Educational Aspirations and Migration: A comparative approach

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Abstract: Educational aspirations are important predictors of educational attainment and intergenerational mobility for children and youth. These aspirations are built from children's own experiences in the family of origin and community. At the family level, parental education, family resources, transitions and parenting practices shape children's own orientation towards schooling. Although educational aspirations figure heavily in the research on educational attainment and disparities, they are less often considered in the research on the returns to migration. This paper explores the association between familial migration from the household and the educational aspirations of children and youth remaining behind in two very different settings. The analyses consider the extent to which children's educational aspirations are related to their exposure to migration from their household, their relationship to the migrant (i.e. a parent, sibling or other relative) and their caregiver's aspirations for them. These associations are compared by child's gender and age. By taking advantage of new comparative data on children, the analyses can explore consistencies in these relationships in two very different social and economic settings of migration.

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Introduction & Background:

Educational aspirations are important predictors of educational attainment and intergenerational mobility for children and youth. These aspirations are built from children's own experiences in the family of origin and community. At the family level, parental education, family resources, transitions and parenting practices shape children's own orientation towards schooling and attitudes about staying in school versus engaging in other competing activities. Although educational aspirations figure heavily in the research on educational attainment and disparities, measures of these aspirations are not as often available in research on how family circumstances and events – such as migration – may shape children's outcomes.

There is a great deal of research on the impacts of migration on children's educational attainment although the findings drawn from this large body of work are far from conclusive. The study of migration's role in children's education often begins with the expectation of positive returns because families use migration as a strategy to invest in children's well-being (Dreby,& Stutz, 2012; Vogel & Korinek, 2012). Many studies indeed find positive returns to parental migration for children's educational attainment in a variety of communities around the globe (Auriol & Demonsant, 2012; Batista et al., 2012; Chen et al., 2009; Edwards & Ureta, 2003; Piotrowski & Paat, 2012).

The implicit assumption is that families have high aspirations for children and use migration as a means to this end – by providing earnings from migration so youths can delay entrance to the labor force and stay in school longer and by transmitting their beliefs about the value of education back to origin households and these 'left behind' children. Studies of migrating parents in destinations, like the United States, frequently point to the high aspirations parents hold for their children as a motivator for migrating in the first place (Fuligni, 1997; Kao and Tienda, 1995). Some of these high aspirations come from the selection of migrants from more optimistic or educated subgroups in the country of origin (Sawyer,

2011). Groups with higher pre-migration education levels tend to have higher educational expectations for children in the destination setting after migration (Feliciano, 2006). Migrating parents may also convey their expectations and aspirations for their children's future back to the origin household. Thus, although there is less work on the extent to which migration from the home shapes the educational aspirations and plans of the children left behind, the expectation throughout much of the research is that these children's aspirations must be high relative to those without migrating parents.

Theoretically, this underlying assumption makes sense. The messages and information that migrants communicate to origin households can shift the orientations of people left in the home. Messages about the costs and benefits of migration and the positive and negative experiences in destination settings could influence children's own expectations for schooling, work and their own migration. A few studies have posited that family migration can alter the expectations and plans adolescents make for their own transitions into labor migration (e.g. Azaola, 2012; Thorsen, 2010). But in this case, the association with education is negative: If migration appears as a successful route for economic mobility, then children exposed to the migration of others from their household or community reduce their commitment to schooling and view migration as an alternative to education (Creighton, 2013; Halpern-Manners, 2011; Kandel & Kao, 2001).

It is also possible that the causal relationship between migration and educational aspirations go in multiple directions. Having high educational aspirations may be the impetus that spurs migration itself. In low resourced settings, children may have fewer educational opportunities and see making a move as the only option for continuing in formal schooling. In this way, educational aspirations themselves could lead to migration, particularly from areas with poor school supply, as young people view education as a means to improve their economic prospects (Boyden, 2013; Heckert, 2015). If migrants, particularly young adults or older siblings of left behind children, make the decision to migrate because they hold high aspirations, then remaining caregivers may also hold higher aspirations for the children in their care.

There are few studies that can address the complex relationship between parents' or caregivers' aspirations, children's aspirations and migration.

Other factors likely influence the way migration out of the household impacts the aspirations of children remaining behind. The relationship of migrants and children likely play a role here as children may be impacted by the migration of others in their family – not just parents (Levitt P. & Lamba-Nieves, D. 2011). Migrants of all relationships to children can transmit ideas about migration and education, yet the strength of such messages might vary across different relationships. Gender of the remaining caregiver, migrant and child also emerge as important predictors of the quality of interactions between absent parents and children (Jordan, et al., 2018). Dreby and Stutz (2012) find children of single migrant mothers increase their academic motivation because they view migration as their mother's sacrifice for their well-being. Father's migration does not seem to spur a similar response on the part of children (Dreby & Stutz, 2012). Having siblings or other relatives with migration experience is associated with higher migration aspirations among children but has a less clear association with educational aspirations (Kandel & Kao, 2000). These findings suggest that gender and relationship status are important moderators in the link between migration and children's aspirations. By comparing settings with very different gender relations – one with more female autonomy and smaller gender gaps in education and one with greater disparities in education and less autonomy among women – this will allow for a test for consistency in these findings.

It also seems likely that the association between migration and children's educational aspirations will vary by age. Young children whose parents or siblings are migrating may not respond to this family separation in the same way as older children. School enrollment tends to be high at the youngest ages, even in settings with fewer resources. As children age and progress through school, there may be less access to schools with higher grades (i.e. upper secondary) and the economic trade-offs to remaining in school are more severe for adolescents who could find it more difficult to remain in school and lower their aspirations accordingly. Further, adolescents who are still in school have already persevered through

early grades and their aspirations may reflect more concrete plans and expectations. By comparing children across settings with comparable measures of migration, schooling and aspirations, we will be able to test for consistency in age patterns as well.

The current study:

This paper explores the association between familial migration from the household and the educational aspirations of children and youth remaining behind in two different settings. The analyses consider the extent to which children's educational aspirations are positively related to their exposure to migration from their household as expected by research that focuses on the high aspirations of migrants and their positive selection. Or, educational aspirations may be negatively associated with exposure to migration as expected by the research showing children in migration settings reduce their commitment to schooling. The analyses will address the importance of relationship to the migrant (i.e. a parent, sibling or other relative), the caregiver's aspirations and the likely gender and age differences in these associations.

The analyses address children's aspirations in two different settings of migration – Jalisco, Mexico and Chitwan, Nepal. Although each of these settings experiences considerable migration, they represent very different educational landscapes and opportunities in childhood and adolescence (see Table 1). The data come from a unique study of households with school age children. The interview instruments were designed to be as comparable as possible across these settings to allow for a comparison of children's aspirations using the same definition of migration, measures of family structure and household resources.

Historically, Jalisco lacked industrial production and wages remained below those in other more industrial states, but economic development in the region has increased (Flores et al., 2013; Gonzalez de la Rocha, 1988). For example, Guadalajara, the second largest city in Mexico and the capital of Jalisco, has developed a strong electronics industry and serves as an attractive destination for many internal migrants (Hanson, 2005; Unger, 2005). Economic inequality prevails in Jalisco with the economic growth and development in Guadalajara accompanied by high poverty levels throughout urban and rural areas.

International migration has long been a part of the lives of residents in Jalisco (Durand et al., 2001). Migration to the United States has fluctuated in response to economic and political conditions in both countries (Masferrer & Roberts, 2012). Economic restructuring in Mexico has also led to a fluctuation in commodity prices and jobs at the lower end of the wage scale (Riosmena & Massey, 2012) and creates continued incentives for international migration, but also increased internal migration to larger urban areas like Guadalajara and destinations in other Mexican states. So even though migration flows to the United States have shifted somewhat, Jalisco remains among the top origin states for Mexican immigrants and migrant remittances remain an important source of income for many households (CONAPO, 2012; Massey, et al., 2010; Orrenius & Zavondny, 2005).

Table 1. Comparison of research settings in Mexico and Nepal:

	MEXICO	***NEPAL***
MIGRATION	Primary international destination is the United States; *Some internal migrants esp. in urban areas.*	Varied international destinations (India, Gulf States, oth. Asia); Internal migrants to Kathmandu & from rural areas.
MODES OF PRODUCTION	Large and small scale farming, agricultural processing, manufacturing	Small scale farming, small scale manufacturing
FAMILY SYSTEM	Marriage & consensual unions, extended family co-residence prevalent but not dominant	Some arranged marriage, patriarchal, mostly monogamous, patrilocal, some extended family residence
NET MIGRATION[1] (PER 1,000)	-3	+3
CHILD LABOR (age 5-14)	5%	34%
LITERACY (AGE 15-24)[2]	98% male; 98% female	86% male; 75% female
GROSS SECONDARY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT[3]	86% male; 92% female	41% male; 46% female

Chitwan District is located in southern Nepal in a valley bounded by community forests and a national forest park. The region developed from heavily forested to largely agricultural in a few decades

in the middle to late 20th century. Today, the district is a mix of mid-size urban areas (Bharatpur with a population of around 150,000), small-scale manufacturing in and around urban areas and intensive agriculture with more sparsely populated communities further from the urban centers. In contrast to the long history of international migration from Jalisco, Mexico, southern Nepal has a much newer and diverse international migration flow. Labor migration has become an increasingly important economic activity and households in Chitwan send migrants both internally to larger urban areas and internationally. International migration increased rapidly during the late 1990s and 2000s (Wagle, 2012). There is history of migration to India along with a few other Asian countries (Shrestha, 2004; Wagle, 2012) but migration has increased to the Gulf States of Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (Bohra & Massey, 2009). During this increase, the Chitwan District has transitioned rapidly from a setting of subsistence agriculture and limited infrastructure to a setting with sufficient resources and labor to sustain international migration. Migration is clearly important to family outcomes (Massey, Axinn & Ghimire, 2010) in this setting.

One difficulty assessing the impact of migration on so-called 'left behind' children is that the definition varies considerably across studies. Some are restricted to cases of children living in origin communities without either parent present. Others consider only parental migration but are able to consider the role of maternal vs. paternal absence. Other studies combine children with any migrant out of the home when considering the role of migration on children's home environments. Current estimates from Mexico suggest that between 7-12% of children are living apart from a parent due to international migration (DeWaard et al., 2018). In Nepal, the estimate is harder to come by and is likely quite variable across districts although somewhere around 12% of Nepal's population are reportedly labor migrants and nearly 30% of households with school age children were reportedly receiving remittances in 2003-04 (Vogel & Korinek, 2012). Internal migration is prevalent in both settings and the likelihood that children experience the migration (internal or international) of other family members such as siblings further increases exposure to migration overall.

This paper considers whether the relationship of the migrant to the child is also associated with children's educational aspirations. The innovative new data identify cases in which children have an absent parent due to migration (internal or international) as well as children exposed to migration through other family members (i.e. older siblings). The analyses also consider the importance of caregiver's aspirations for the focal child. In many cases, this will be the child's mother as male migration is more prevalent than female in both contexts under consideration here. But in some cases, children are left in the care of grandparents or other relatives. Regardless, the expectation is that caregiver's aspirations are also higher in the case of familial migration than among caregivers in households without ongoing migration. These higher aspirations may be the conduit for higher aspirations on the part of the children as well.

The analyses also consider the association between migration and educational aspirations by children's age and gender. In both countries, school enrollment is very high among young children and tapers off as children enter adolescence with a considerable drop in enrollment after age 15. So, although there may not observe much variation in school enrollment among young children, it is not clear if the relationship between migration and aspirations will vary by age. And analyses attend to the possible interactions between relationship to the migrant, migrant gender and child's gender.

On average, there is not much difference in school enrollment or educational attainment by gender in Mexico (Creighton, 2010). But there are gender differences in the importance of migration from the family of origin. For example, children's time spent on schoolwork decreased and involvement in work outside the home increased with father's migration, a result that was strongest for adolescent boys (Antman, 2011b). There may be differences in the role of parental or sibling migration on the aspirations of boys versus girls. As parents or siblings become labor migrants, the expectations for boys and girls activities may also shift and these changing orientations may encourage higher aspirations for education or reduce educational commitment and encourage children to become migrants themselves (Kandael & Kao, 2001; McKenzie D, Rapoport H. 2011). In the traditional pattern of labor migration from rural Mexico, female migration to the United States was often in the role of a tied mover – a woman following

a spouse or other family members for reunification. The more recent era of migration finds more single women, including single mothers, moving for work as sole providers for origin households (Arias, 2013; Dreby, 2010). In this case, when mothers or sisters are the migrants from the household, their perceived autonomy could inspire higher aspirations among girls in the origin household. In Nepal, men dominate both internal and international migrant flows so it is less likely to observe children impacted by the migration of their mothers or sisters. And, migrant remittances are more likely to be invested in boys' education than girls further accentuating the gender differences likely to be observed in Nepal vs. Mexico (Vogel & Korinek, 2012; Raut & Tanaka, 2018). On the other hand, women may gain decision making autonomy in the absence of male migrants from the home which should favor girls' education over boys' education or at least reduce the disadvantage among girls relative to boys (Self, 2015).

Data and Methods:

The data for these analyzes come from a very recent and unique study of children in origin communities. The Family Migration and Early Life Outcomes Project (FAMELO) interviewed children age 5-17 and their caregivers in three diverse settings with significant internal and international migration: Jalisco, Mexico, Gaza Province, Mozambique and Chitwan, Nepal. The survey design is a household-based sample. In each site, approximately 2,000 households containing at least one child age 5-17 were selected. In half of these households, a single child was selected for interviews; in the other half, a sibling pair of children was selected. Children age 14-17 were oversampled. Information on household composition, resources and migration as well as current schooling is available for all children age 5-17.

The Jalisco, Mexico sample is drawn from randomly selected households in one of 25 municipalities exhibiting high levels of migration (INEGI). The survey team determined that safety concerns in 5 municipalities precluded their inclusion in the sample. Once interviewers made contact with household and determined the household was eligible to participate, caregivers of minor children were selected along with one randomly chosen child in the household. The final wave 1 FAMELO sample included 2,268 adults and 3,249 children in Jalisco interviewed between the end of 2017 and early 2018.

The Chitwan, Nepal sample is drawn from 54 randomly sampled 'wards' within the district. Households in the selected wards were enumerated and households with age eligible children were then sampled from this enumeration. The final wave 1 FAMELO sample included 2,333 adults and 3,202 children in Chitwan interviewed in the end of 2017.

For both sites, the interviews included questions for the children's caregiver on household resources, family structure, current and past migration of household members and their own aspirations for the focal child's schooling. Children provide information on their own experiences and time use, school progress and aspirations. Analyses rely on a final sample for each site that includes children who can be matched with their appropriate caregiver (i.e. not missing household data) and who provided valid values for educational aspirations. The analyses for this paper focus on one child per household ("focal child 1") and household level information provided by the caregiver respondent.

The dependent variable is children's educational aspirations, coded into four categories based on ISCED designations so that categories are comparable in Jalisco Mexico and Chitwan Nepal. Children were asked about their educational aspirations with the survey question, "If you could get as much schooling as you want, how far in school you would like to go?" Children were given 20 potential categories to choose from, ranging from "no school at all" to "doctorate degree." For ease of interpretation and comparison across contexts, educational aspirations was recoded using International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) codes. This recoded variable includes 9 categories, ranging from "pre-school or lower" to "doctorate degree." Caregiver aspirations are asked in the same way (how far in school would you like [NAME] to go?) with the same response categories.

For these initial analyses, original responses are collapsed into lower secondary schooling and below, upper secondary completion, bachelor's degree, and an advanced graduate degree. The first two categories are roughly equivalent to middle school completion or less and high school completion. Descriptive results show the distribution of aspirations for the full range of ISCED categories, but proportional odds models are estimated (ologit in STATA 15.1) with the collapsed categories due to

substantive meaning between categories and insufficient cases in some categories (Williams, Ordered Logit Models).

The main independent variables are measures of household migration. Migration history was collected for all members of the household. A series of dichotomous variables are constructed to identify whether there are any of household members currently absent from the household by destination and relationship to focal children. The specific measures are whether a parent is currently abroad, a parent is currently away from the household, a sibling is currently abroad, a sibling is currently away from the household but still in the country, any other relative is currently abroad, and any other relative is currently away from the household but still in the country. These categories are exhaustive, but not mutually exclusive as a child may have both a parent and a sibling out of the household. In addition to these relationship specific variables, we also constructed dichotomous measures of whether anyone in the households was currently abroad or away inside the country. Parents that have left the household for marriage/divorce are not counted here as they are no longer considered part of the selected household.

There are a number of other variables included in the model to control for differences between households and to isolate the effects of the main variables of interest. Caregiver's aspirations for the child's educational attainment are included as a covariate, coded as a four categories like children's own aspirations. The caregiver's own educational attainment is included following that same categorization. Another important control is whether or not the household receives remittances of any type, cash or goods, from a member who is currently away. Household size and wealth are included, where wealth is constructed through principal component analysis of household assets. The sex and age of the child are also included, as well as an age squared term in Nepal.

Results:

The analyses are just beginning and there is a great deal of information on migration and household structure available. For now, the focus is on current migration of family members out of the household. The prevalence of current international and internal migration out of the current household

varies considerably across settings (Table 2). Current migration from the household is more prevalent in the Chitwan Nepal sample than the Jalisco Mexico sample, as expected. Overall, international migration is quite prevalent in Chitwan with over one quarter of our sample of children with at least one parent living in another country at the time of the interview. As expected, more parents are away internationally than siblings in both settings. Domestic internal migration is also fairly prevalent in both samples. In the Mexican sample, more parents are way from the household but living in the same country than are currently out of country. In Nepal, the prevalence of internal migration is lower among parents than international migration but focal children are more likely to have siblings living somewhere else in Nepal than out of the country. Our regression models also consider whether other household members (i.e. other relatives who usually live in the child's household) are also currently migrating and whether the household receives any remittances.

Table 2. Prevalence of current migration from the household, FAMELO sample from Jalisco and Chitwan

	JALISCO, MEXICO	***CHITWAN, NEPAL***
Households with at least one person living abroad (%; n)	5.3% (118)	36.1% (839)
Parent of child is abroad	4.1% (91)	29.0% (675)
Sibling of child is abroad	0.9% (20)	5.4% (126)
Households with at least one person living elsewhere in the country	12.2% (270)	19.2% (446)
Parent of child is living elsewhere	8.8% (195)	10.5% (245)
Sibling of child is living elsewhere	3.1% (69)	7.2% (167)
Sample Size	2,221	2,326

The FAMELO project also collects extensive information on children's education, educational engagement and aspirations from both the focal children and their caregivers. For descriptive purposes, Table 3a and 3b report a full range of educational categories as reported by caregivers and then by children in Mexico and Nepal. Overall, caregivers have very high aspirations for children's education despite the very different economic, social and cultural settings. In both settings, around three quarters of the caregivers give aspirations at college or more. Mexican caregivers' aspirations are slightly higher for girls with a larger percent hoping for college or more for the girls than boys, although the differences are quite small. The children themselves report lower educational aspirations, with boys in particular reporting aspirations to lower or upper secondary education and fewer reporting aspirations above college. In Nepal, a similar percentage of caregivers report aspirations for children of college or more, but here there is a more even distribution across the higher degree categories with far more caregivers reporting that they hope children get advanced degrees. Virtually no caregivers report educational aspirations below upper secondary for children in Nepal. And, gender differences are small here as well, although caregivers hold slightly higher aspirations for boys than girls. As in Mexico, the children themselves report lower aspirations with far more aspiring to an upper secondary education with very little variation by gender.

Table 3a. Distribution of Educational Aspirations by caregivers and children, Jalisco Mexico

	Primary	Lower Secondary	Upper Secondary	Some college	Bachelor's degree	Master's degree	Doctorate	Row total (n)
Caregiver's Aspirations								
All	0.4%	2.2%	13.8%	3.2%	73.8%	3.8%	2.9%	2218
Boys	0.3%	2.7%	15.8%	2.8%	71.8%	4.1%	2.6%	1129
Girls	0.6%	1.7%	11.8%	3.5%	75.8%	3.6%	3.2%	1089
Children's Aspirations								
All	3.7%	5.8%	15.1%	4.2%	65.2%	3.3%	2.4%	2163
Boys	4.6%	7.8%	18.1%	3.0%	60.8%	2.6%	2.5%	1102
Girls	2.7%	3.7%	12.0%	5.4%	69.7%	4.1%	2.3%	1061

Table 3b. Distribution of Educational Aspirations by caregivers and children, Chitwan Nepal

	Primary	Lower Secondary	Upper Secondary	Bachelor's degree	Master's degree	Doctorate	Row total (n)
Caregiver's Aspirations							
All	0.1%	0.0%	21.8%	21.3%	37.1%	19.7%	2325
Boys	0.0%	0.0%	19.9%	20.8%	38.4%	20.9%	1279
Girls	0.2%	0.0%	24.1%	22.0%	35.5%	18.3%	1046
Children's Aspirations							
All	5.1%	2.4%	42.5%	22.7%	18.0%	8.9%	2335
Boys	5.2%	2.6%	43.5%	23.2%	16.0%	9.3%	1294
Girls	5.1%	2.2%	41.3%	22.2%	20.6%	8.5%	1041

The main research question addressed here is whether these aspirations are associated with current ongoing migration from the household, the relationship of the migrant to the child and whether caregiver aspirations help mediate this relationship such that caregivers and children have higher aspirations when there is migration from the home. Table 4 presents the descriptive distribution of the other variables included in the models. The characteristics of the children are quite similar in both samples although there are more boys in the sample in Nepal and the Mexican sample is slightly younger than Nepal. Households in both samples are also similar in size with an average of just over 4 people. The asset index is calculated within country so cannot be compared across. The caregivers in both samples have relatively low levels of education with more than half having less than a lower secondary education. There are proportionately more caregivers with upper secondary education completed in Nepal than in the Mexican sample but more caregivers have experienced some college education in our Mexican sample. Finally, reflecting the large differences in the prevalence of migration, very few households are currently receiving remittances in the Mexican sample as compared to over one third of households in the Nepal sample.

Table 4. Summary characteristics of children and households, Mexico and Nepal

	Mexico		Nepal	
	Mean or %	(sd)	Mean or %	(sd)
Child Sex				
Girls	49.4		44.8	
Boys	50.6		55.2	
Child age	9.6	3.6	10.8	3.8
Household Size	4.5	1.4	4.4	1.5
Wealth- household assets	0.033	1.5	0	1.6
Caregiver's education				
Lower secondary and below	76.8		59.3	
Upper secondary	17.4		35.3	
College	5.4		3.9	
Above College	0.38		1.5	
Remittances-any type				
Yes	4.1		38.6	
No	95.9		61.4	

Source: FAMELO Wave I, Jalisco Mexico (n =2,085) & Nepal (n = 2,303)

The next step is to estimate multivariate models to determine the association between migration and children's educational aspirations net of child and household characteristics. The models assess the extent to which there are differences in aspirations among children with and without migrants from their households and according to the destinations and relationships of migrants to the focal children. Models also consider age and gender of children and other resources available to the household including household assets, caregiver education and remittance receipt. The expectation is that children with recent migrants from their households will have higher educational aspirations than those without recent migrants particularly in Chitwan, Nepal where international labor migration has more recently become an increasingly important conduit for upward economic mobility for origin households. The results of the

ordinal logistic regression models predicting children's aspirations are presented in Table 5a (Mexico) and Table 5b (Nepal).

Table 5a: Ordinal logistic regression models predicting children's educational aspirations, Mexico

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Migration						
Parent abroad	0.357	0.324	0.422	0.511		
Parent elsewhere	0.089	0.057	0.111	0.078		
Sibling abroad	0.557	0.378	0.465	0.398		
Sibling elsewhere	0.663*	0.433	0.491	0.346		
Other abroad	1.034	0.890	1.073	1.084		
Other internal	-0.305	-0.268	-0.156	-0.038		
Girls (vs. boys)		0.476***	0.476***	0.440***		0.511***
Child's age		0.059***	0.059***	0.061***		0.060***
Household Size		-0.139***	-0.138***	-0.121***		-0.120***
Wealth- household assets		0.045	0.045	0.008		0.012
Caregiver's education		0.455***	0.456***	0.251**		0.253**
Remittances-any type			-0.217	-0.270		-0.281
Caregiver's aspirations				0.976***		0.980***
Collapsed Migration Variables						
Anyone abroad					0.506*	0.651
Anyone elsewhere					0.347	0.734*
Interactions						
Girl*Anyone abroad						-0.128
Girls* Anyone elsewhere						-1.022**
cut1	-2.222***	-1.994***	-1.990***	-0.298	-2.216***	-0.266
cut2	-0.867***	-0.600**	-0.596**	1.164***	-0.864***	1.200***
cut3	2.906***	3.307***	3.312***	5.218***	2.903***	5.264***
Observations	2085	2085	2085	2085	2085	2085
Pseudo R-squared	0.003	0.027	0.027	0.059	0.002	0.060
="* p<0.05	** p<0.01	*** p<0.001"				

Table 5b: Ordinal logistic regression models predicting children's educational aspirations, Nepal

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Migration						
Parent abroad	-0.136	-0.069	-0.005	-0.063		
Parent elsewhere	0.127	0.231	0.281	0.187		
Sibling abroad	0.175	-0.294	-0.258	-0.253		
Sibling elsewhere	0.550***	0.245	0.253	0.207		
Other abroad	-0.209	-0.095	-0.052	-0.048		
Other elsewhere	-0.146	0.108	0.128	-0.007		
Girls (vs. Boys)		0.135	0.136	0.184*		-0.035
Child's age		0.772***	0.773***	0.789***		0.797***
age square		-0.025***	-0.025***	-0.025***		-0.026***
Household Size		-0.062*	-0.062*	-0.047		-0.049
Wealth- household assets		0.271***	0.270***	0.180***		0.177***
Caregiver's education		0.471***	0.472***	0.306***		0.311***
Remittances-any type			-0.078	-0.084		-0.124
Caregiver's aspirations				0.562***		0.565***
Collapsed Migration Variables						
Anyone Abroad					-0.097	-0.248
Anyone Elsewhere					0.306**	0.094
Interactions:						
Girls*Anyone abroad						0.432*
Girls*Anyone elsewhere						0.341
cut1	-2.474***	2.194***	2.196***	3.530***	-2.460***	3.469***
cut2	0.017	5.171***	5.173***	6.591***	0.024	6.541***
cut3	1.011***	6.355***	6.357***	7.818***	1.016***	7.770***
Observations	2303	2303	2303	2303	2303	2303
Pseudo R-squared	0.004	0.106	0.106	0.123	0.002	0.124

="* p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001"

Model 1 presents the relationship between migration (international and internal) and children's aspirations. The predictors include having at least one: parent abroad, parent away internally, sibling abroad, sibling away internally and other household members abroad and other household members away internally. The results in this model suggest that in both Mexico and Nepal, children with a sibling living elsewhere in the same country have higher educational aspirations for themselves than children without

migrants from their households. None of the other coefficients are statistically significant and the direction of the coefficients is quite variable in each context. The number of current migrants is low in Mexico but cell sizes are considerably larger in Nepal suggesting sufficient power to detect such variation.

Model 2 adds controls for children's age and sex as well as household size, wealth and the caregiver's education. These control variables operate consistently in both contexts. Girls' aspirations are notably higher than boys in Mexico. The coefficient for girls is positive in Nepal as well but not statistically significant. As expected, older children have higher aspirations than younger children, probably reflecting familiarity with educational certification and structure. Larger households are associated with lower aspirations but wealth and higher caregiver education are associated with higher educational aspirations in both Mexico and Nepal. With these controls in the model, none of the migration variables are statistically significant.

Based on prior research pointing to the importance of remittances for children's schooling, model 3 adds a measure indicating whether any migrant is currently sending any remittances (money or goods) to the household. This too is not statistically significant and does little to change our overall conclusions. Note, however, remittance receipt is negatively associated with children's educational aspirations which is contrary to the expectations that added resources spur educational engagement but quite consistent with the idea that successful migrants encourage others in their origin households to consider migration and may encourage youth to curtail formal schooling. Subsequent analyses with more detailed measures of migration and remittances, not yet coded but available in our data, may elucidate which of these expectations is supported.

Model 4 adds the caregiver's own educational aspirations for the child. This is also consistent in both contexts. In both Nepal and Mexico, caregiver's aspirations are positively associated with children's own aspirations and this holds even when we are adjusting for the caregiver's own education. Given the null findings for migration, no formal test for a mediating effect of caregiver's aspirations and migration

is needed. There is clearly an important role for caregiver aspirations, even net of their own educational attainment, but these aspirations do not appear related to current migration.

Finally, research on the role of migration on children's education and aspirations has found different impacts for boys and girls. Although the migration measures separated by relationship and destination are not significant, there may be variation in the role of migration on girls and boy in these settings. Recognizing the smaller cell sizes, the next model collapses the migration variables into two indicators: Any household member currently abroad and any household member currently elsewhere. Here the positive association between internal migration and children's aspirations returns in Nepal while international migration appears positively associated with children's aspirations in Mexico. But when all controls are included and these migration variables are interacted with child's sex in Model 6, there are few consistent findings. In Mexico, girls' higher aspirations when compared to boys are not as high when there is current internal migration from their household. In Nepal, girls do not have higher aspirations than boys except in cases where there is international migration from the household. In short, there is tantalizing evidence of a positive role for migration on girls' aspirations but the multivariate analyses do not provide conclusive support for this despite the very consistent findings for the importance of household characteristics and caregiver aspirations in both settings.

Discussion:

As more children around the globe experience migration of close family members and others from their households, there are few consistent conclusions about how this migration shapes children's development and educational trajectories. Theoretically motivated hypotheses expect positive impacts when remittances and positive messages about migration are returned to the household. Equally supported hypotheses expect negative outcomes as children experience psychological distress and increased demands on their time when parents and other family members are absent from the household. And, these competing hypotheses are difficult to test across diverse contexts because data sources use different measures of migration and children's outcomes. The analyses presented here take advantage of *very* new

data on children and migration in Jalisco, Mexico and Chitwan, Nepal that was purposely designed with comparable measures of migration, household resources and children's development and education.

Overall, children in both settings have very high aspirations for their own educations. These high aspirations are echoed by their caregivers. But, current migration from the household is not consistently associated with these aspirations in either setting. There is some suggestion that sibling's mobility could be associated with higher educational aspirations on the part of children remaining in the household but it is far from conclusive. The limited association between migration and children's aspirations is more notable when one considers that all of the other measures in the models are consistently associated with aspirations across the sites in Mexico and Nepal. Wealth, caregiver education and caregiver's own aspirations are all clearly positively associated with the hopes children have for themselves even in culturally, socially and economically distinct settings.

Girls' aspirations are higher than boys in Mexico and, to a lesser extent, in Nepal. Although gender differences in aspirations are relatively small, it remains to be seen if these aspirations are acted upon as children move through school. The interactions of gender and migration suggest that migration may be associated with even higher aspirations for girls in Nepal where international migration has become an important conduit for economic mobility. Yet, this result is not dependent on remittances which remain non-significant (and negative) in all models. Clearly more work is needed to untangle these relationships but the evidence so far suggests migration is not deterring children from schooling and may be giving girls even more of a boost.

The analyses here are limited to a cross-sectional snapshot of migration and aspirations but the work is ongoing and there are three important directions for the work presented here. First, the FAMELO data includes more information that has not yet been analyzed. The analyses did not yet consider the gender of the migrant (i.e. mothers vs. fathers, sisters or brothers). And, there is more information on prior migration from the household so it is possible to time migration more precisely in children's own lives. There is considerably more past migration of household members in the sample in Mexico (not

included in these analyses) suggesting that many of the children in these households are living with returned migrants more than they are exposed to ongoing migration. This is consistent with declines in international migration from Jalisco over recent years. There is also more information on children's educational engagement and views of their current schools and classes. This additional information will provide insight into whether children's activities are consistent with their high aspirations such that children with higher aspirations are also more positively disposed to their schooling experiences. Second, FAMELO data collection is ongoing. A follow-up survey with children and caregivers is scheduled for next year. This will allow longitudinal analyses that can assess children's paths through schooling, changes in aspirations and expectations and changes in migration and return migration. Finally, the FAMELO project collected data from a third site – Gaza Province, Mozambique. The wave I data contain the same measures and outcomes as the data collected in Mexico and Nepal. Thus, the analyses will expand to a third context for comparison and provide more insight into the consistent role of household resources and caregiver education and possibly more divergent results for migration and children's aspirations.

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