

Bridging the Gulf: Overseas Migration to the Middle East Fosters Tolerance and Cosmopolitanism

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Does Migration Impact Tolerance and Alter Identities?

NEWS / LIFE

World tolerance for migrants on decline

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Seven European countries, led by North Macedonia, Hungary, Serbia and Croatia, top the Gallup index of the world's least-accepting countries.



Asylum seekers getting on their feet in a camp in Greece. Immigration is a hot topic in the United States. Photo: AP/Wide World

Is Europe ready for non-European migrants?

Integration attitudes linked to perceptions of race and ethnicity

By Tom Turner and Dr. Christine Cross



It's not always what you think. Immigrants and migrants may be seen as the same, but they're not. A new study from the University of Exeter, UK, shows that people's attitudes towards migrants are linked to their perceptions of race and ethnicity. The study found that people who see migrants as a threat to their own identity are more likely to have negative attitudes towards them. This is particularly true for people who see migrants as a threat to their own identity. The study also found that people who see migrants as a threat to their own identity are more likely to have negative attitudes towards them.

Europeans remain welcoming to immigrants

Particularly if they live in countries that host some.



Germans upbeat about immigration, study finds

Despite gloomy headlines about the asylum policy debate, a majority view life with their immigrant and non-immigrant neighbors positively. The study will assess an East-West split, as well as a divide on headscarves.



It's time for the United States and Europe to face the politics of cultural displacement



Migration's Impact on Migrants Less Known

A vast literature explores how in-migration alters tolerance and group identification among *natives* in host societies

(Fetzer 2000, Enos 2014, McLaren 2003, Ellison et al 2011, Steinmayr 2021, Tabellini 2020, Halla et al 2017, Dustmann et al 2019...)

- In some cases: out-group anxiety, cultural exclusion, nativism, xenophobia, nationalism
- In others: increased acceptance of migrants and refugees

Much less work on the impact of mobility on the social preferences and identities of *migrants* themselves

- Methodological issue: Migrants *self-select* into migration

Research Question: How does migration impact tolerance and group identities among those who move?

Research Design: Setting

Mizoram, North-east India

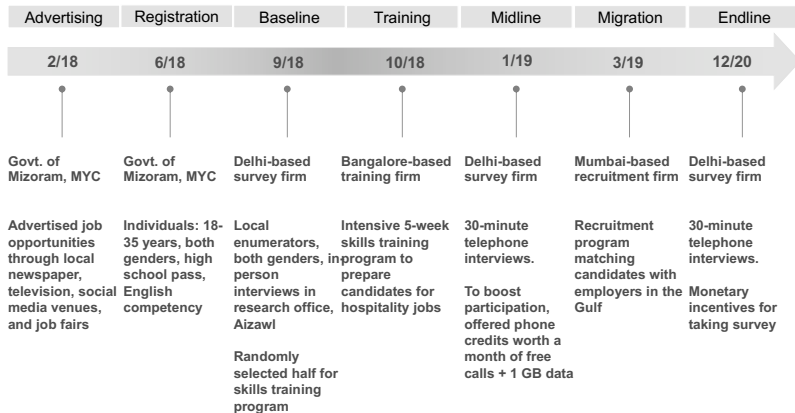


Context

Background

- Mizoram, small NE state with high geographic barriers to employment
- Population ~ 1 million
- GDP per capita is around USD 1,600
- High unemployment rates
- Largest employer: government
- Yet 92% literacy
- Language: Mizo, English widely spoken
- Predominantly Scheduled Tribe (ST)
- Lack local job opportunities; face discrimination in mainland India

Study Structure and Timeline



Demographic Characteristics of Subjects

	<i>Baseline</i>	<i>Endline</i>
N	389	248
Mean Age (Baseline)	22.9	22.9
Pct Male	56	54
Pct Completed Grade 12	72	75
Pct Employed	14	12
Pct Married	2	1
Pct Scheduled Tribe	95	96

Experimental Interventions

Stage 1: Skills Training

Hospitality sector skills training program

- Classroom Training
 - Food safety
 - Communication, etiquette, cultural sensitivity
 - Kitchen & food production
 - Food & beverage service
 - Coffee & bar
 - Housekeeping (guest rooms, kitchen, public areas)
 - Grooming & hygiene
 - Interview preparation
- Job Exposure Training
 - Practical 2 week training in local Aizawl hotels and restaurants



Experimental Interventions

Stage 2: Recruitment Program

Interviews with GCC hospitality sector firms

- Interviews with employers
 - CVs
 - Mock interviews
 - Certificates
 - Match with employer interviews
 - Guide through visa, migration processes
- Employers
 - Costa Coffee
 - Chili's, Papa Johns, La Brioche
 - Emirates Airways
 - Al Abraaj
 - Mandarin Oriental



Empirical Strategy

Intention to Treat Framework

- Effect of program selection on post-migration attitudes and behaviors.

Main Outcomes are Z-Score Indexes

- 2-6 survey questions measuring each outcome

Control for baseline measures for pre-treatment outcomes

- Robustness: Also include demographic covariates

P-values estimated using randomization inference

- Robustness: Use OLS standard errors instead

One-sided hypotheses tests (hypothesis directions pre-registered), except when noted

Ethical Considerations

Labor migration poses risks

Goal: minimize risks; ensure benefits flowed to migrants and communities (Teele 2014, Humphreys 2015)

Government of Mizoram and local NGOs have sought to promote overseas Gulf recruitment to tackle endemic unemployment

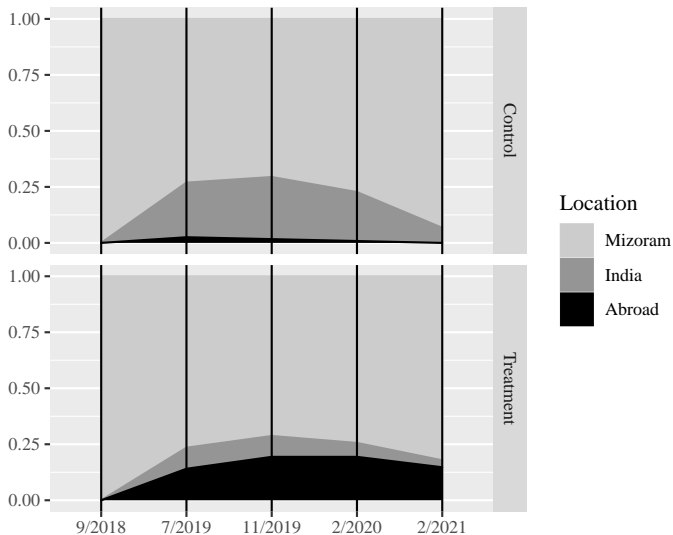
- Builds on prior government attempts to promote GCC employment
- Researchers helping evaluate efficacy of program
- Build blueprint for ethical and safe labor migration in region

Partners, employers, sector of employment carefully vetted

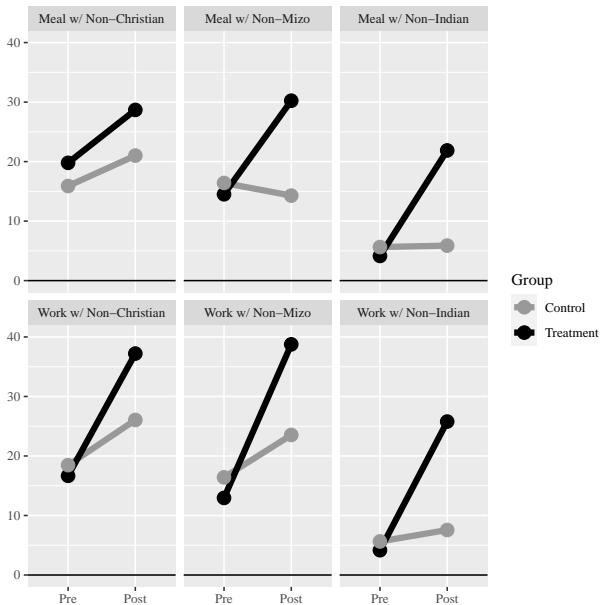
- Focus on hospitality sector; lucrative pay; reputable jobs

Subjects connected with government and non-governmental support systems; provided extensive information on rights and recourses

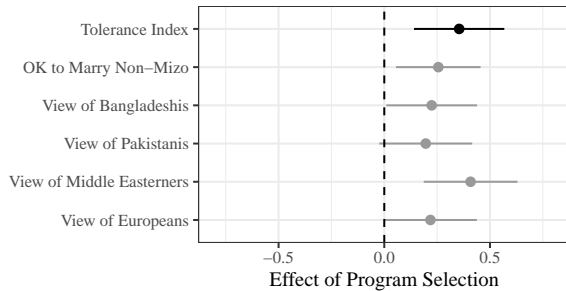
Results: Migration Outcomes



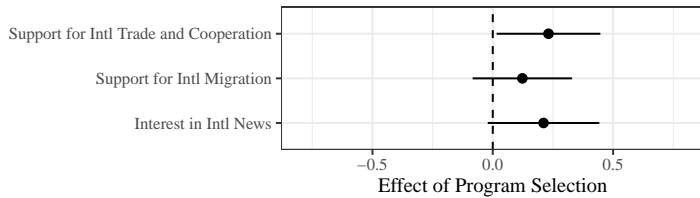
Intergroup Contact



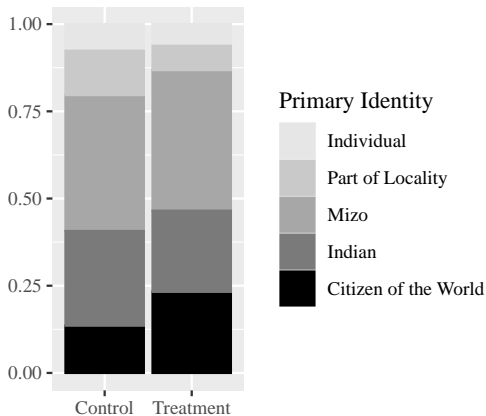
Intergroup Tolerance



Internationalism



Cosmopolitanism



	Group Means		OLS w/ Baseline		<i>N</i>
	<i>Ctrl</i>	<i>Treat</i>	<i>ATE</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	
Identify as World Citizen	.14	.23	+.10	.025**	247

p* < .1, *p* < .05, ****p* < .01

Key Takeaways

- Cross-border labor migration fosters norms of inter-ethnic tolerance among migrants
- Increases internationalism and international identification
- Does not alter more parochial national and regional identities
- Findings support the claim that inter-group contact in cooperative settings leads to more egalitarian outgroup attitudes

Thank you for listening! Questions?

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How Labor Migration Reshapes Social Preferences

Focus of study: labor migrants, comprising 2/3rds of 272 million cross-border migrants

Intercultural contact builds trust and tolerance (Allport 1954, Pettigrew and Tropp 2006, Paluck and Green 2009)

Labor migration:

- Facilitates interactions between migrants and out-group employers, customers, co-workers
- Fosters exposure to diverse cultures, religions, nationalities
- Alters costs of clinging to tradition and benefits from embracing more egalitarian and tolerant attitudes

Those with more cultural tolerance are also more supportive of international cooperation (Kertzer 2018, Herrmann 2017)

Survey and Analysis

	<i>Endline</i>
Response Rate: Treatment Group	65.8%
Response Rate: Control Group	60.7%
Difference in Response Rate	5.1%
P-Value: Two-Sample T-Test	.296
P-Value: RI-based Test	.268

Notes on Attrition:

- Not significantly affected by treatment.
- Had no effect on balance of treatment groups.
- Not predicted by any pre-treatment covariates or by program attendance.

Balance Tests

Predictors of Response

Description of With Whom Interviewees Spent Time: Control Group



Description of With Whom Interviewees Spent Time: Treatment Group



Ethnographic Interviews w/Migrants

Initially I was not very close with [Filipinos] but as I get to know them more and spend more time with them, I feel comfortable and I was close to them more than the other employees who were Indian. There were newcomers from Arabia and Africa who joined after us, I am also close to these people and we are still in contact

Respondent #156

I hang out with the local [Saudi] people the most, we would go out for coffee or go shopping together

Respondent #144

I think Mizos will face more discrimination in mainland India because my co-workers who are from India itself were racist towards me at work while people from other country and the local people never show any sign of racism

Respondent #80

Economic Gains? No Effect Among Household Members

	Group Means		OLS w/ Baseline		<i>N</i>
	<i>Ctrl</i>	<i>Treat</i>	<i>ATE</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	
Secondhand Contact	—	+ .076	+ .077	.268	301
Intercultural Tolerance	—	- .045	- .054	.698	304
Internationalism	—	- .134	- .119	.844	304

* $p < .1$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Effects Among Likely Migrants and Non-Migrants

Effects among “likely migrants” vs “likely non-migrants” using Bayesian Additive Regression Trees (BART)

- (1) Use pre-treatment covariates to predict likely movers
- (2) Predictors identify T and C subjects resembling “compliers”

	<i>Effect Size</i>		<i>Difference?</i>
	<i>Migrants</i>	<i>Non-Migrants</i>	
Moved Abroad	+ .59***	+ .06*	$p < .01$
Intergroup Contact	+ 1.36***	+ .18***	$p < .01$
Intergroup Tolerance	+ .93***	+ .19	$p < .05$
International Cooperation	+ .34*	+ .16	$p > .1$
Nationalism	− .15	+ .18	$p > .1$
N	68	180	

Balance Tests

	Baseline	Midline	Endline
Age	-0.008 (0.009)	-0.005 (0.011)	-0.006 (0.011)
Male	0.005 (0.053)	0.016 (0.062)	-0.041 (0.067)
Education	0.028 (0.033)	0.008 (0.038)	0.060 (0.041)
Employed	0.035 (0.109)	-0.116 (0.128)	-0.116 (0.145)
Scheduled Tribe	-0.044 (0.123)	-0.057 (0.162)	-0.095 (0.166)
Married	0.131 (0.202)	0.147 (0.310)	0.266 (0.314)
English Ability	0.002 (0.026)	-0.015 (0.030)	-0.006 (0.032)
Economic Status	-0.025 (0.040)	0.031 (0.050)	0.051 (0.052)
Economic Confidence	-0.013 (0.039)	0.023 (0.045)	0.008 (0.052)
Economic Attitudes	-0.016 (0.025)	-0.018 (0.029)	0.017 (0.030)
Observations	384	286	244
F-Stat P-Value	.990	.993	.912
F-Stat P-Value (RI)	.944	.980	.851

Predictors of Response Rate

Midline

Demographics	✓	✓	✓
Pre-Treat Outcomes		✓	✓
Treat x Demographics			✓
Treat x Outcomes			✓
Observations	389	384	384
F-Stat P-Value	.252	.399	.417

Endline

Demographics	✓	✓	✓
Pre-Treat Outcomes		✓	✓
Treat x Demographics			✓
Treat x Outcomes			✓
Observations	389	384	384
F-Stat P-Value	.314	.461	.220

Migration Progress

	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Control</i>
Did not apply for a job abroad	48%	64%
Applied, but did not receive an offer	18%	27%
Received an offer, but did not accept	7%	4%
Accepted a job, but did not receive a visa	2%	3%
Received a visa, but did not move	1%	0%
Moved abroad	23%	2%

Migration

Intergroup Contact

	Group Means		OLS w/ Baseline		<i>N</i>
	<i>Ctrl</i>	<i>Treat</i>	<i>ATE</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	
Contact Index	—	.481	+.487	.001***	248
Meal w/ Non-Christian	2.28	2.61	+.34	.031**	248
Meal w/ Non-Mizo	2.18	2.66	+.49	.002***	248
Meal w/ Non-Indian	1.49	2.13	+.64	.000***	247
Work w/ Non-Christian	2.79	2.99	+.20	.131	248
Work w/ Non-Mizo	2.72	2.98	+.27	.070*	248
Work w/ Non-Indian	1.59	2.26	+.67	.000***	247

* $p < .1$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Intergroup Tolerance

	Group Means		OLS w/ Baseline		<i>N</i>
	<i>Ctrl</i>	<i>Treat</i>	<i>ATE</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	
Tolerance Index	—	.371	+.354	.004***	248
OK to Marry Non-Mizo	.52	.65	+.13	.022**	248
View of Bangladeshis	2.95	3.08	+.13	.041**	248
View of Pakistanis	2.90	3.01	+.11	.072*	248
View of Middle Easterners	3.01	3.23	+.21	.002***	248
View of Europeans	3.14	3.25	+.11	.045**	248

* $p < .1$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Internationalism

	Group Means		OLS w/ Baseline		<i>N</i>
	<i>Ctrl</i>	<i>Treat</i>	<i>ATE</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	
Intl Cooperation Index	—	.231	+ .231	.038**	248
Trade Improves Lives	4.04	4.27	+ .23	.023**	248
Support Peace w/Pakistan	3.87	3.98	+ .12	.179	248
Migration Index	—	.125	+ .123	.161	248
Migration Improves Lives	3.39	3.47	+ .08	.278	248
Pro Bangladeshi Migration	2.66	2.78	+ .11	.198	248
Interest in Intl Politics	—	.212	+ .211	.066*	248

* $p < .1$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$

Support for National Integration

	Group Means		OLS w/ Baseline		<i>N</i>
	<i>Ctrl</i>	<i>Treat</i>	<i>ATE</i>	<i>P-Value</i>	
Nationalism Index	—	.093	+.092	.498	248
Identify more as Indian	2.26	2.17	-.09	.532	247
No Autonomy for Mizoram	2.93	3.04	+.11	.487	248
Mizoram In-Migration OK	1.92	2.09	+.16	.250	248

* $p < .1$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$