



## Research Article

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# Internal Return Migration in Rural of Vietnam: Reasons and Consequences

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### Abstracts

*Many researchers have tried to explain the motivation behind out and return migration. However, few bodies of literature focus on selection of destinations of out migration, motives to return according to marriage status of migrants before the return and gender perspective of employments on the return. By surveying 68 returnees and applying participatory rural appraisal, this study shows that the personal and household characteristics of returnees before the migration create an effect on destination selections. On the return, both single and married migrants are motivated by filial obligations to their parents. Single migrants' motive associates to the potential failures that can be a burden on their livings after getting married. Married migrants' motive to return results from living away from their children. This study also demonstrates that women play an important role in the development of agriculture. Additionally, agriculture acts as a buffer to the negative impacts of return migration.*

**Keywords:** migration, destination selection, return motivation, marriage status, gender employment

## 1. Introduction

Migration and development are a debated topic among many researchers as well as policy makers, especially in developing countries. Literature review shows a better understanding of out-migration. Nevertheless, migrants do want to return (Lapah & Tengeh, 2013). Return migration theories have been developed and are subject to various debates. For example, according to neoclassical approach, return migration is determined by the failures of migration experience and defined by individuals. Conversely, the approach of new economic migration labor demonstrates that success is a cause of return, based on migrant's household strategy. After archiving their targets, migrants were likely to return (Cassarino, 2004). Furthermore, to explain motives of return, failure or success approaches are limited because they focus on economic determinants and draw little attention to non economic ones at the areas of origin such as the social and political environment (Cassarino, 2004; Dustmann, 2003; Junge, Revilla Diez, & Schätzl, 2015; Niodomysl & Amcoff, 2011; Piotrowski & Tong, 2010; Wang & Fan, 2006)

Migration is understood as an in and out process. Attempts have been made to explain the motive of out migration, but few ones focus on return migration. Furthermore, existing literature

focuses more on international return migration than internal return migration (Hirvonen & Lilleør, 2015). It is often considered that returnees come back with skills and knowledge that positively affect the development of the origin areas (Démurger & Xu, 2011a; Marchetta, 2012; Wahba & Zenou, 2012). However, it is restrictive to only consider its international aspect. Indeed, recent studies have shown that the internal return migrations also have a positive impact on the development of areas of origin. (Démurger & Xu, 2011a; Wang & Fan, 2006).

Although the phenomenon of return migration is not as common as out migration, the more there is out migrants, the more there might be returnees (Hirvonen & Lilleør, 2015). Return migration can be found in both developed and developing countries. Among internal migrants, the proportion of return accounts for 26% in Finland (Kauhanen & Tervo, 2002), 23% in Germany (Hunt, 2004), 17% in Tanzania (Hirvonen & Lilleør, 2015), 26% in Thailand, 31% in Vietnam (Junge et al., 2015) and about 25-38% in China (Démurger & Xu, 2011b; Wang & Fan, 2006; Zhao, 2002)

Since 1975, after the reunion of Vietnam, the government enforced a policy to restructure population which led to inter-province migration. Then, from 1986, migration bloomed due to the reform of the economy, *Doi Moi* (UN, 2010). Many studies have been conducted on migration ever since (Bélanger & Linh, 2011; De Brauw, 2010; De Brauw & Harigaya, 2007; Duc Loc, Raabe, & Grote, 2015; Malamud & Wozniak, 2012; Resurreccion & Van Khanh, 2007), but few focused on return migration, especially in Vietnam. Furthermore, a huge number of rural labors have migrated to industrial zones which are considered to be places of unstable employment (Kusago & Tzannatos, 1998; Rondinelli, 1987). Moreover, according to Thanh (2016) most of migrant workers in industrial zones are not stably engaged on the zones. Thus, this paper is going to discuss how rural labors select their destinations on the first move out of the village; which are the different motives to return according to marriage status before the return; and how returnees generate employment on the return through the lens of gender.

## 2. Literature Reviews

### 2.1 Determinants of return

A review of literature showed that both economic and noneconomic factors determine the motives of return migration. Since it was mentioned by the neoclassical model of migration, return migration is determined by the failures of the migration experience (Cassarino, 2004). Before leaving the village, migrants expected that their status would improve. When migrants' efforts failed, they were more likely to return home (Farrell, Mahon, & McDonagh, 2012; Piotrowski & Tong, 2010). The failures of this approach considers that human capital selectivity is negative as a determinant of return. Migrants with lower educational level had a higher probability to return because they got lost in competition on the labor market (Hirvonen & Lilleør, 2015; Lindstrom & Massey, 1994; Piotrowski & Tong, 2010). Meanwhile, those who had access to trainings and to gain higher education were less likely to return, and keep migrating (Wang & Fan, 2006). However, compared to non-migrants, returnees do not fail because of their low educational level. Their educational level of non-migrants is lower (Constant & Massey, 2002). Even among returnees, there is a difference of levels of education. Regional returnees have a higher education local returnees (Newbold & Bell, 2001; Piotrowski & Tong, 2010)

According to the approach of new economic labor of migration, when migration is viewed as a strategy to diversify household's income, return migration is somehow determined by success. Farrell, Kairytė, Nienaber, McDonagh, and Mahon (2014) illustrated that migrants returned when they accumulated sufficient funding to elaborate a business or purchase an accommodation or when they gained enough experience. Furthermore, an empirical data analysed by Démurger and Xu (2011a) revealed that experiences gained during migration helped returnees to obtain self employments in entrepreneurial activities in the areas of origin. It found that migrants returned to rural Zimbabwe with more skills and experience than when they left the village. Therefore, returnees had advantage over locals in the search of employment (Dziva & Kusena, 2013).

Referring to noneconomic factors, return migration is considered as a process of re-embeddedness with social economics, social psychology and social network in the area of origin. It

was found that personal characteristics (age, gender) and cultural background (ethnic, religious) were shaped by the embeddedness (van Houte & Davids, 2008). In addition, family ties are sometimes more important than financial interaction as a pull to return. Initial attempt of migrant to return is desired by filial obligations (Binh, 2016). The fellow feeling of home communittee seems to pull migrants to return whenever they archive their goals at the destinations (Farrell et al., 2014). Hence, the more returnees have relatives in area of origin (children, spouse and mother), the more they return (Junge et al., 2015; Piotrowski & Tong, 2010). The forces to return increased especially when migrants gave birth at the destination or when a family member got a severe illness back at the areas of origin (Farrell et al., 2012). By contrast, migrants who got married at the destinations are less likely to return. Meanwhile, remittance does not cause an effect on the decision of return (Piotrowski & Tong, 2010). On the one hand, such social networks of returnees' family or friends actually support for their income generation or employment at the area of origin (Farrell et al., 2014; Gashi & Adnett, 2015; Niedomysl & Amcoff, 2011). On the other hand, origin or rural setting itself was considered as a value that attracted migrants to return. In this vein, returnees perceived ancestor worship, safety, closer relationships, community and a place for family to be more important than other motives to return (Farrell et al., 2012; Jellema, 2007). Last but not least, return is seen by migrants as a natural progression of family life. When migrants left their village, it was in the promise to return (Le Mare, Promphaking, & Riggs, 2015).

Migration is usually determined by low economic development and lack of employment at the area of origin. Return is based on the similarities between the area of origin and the destination. The rise of employment opportunities go along with a higher probability of return (Farrell et al., 2014; Niedomysl & Amcoff, 2011). Nevertheless, the growth of regional nonfarm employment affects both regional and local returnees in a certain context. For example, in Vietnam, the nonfarm opportunities at regional level attract more local returnees than regional ones. Close distance to township allows returnees to commute daily. Meanwhile, in Thailand, regional returnees are more likely to be pulled by the growth of regional nonfarm than the local returnees (Junge et al., 2015)

## 2.2 Determinants of consequences following return

Continuing to existing reviews, this part focuses on the living conditions of migrants after returning to the areas of origin. Return migration, in a body of literature up until now, demonstrated that the consequences of the return varied according to time and space. Studies in China showed that return migrants were more likely to be entrepreneurs by investing in productive assets (Zhao, 2002) and they engage more on self employments in comparison with non-migrants (Démurger & Xu, 2011a). By contrast, according to Hirvonen and Lilleør (2015) in Tanzania, returnees who engaged on agriculture activities saw an improvement of their livelihood in comparison with both migrants and nonmigrants. Interestingly, local returnees in Vietnam totally engage on nonfarm employment. Meanwhile, those in Thailand engage on both nonfarm and farm activities (Junge et al., 2015).

Referring to determinants that affect the return migrants' livelihood, there exists a controversy on the role of working experience for the occupational changes following the return. Démurger and Xu (2011a) revealed that the occupational changes after the return related to working experiences during migration spell rather than to occupations before migration. The longer migration spell returnees had, the more there was improvement of returnee's livelihood (de Haas, Fokkema, & Fihri, 2015). In many cases, significal entrepreneurial skills that archived by returnees to flourish their bussiness at area of origin (Black & Castaldo, 2009; Marchetta, 2012). However, studies of Farrell et al. (2014) and Le Mare et al. (2015) showed in some cases, migrants' experience in occupations at destinations have contributed a little for searching employments in the areas of origin, except learnings from different communications with people, different discovers with varied systems (Farrell et al., 2014). Furthermore, it is found in study of Pekkala (2003) that return migrants could not find an employment based on their working experiences. Similarly, stated by Farrell et al. (2014), the failure of using working experiences resulted from recession that even negatively effect on rural setting to generate nonfarm employments. In addition, returnees with low educational level or skills faced a constrain of good employment opportunities. Therefore, a more reasonable options were to take low skill works in local fatories, work as daily hired labors or to return agricultural works (Le Mare et al., 2015)

Another body of literature that puts arguments on the determinants of the consequences of return relates to individual characteristics. The probability of becoming an entrepreneur is affected by the age of returnees. Démurger and Xu (2011a) stated that new business at the home village appeared for middle age returnees, but it did not occur for younger and older ones (Newbold, 2001). The key determinants that created success of middle age returnees resulted from their necessary accumulations of financial and social capital during migration spell. Other ages were more averse to risks that prevented them to become entrepreneur (Démurger & Xu, 2011a). Complementing to this discussion, gender issue is also argued as a factor that shapes the consequences of returnees' employments. According to Le Mare et al. (2015) the employment following the return was confined by aspirations between men and women within home communities. Men returned as an the end of working period while women have just changed their work as taking care of their family. Therefore, going back to their family was more favorable than setting up a new business. The gender differentiation was confirmed by Amcoff and Nedomysl (2015) and Démurger and Xu (2011a), but reverted. It suggested that female returnees were less likely to generate self employment than male ones. Therefore, women gained less economic benefit for the living after the return.

Finally, the consequences following the return are determined by migrant's household characteristics. Démurger and Xu (2011a) found that in the households which usually appear with fewer dependent labors like old family members and female labors, the return migrants engaged more with nonfarm self employments. It could be a rational choice because these households were characterised as lack of agricultural land. In the same vein, when households were more available in agriculture land, the return migrants preferred less nonfarm employments than farm ones (Hirvonen & Lilleør, 2015). Social life after the return is mentioned by very few literatures, except Binh (2016) who found that in the households with familinist ideology, the return migrants have incited with some ethnical conflicts resulting from unbalanced supports between family and nonfamily members.

### 3. Method and Data Collection

This study has been conducted in Van Thang commune, Nong Cong district, Thanh Hoa province of Vietnam. According to the data provided in an interview with the head of the commune, Van Thang has a long tradition of agriculture production that shapes current livelihood of households. About 80% of total households in this commune currently relies on agriculture activities, except 5% of total households who reside along the national road 45 which generates its main income from non-farm activities. At the time the survey was being conducted, income per capital per year within the commune reached approximately 23 million VND (1 USD = 22.330 VND). Since the mid-1990s, residents in Van Thang started migrating out of the commune, unfortunately statistics on migration were out of concern by the authorities of commune.

Based on the pre-survey for the national election conducted by Van Thang's authorities in March 2016, we identified about 600 migrants who were working out of the commune and 162 returnees who already resided within the commune at least one year. Among that population, a sample has been drawn randomly according to the calculation as follow:

$$n = \frac{N}{(1+N*e^2)}$$

where  $n$  = sample size;  $N$  = total population (162 returnees);  $e$  = sample variance (assumed at 10%).

For these parameters,  $n$  was supposed to generate 62. However, after the survey was completed, 68 have been used for analysis.

The survey was conducted in August 2016 and used face to face interviews with a prepared questionnaire. Then, in early May 2017 group discussions with single and married returnees (marriage status before the return) have been applied to generate more qualitative data. The single group consisted of 7 interviewees and married group of 9. In group discussions, wealth ranking tools of participatory rural appraisal were used to generate information. All group discussions were conducted after 7 PM because working on field prevented gathering interviewees during day time.

This study used Independent T-test for continuous variables and N-1 Pearson Chi square test for binary variables. As recommended by Campbell (2007), the N-1 Pearson Chi square test is more appropriate to small sample sizes and two by two tables where the minimum expected number is less than 5.

#### 4. Findings and Discussions

##### 4.1 Out migration – characteristics and determinants of the destination selection

To analyze the characteristics of return and out migration, this study used descriptive statistic with independent t-test for continuous variables and N-1 Pearson's chi square for binary variables. It showed statistically significant differences between the two migrant groups: moving to industrial zones and other work places outside industrial zones. Those who selected industrial zones were more likely female than those who were outside industrial zones. The proportion of female migrants accounted for 75.7% of total in industrial zones and for 41.9% of total outside the zones. Moreover, industrial zone's migrants started to migrate more than 4 years earlier (20.5 years old) on average and put an end to it 5 years sooner (26.6 years old) than those who selected a work place outside industrial zones. That is why the migration spell of these migrants is significantly 3 years shorter (Table 1). These findings are quite similar to Junge et al. (2015) who sets the age of local returnees in Vietnam at 32.05 years old. Besides, this study found single labors migrated to industrial zones rather than other work places outside industrial zones. The survey shows that 86.5% of migrants in industrial zones were not married before migrating while 74.2% of migrants outside industrial zones were.

Regarding to the level of education, this study found those who obtained high school were more likely to migrate to industrial zones than those who finished secondary school. The proportion of high school migrant is 56.8% in industrial zones, while it is 32.3% outside the zones (Table 1). But more interestingly, the secondary school education was also found on the migrants in the industrial zones where is usually expected with skilled labors.

**Table 1:** Characteristic of returnees before the migration and determinants of the selection of destinations

	Inside Industrial zones (N=37)	Outside industrial zones (N=31)	Difference
Gender (0=Female; 1=Male)	0.243 (0.435)	0.581 (0.502)	-0.337**
Age of out migration (year)	20.649 (3.630)	24.968 (9.992)	-4.319**
Educational level (0 = secondary school; 1 = high school)	0.568 (0.502)	0.323 (0.475)	0.245*
Marriage status before migration (0=Single; 1=Got marriage)	0.135 (0.347)	0.258 (0.445)	-0.123**
Well off (0 = No; 1 = Yes)	0.081 (0.277)	0.000 (0.000)	0.081
Average (0 = No; 1 = Yes)	0.676 (0.475)	0.742 (0.445)	-0.062
Poor (0 = No; 1 = Yes)	0.243 (0.435)	0.258 (0.445)	-0.045
Number of dependent labors	2.486 (1.557)	1.742 (1.460)	0.745**
Living with parents before migration (0=No; 1=Yes)	0.541 (0.505)	0.290 (0.461)	0.251**
Migration spell (year)	5.946 (3.205)	8.903 (5.540)	-2.957**
Age of return (year)	26.649 (4.620)	33.710 (10.103)	-7.061**
Having relatives or friends (0=No; 1=Yes)	0.100 (0.000)	0.871 (0.341)	0.129**
Wage (on the first move)	2.787 (1.467)	3.500 (1.963)	0.714*

Notes: Standard deviations in parentheses. Significances of the means are based on a t-test and N-1 Chi square test  
\*  $p < 0.10$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.05$

Referring to the characteristics of the household before the migration, there is no difference between the two groups in term of household's economic status. However, the difference appears on the numbers of independent labor in migrant's households before the move. Households whose member worked in industrial zone had more independent labor than those which were outside the zones. Additionally, migrants who selected works in industrial zones were more likely to live with their parents than those who moved to work outside the zones. The proportion of migrants who lived with their parents is of 54.1% in industrial zones, but of 29% outside the zones (Table 1).

Turning to the direction of migration, this study argued that social networks played a determinant role in migrants' selection of destinations for their first move. Based on the relatives or friends who have been working at the destinations, rural labors formulated the direction of their move. The proportion of migrants who had friends and relatives at destinations reaches 87.1% outside the industrial zones and 100% inside the zones. According to in-depth interviews, those friends or relatives acted as evidence of reasonable employment and security life that convinced rural labors to choose a working place. This argument is in consistence with the study of Kuhn (2003) who illustrated that kinship or relationship within villages flourish new migrants at destination. However, (Nghị, Trjnh, Châu, & Luân, 2012), Long, Appleton, and Song (2017) addressed that such networks supported an informal job search. Migrants who relied on these networks could have less chance to find an employment compared to those who used other means. The role of social networks is more highlighted in the wage between inside and outside industrial zones. Although there was a statistically significant difference between the wages inside and outside industrial zones (Table 1), it was none of the concern of rural labors before migrating. Only an assumption appeared in many in-depth interviews : a higher income and more cash available at destinations than it was at home villages. The wages were motives of out migration rather than a choice of destination.

#### 4.2 Marriage status and motive to return

From a theoretical point of view, the consequence of the extension of a family might cause a failure that drives migrants to return. However, in the case of Van Thang, the research showed that both married and single migrants returned to the areas of origin. Thus, why do singles return would be an interesting question to analyse. According to the survey, the proportion of married migrants was 67.7% before the time to return, respectively 20.6% already prepared a plan to get married in the near future.

Regarding the motivation of return, group discussions suggested a variety of factors formulated from both actual hardships like low income, home sick and health problem of migrants, and potential ones like increased living cost of the life after marriage and birth giving. Especially, decision to return was more realized when migrants paid a concern to stayers like their children and parents (Table 2). However, there is a difference with migrant's marriage status before the return. Those who were single ranked "earning insufficient income for a future life" as the first important determinant that urged them to home, while those who were married prioritized "taking care of their children". Single migrants perceived that what they have earned far from home, about 4.6 million VND per month on average, was insufficient for their future when they planned to get married. Compared to the life at the destinations, returning brought them an advantage of living closer to their originated family where they would receive both home-feelings and economic supports. This practice follows an argument of Farrell et al. (2014) who argued that failure possibly pushed migrants to return, using a neoclassical theory of migration.

**Table 2:** Ranking of the reasons of return between single and married migrants

Reasons	Rank
Single	
Earning insufficient income for future life	1
Taking care of parents	2
Not satisfied by their working environment	3
Getting home sick	4
Getting an alternative nonfarm employment at home	5

Married	
Taking care of children	1
Taking care of parents	2
Not satisfied by their income	3
Giving birth for the first time	4
Getting health problems (of returnee)	5

Group discussion

\* *The less importance increases by number*

For married migrants, a common strategy was to leave their children to their parents or partners at home villages because using hired labors who were probably paid by remittance for agriculture works made stayers more available to take care a child. Furthermore, living conditions at the destinations was not enough for the whole family to sustain the living. They could not afford them to send their children to a nursery school at destination with an income, which was about 4.1 million VND per month on average. Thus, they returned when their children, who were living with grandparents, were old enough to go to primary school. According to interviews, children at this age required more care not only from their grandparents, but also from their parents. This finding is closer to studies of Piotrowski and Tong (2010) and Junge et al. (2015) who illustrated that the more migrants had children or spouse at their home villages, the more they returned. Previously, Dustmann (2003) also noted that the motive to return was shaped by migrants' concerns for their children. According to Cassarino (2004), such motive utilizes the transnationalism theory of migration which links return with family relationships.

More interestingly, both single and married migrants were driven home by norms formulated in the villages and concrete relationships with stayers. They all addressed a concern for their parents as the second important determinant of return (Table 2). As perceived by returnees, taking care of parents is a filial obligation shaped by culture, when those are getting older or get health problems, despite their satisfaction at destination. Otherwise, migrants would be condemned as immoral individuals by the whole home community. This rumour could last for the rest of their lives and even weight on the next generations. Furthermore, returning home to take care of parents is also meant to set an example for migrant's children on the value of family and the way to deal with their parents in the future. These findings reflect the work of Le Mare et al. (2015) and Binh (2016) when they suggest the return is part of the circle of family life and it is like a filial responsibility.

In consistence with Niedomysl and Amcoff (2011) who demonstrated that employment opportunities at the areas of origin were less likely to be an important factor which affected decisions to return, this study also found that single migrants ranked non-farm employment opportunities at the lowest on the ranking of importance of return motives. Additionally, those who were married did not even mention it as a return determinant during discussions (Table 2). Returnees consistently thought that in the worst case scenario, relying on agriculture works like what their parents have done can provide enough food for their family. In fact, except few singles who already found alternative nonfarm employments before returning, others reported that all of their search for employment took place after the return. As observed, several garment factories built in neighbor communes brought returnees more nonfarm employment opportunities than at the time they moved out of the village.

#### 4.3 *Agriculture land accessibility and gender perspective of employment generation after return*

Although agriculture land use rights can be bought and sold in Vietnam, returnees did not go for it in Van Thang. Instead, they accessed to agriculture land by two main ways. Returnees could receive it from their parents as an inheritance or rent it from other villagers. The proportions of returnees who inherited and rent agriculture land are respectively of 74.9% and 29.4%. Of those land renters, 5.9% belonged to families that had no more available farm land to share. In response to gender regarding to agriculture land access, the area that female returnees received from their parents was less than male returnees were. The survey showed that each female was given 2.0 *sao* (1 *sao* = 500 m<sup>2</sup>) on average, while each male was 2.9 *sao* on average. This originates from a perception that women, after getting marriage, have to follow her husband's family where they might access to

more agriculture land through a part of her husband received. In fact, this study found more male returnees than female ones had their land leased after receiving it from their parents. It is in consistence with an argument of McCaig and Pavcnik (2013) who revealed that due to the reform of economic development in Vietnam, more and more agriculture labors moved toward service or industrial sector, creating more availability of agriculture land. It did so in Van Thang. Thus, renting or even borrowing more agriculture land was easy to archive. The survey also found two cases with agriculture land up to 1ha managed by female returnees. Such area was about 10 times higher than the one allocated to a normal villager by local authorities.

**Table 3:** Gender difference of agriculture land accessibility and employment after the return

	Male (N=28)	Female (N=40)	Difference
Given agriculture land (1=Yes; 0=No)	0.857 (0.3564)	0.75 (0.4385)	0.107
Leasing agriculture land (1=Yes; 0=No)	0.214 (0.4179)	0.075 (0.2668)	0.139*
Renting agriculture land (1=Yes; 0=No)	0.286 (0.4600)	0.3 (0.4641)	-0.014
Given agriculture land area (sao)	2.868 (1.9724)	2.048 (1.9091)	0.82*
Leasing area (sao)	0.664 (1.4454)	0.175 (0.6360)	0.489*
Renting area (sao)	0.886 (1.6550)	1.675 (4.3524)	-0.789
<b>Early stage of return</b>			
No job	0.179 (0.3900)	0.175 (0.3848)	0.004
Agriculture	0.250 (0.4410)	0.600 (0.4961)	-0.35**
Non-agriculture	0.429 (0.5040)	0.2 (0.4051)	0.229**
Mixed Agriculture and non-agriculture	0.143 (0.3564)	0.025 (0.1581)	0.118*
<b>Current stage of return (more than one year after return)</b>			
No job	0.107 (0.3150)	0.025 (0.1581)	0.082
Agriculture	0.214 (0.4179)	0.45 (0.5038)	-0.236**
Non-agriculture	0.536 (0.5079)	0.450 (0.5038)	0.086
Mixed Agriculture and non-agriculture	0.143 (0.3564)	0.075 (0.2668)	0.068

Notes: Standard deviations in parentheses. Significances of the means are based on a t-test and N-1 Chi square test;

01 sao = 500m<sup>2</sup>

\*  $p < 0.10$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.05$

Considering the alternative employment generation, this study illustrated a statistically significant gender difference at the early stage of return. Whereas female returnees preferred agriculture works (60%), male returnees were more likely to select nonfarm employments or mixing up between farm and nonfarm employments (42.9% and 14.3%, respectively). In fact, working experiments of female returnees who mostly came back from industrial zone created less impact on nonfarm self-employment on the return, except few of them who have previously worked at garment factories was able to operate a tailor shop. Thus, working in agriculture is a rational choice when better employment opportunities are unsure. Reversely, male returnees who were mostly back from work places outside industrial zones gained more nonfarm employments because the works like construction (hired labor), motorbike or refrigeration reparation service that they have experienced before the return can be found recently in places around home villages.

At the time of the survey, around one year after the return, the gender difference remained within agriculture works. However, the proportion of females decreased by 45% of total respondents. By contrast, those females who worked on nonfarm employments increased from



20% to 45%. The possible reason for this result is that the establishment of some garment factories nearby provides more employment for female returnees who have worked at industrial zones before the return.

**Table 4:** The influence of gender on employment selection after the return

	No job	Agriculture	Non-agriculture	Mixed Agriculture and Non-agriculture
<b>Early stage of return</b>				
Female	1.025 (0.250)	4.500** (1.504)	0.333** (-1.099)	0.154 (-1.872)
Nagelkerke R Square	0.00	0.155	0.084	0.120
N	68	68	68	68
<b>Current stage of return (around one year after return)</b>				
Female	0.214 (-1.543)	3.000* (1.099)	0.709 (-0.344)	0.486 (-0.721)
Nagelkerke R Square	0.081	0.081	0.009	0.024
N	68	68	68	68

\*  $p < 0.10$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.05$

According to the regression result, the current probability for female returnees to work in agriculture at the early stage of return is statistically significant. It is 4.5 times higher than for male returnees (Table 4). Whereas, the probability for females to work on non-agriculture employment decreased by 66.7%. However, after the return, the probability for female returnees to work in agriculture tends to decrease by 3 fold compared to male returnees at the early stage of return.

Although there is a difference between genders, the participation of male and female returnees in agriculture work is not consistent with the work of Junge et al. (2015) who claimed that local returnees engage less in self-employment in Vietnam; and with the work of Démurger and Xu (2011a) who found that local returnees in China engage more in nonfarm employment by entrepreneurial activities. However, these findings are in similar line to Hirvonen and Lilleør (2015) who argued that return migrants in Tanzania worked more on their own farm. The availability of accessing agriculture land is a possible reason to drive returnees to agriculture employment. However, the study of Bezu and Holden (2014) in Ethiopia illustrated that the restriction of access to agriculture land drove rural labors away from agriculture livelihood.

## 5. Conclusion

By surveying 68 returnees with face to face questionnaire interviews and organizing group discussions with a wealth ranking tool of participatory rural appraisal methods, we come to three main conclusions:

- 1) Personal and household characteristic of returnees in Van Thang before the first migration create an effect on the selection of destinations . Regarding personal characteristics, returnees who are younger, female and have a high school education are likely to select working at industrial zones, whereas married returnees (prior to migration) are likely to select work outside industrial zones. Besides, the selection of destinations is shaped by social networks that returnees have already obtained at their home village before the migration. For household characteristics, returnees who share living with their family (being a child of their family) and whose family has more dependent labors are more likely to select work inside industrial zones.
- 2) Motives to return are both different and similar between single and married returnees. While the most important motive to return for single migrants results from potential failures related to the increased living costs of the future married life, that of married migrants associate with children left behind at the home village with stayers. However, they are all driven by a filial obligation to their parents, shaped by the norms or culture of the home community. Even if it was ranked at the lowest level of importance , non-farm employment opportunities around home villages are more of a motive to return for single migrants. Both

of those migrants imply farm employment is seen as a guarantee to generate income on the return because of agriculture land availability.

- 3) Women play an important role in agriculture development in Van Thang. Many of them engage on their own farm on the return. Due to agriculture land accessibility by heriting or renting from relatives and other villagers, they are able to extend their farm size, which probably contributes to agriculture land consolidation in Van Thang. Moreover, agriculture plays as a buffer for the negative impacts of the return while the returnees seek better non farm employments around their home villages. At the early stage of return, migrants, especially women, engage more on agriculture. Although this sector is often considered as low profit, it can diversify income of the returnees' households and guarantee their household's food security as well.

To draw a conclusion to this paper, research novelties were put forward: determinants of the migrants' selection of destinations and arguments of motives to return through the lens of marriage status, which is less mentioned in the body of migration literature. Furthermore, we add a gender perspective of employment on the return to the understanding of return migration research, where women are highlighted in the development of agriculture.

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