



European
University
Institute

ROBERT
SCHUMAN
CENTRE FOR
ADVANCED
STUDIES

CARIM INDIA – DEVELOPING A KNOWLEDGE BASE FOR POLICYMAKING ON INDIA-EU MIGRATION

Co-financed by the European Union

Migration from Punjab to Italy in the Dairy Sector: The Quiet Indian Revolution

Paramjit Sahai

Kathryn Dominique Lum

CARIM-India Research Report 2013/10



© 2013. All rights reserved.
No part of this paper may be distributed, quoted
or reproduced in any form without permission from
the CARIM-India Project.



CARIM-India
Developing a knowledge base for policymaking on India-EU migration

Thematic Report
Case Study
CARIM-India RR2013/10

Migration from Punjab to Italy in the Dairy Sector:
The Quiet Indian Revolution

Paramjit Sahai⁽¹⁾ and Kathryn Dominique Lum⁽²⁾

“CRRID”, The Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development, Chandigarh, India (1);
Research Assistant, Migration Policy Centre, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European
University Institute (2)

© 2013, European University Institute
Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies

This text may be downloaded only for personal research purposes. Any additional reproduction for other purposes, whether in hard copies or electronically, requires the consent of the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies.

Requests should be addressed to India-EU.Migration@eui.eu

If cited or quoted, reference should be made as follows:

Paramjit Sahai, Kathryn Dominique Lum, Migration from Punjab to Italy in the Dairy Sector: The Quiet Indian Revolution, CARIM-India RR 2013/10, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, San Domenico di Fiesole (FI): European University Institute, 2013.

THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THIS PUBLICATION CANNOT IN ANY CIRCUMSTANCES BE REGARDED AS THE OFFICIAL POSITION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

European University Institute
Badia Fiesolana
I – 50014 San Domenico di Fiesole (FI)
Italy

<http://www.eui.eu/RSCAS/Publications/>
<http://www.india-eu-migration.eu/publications/>
<http://cadmus.eui.eu>

CARIM-India – Developing a knowledge base for policymaking on India-EU migration

This project is co-financed by the European Union and carried out by the EUI in partnership with the Indian Council of Overseas Employment, (ICOE), the Indian Institute of Management Bangalore Association, (IIMB), and Maastricht University (Faculty of Law).

The proposed action is aimed at consolidating a constructive dialogue between the EU and India on migration covering all migration-related aspects. The objectives of the proposed action are aimed at:

- Assembling high-level Indian-EU expertise in major disciplines that deal with migration (demography, economics, law, sociology and politics) with a view to building up migration studies in India. This is an inherently international exercise in which experts will use standardised concepts and instruments that allow for aggregation and comparison. These experts will belong to all major disciplines that deal with migration, ranging from demography to law and from economics to sociology and political science.
- Providing the Government of India as well as the European Union, its Member States, the academia and civil society, with:
 1. Reliable, updated and comparative information on migration
 2. In-depth analyses on India-EU highly-skilled and circular migration, but also on low-skilled and irregular migration.
- Making research serve action by connecting experts with both policy-makers and the wider public through respectively policy-oriented research, training courses, and outreach programmes.

These three objectives will be pursued with a view to developing a knowledge base addressed to policy-makers and migration stakeholders in both the EU and India.

Results of the above activities are made available for public consultation through the website of the project: <http://www.india-eu-migration.eu/>

For more information:

CARIM-India

Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies (EUI)

Convento

Via delle Fontanelle 19

50014 San Domenico di Fiesole

Italy

Tel: +39 055 46 85 817

Fax: + 39 055 46 85 770

Email: India-EU.Migration@eui.eu

Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies

<http://www.eui.eu/RSCAS/>

Abstract

The preference for high-skilled migrants and the relative ambivalence of countries to develop adequate policies for low-skilled migrants is often times accepted without question. The lack of information on the socio-economic impact of these low-skilled migrants on sending and receiving countries thus skews their public image. To challenge this myth of low-preference for the “low-skilled” migrant worker, the paper explores a case study of Indian Punjabi migrants in the Italian dairy industry to show that relevance of these so-called “low-skilled” migrant workers in producing “high-quality” Italian cheese. This paper investigates the origins of the current Indian dominance of the dairy sector in Italy and offers insights into both employee and employer perspectives on this vital industry for the Italian economy and consumer. The paper tries to create a mental picture of the life of the Indian dairy worker in Italy, their motivations, aspirations and conditions of work and shows how and why their work is valued by their Italian employers. The paper includes findings of surveys conducted by both authors to the paper which helps give a balanced view of the impact of this migration on both India and Italy. The paper concludes by clarifying how the Punjabi migrant worker does not “steal European jobs” and gives recommendations for greater efforts towards their adequate integration into Italian society.

Introduction

The invitation by countries across the world to the best and the brightest starkly contrasts with the immigration opportunities for low-skilled workers to industrialised countries. While the immigration of skilled workers is addressed in the EU acquis¹, there is no harmonized EU policy regarding unskilled and low-skilled workers (BEPA, 2010: 8). Furthermore, the lack of information about the socio-economic impact of low-skilled migration on both the host and sending countries skews the public image of migrants (Lowell and Kemper, 2004: 117). Uncertain of whether to integrate or return migrants in the low-skilled category, governments have often pursued ambivalent policies at the cost of immigrants, receiving and sending countries. Under these circumstances, it is therefore interesting to study an example of long-term low-skilled migration from India to Italy in the dairy sector.

A paper based on the Punjab-Italy migration corridor is relevant for a number of reasons: Italy² for its varied immigrant population and the Punjab for its strong tradition of migration, primarily in the low-skilled category. The bulk of migration from India is low-skilled migration from a few select states. Unlike traditional Indian skilled migration to the United Kingdom, a tenfold increase in Indian low-skilled migration has been recorded since 1992 in Italy (Fargues et al, 2009). Arthur Helweg (1996) notes, “Punjabis have a tradition of being mobile and adaptable...They move to where opportunity is present...Thus Punjabis are found all over India and the world...not bound by the strict concepts of maintaining purity, as in the case of other parts of South Asia.” A major section of the Punjabis migrate on the basis of family relations. A noticeable number of migrants from Punjab move owing to marriage. There are some who migrate to the Gulf countries as workers, though these are temporary forms of migration given the prevalent immigration regime in those countries. Emigration has started taking place from all regions of Punjab, but Doaba still continues to lead in sending the largest number of emigrants (Judge, 2012: 45).

The entry of non-EU citizens for employment in Italy is governed by quotas.³ Annual “flow decrees” establish labour quotas periodically, on the basis of labour market demands and analysis (EMN 2012: 1). These include annual allocations for seasonal and non-seasonal workers.⁴ Seasonal quotas have been kept at 80,000 for the past few years.⁵ There is significant immigration into Italy from Asian countries (Table 1). In the case of India, there is a steady increase of annual inflows over

¹ See for example, the Council Directive 2009/50/EC of 25 May 2009 on the conditions for entry of and residence of third-country nationals for the purpose of highly qualified employment.

² Italy emerged as a “leading immigration destination” among European OECD countries in 2009, with a stock of 4.24 million foreign residents, registering an increase of 9% over the previous year. The number of non-EU residents, touched 3 million, while EU residents were 1.24 million. This included a new enrolment of 400700 foreigners, with a further increase of 376,000 projected for 2010. The number of employment visa touched 186,300, while that for family reunion was 107,000. Among the non-EU foreigners, resident in Italy in 2009, the Albanians topped at 467,000 and were closely followed by Moroccans at 432,000. Among the EU citizens, Romanians topped with a population of 888,000 persons (SOPEMI, 2011).

³ The efficacy of the quota system in Italy is questionable given the large number of migrants “regularized” over the years, over and beyond the quota limits set.

⁴ Non-seasonal quotas dropped from 170 000 to 150 000 in 2008 (largely limited to domestic workers). In 2009, the quota was restricted to 10 000 places for training and apprenticeships. A quota was set in December 2010 to 98 000 entries, with sub-quotas by nationality and occupation. About 392 000 applications were filed, of which 65% were for domestic work and 9% for long-term care. The distribution of quotas at the provincial level implies that the total may not be used despite overall high demand (20% of the 2008 quota was reallocated in May 2009). See OECD Country Notes on Recent Changes in Migration Movements and Policies in Italy, available at <http://www.oecd.org/migration/48351326.pdf>

⁵ In 2010, India obtained a quota limit of 1,800 migrants to Italy. This was in recognition of “an enhanced and better structural bilateral collaboration between the two countries in the field of legal migration”. Interaction of one of the authors with official at Embassy of Italy, New Delhi.

the years, from 7000 in the year 2000 to 15,000 in 2008. In fact, India emerged as the largest supplier of workers in 2008 from South Asia, followed by Bangladesh (11,000) (Table 2).

Table 1**ITALY. International migration: first 15 countries of citizenship, destination and origin (2010)**

Emigration				Immigration			
Country of citizenship		Country of destination		Country of citizenship		Country of origin	
Italy	45.954	Germany	7.650	Romania	92.116	Romania	92.591
Romania	7.488	Romania	7.454	Italy	34.357	Ukraine	30.432
Morocco	2.179	United Kingdom	6.846	Ukraine	30.416	Morocco	30.198
China	1.517	Switzerland	5.895	Morocco	29.960	Moldova	27.038
Albania	1.495	France	5.583	Moldova	26.591	China	23.179
Poland	1.429	Spain	4.021	China	22.866	Albania	22.749
Ukraine	1.211	USA	3.651	Albania	22.591	India	15.292
Germany	1.142	Brazil	2.597	India	15.246	Peru	12.455
Bangladesh	1.039	Morocco	2.015	Peru	12.166	Pakistan	10.894
India	1.011	China	1.982	Pakistan	10.816	Philippines	10.482
Moldova	822	Belgium	1.621	Philippines	10.745	Brazil	10.058
France	781	Poland	1.588	Bangladesh	9.688	Bangladesh	9.679
Brazil	670	Albania	1.529	Egypt	9.345	Egypt	9.625
United Kingdom	608	Ukraine	1.231	Senegal	8.851	Senegal	8.908
Pakistan	584	Argentina	1.078	Brazil	8.566	Germany	8.401
Total	78.771	Total	78.771	Total	458.856	Total	458.856

NB Third countries shown as bold

Source: EMN Italy. Elaboration of Eurostat data (<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>)

Table 2. Inflows of foreign population by nationality into Italy (in thousands)

Country	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
India	7.0	4.8	7.2	...	5.7	4.2	4.8	11.0	15.0	...
Bangladesh	6.6	...	4.7	...	3.5	2.5	2.9	9.8	11.8	...
Philippines	12.2	4.6	10.4	...	5.2	3.0	2.2	7.4	10.5	...
Sri Lanka	6.0	4.3	7.6	...	3.0	2.4	2.3	1.3	3.8	6.2
Pakistan	6.0	...	5.2	...	3.7	2.3	1.3	3.8	5.9	6.1
Total	271.5	232.8	388.1	...	318.3	206.8	181.5	252.4	296.2	...

Source: SOPEMI, 2011

The resident Indian population in Italy, as on January 1, 2011 was 121,036. Indians occupied the eighth position among the migrant population in Italy. Indians formed 2.7% of the total foreign population. Two decades ago, Indian migration to Italy was a largely unknown phenomenon, and Italy was not part of the 'mental map' of economic migrants from the Punjab region of India. Located in the North-west of India, sharing a border with Pakistan, the state of Punjab is noted for its long tradition of migration beginning with the British Empire, along with a vibrant 'migration culture' that has permeated the psyche of a large part of its population. A majority Sikh state (approximately 60% of its residents profess the Sikh faith), it is known as the bread basket of India and has traditionally been one of the most prosperous Indian states, although in recent years it has lost this status and has been experiencing economic decline due to a lack of investment in industry. The most favoured migration destinations on the part of Punjabis are English-speaking nations, the number one country being the US, although with increasingly restrictive and selective migration policies being adopted by these

nations, a growing number of Punjabis saw their migration dreams being thwarted. This has led to a diversification of migration destinations beyond the English-speaking/Commonwealth world, a process that is ongoing and is now seeing Punjabis even enter Eastern Europe. In 2012, Italy is now an established migration destination for Punjabis, the Italian flag sometimes graces the American, British and Canadian flags in advertisements for work abroad in the Punjab, and Italy boasts the second largest Indian population in Europe- a fact that is little known in Italy.

Beginning in the 1990's, Punjabis started to find work in the cow milking sheds of small dairy farms dispersed across Northern Italy. Two decades later, this work has become something of a Punjabi niche market, with 90% of the workers in this sector estimated to be Indian (Deutsche Welle: 2008). According to 2008 data from Istat, the Italian Institute of Statistics, 42.9% of Indians work in the agricultural sector in the Lombardy region, compared to only 2.8% of the total foreign population, showing a marked tendency for Indians to concentrate in agriculture, particularly in Northern Italy. Thus, unbeknownst to most Italians, much of the milk they drink and cheese they consume (particularly *grana padano*) has its origins in cows milked by Indians, who continue to remain relatively low-profile compared to other immigrant groups.

This paper will investigate the origins of the current Indian dominance of the dairy sector and offer insights into both employee and employer perspectives on this vital industry for the Italian economy and consumer. It will begin with a brief review of Punjabi aspirations to migrate, the existing literature on Indian dairy workers, followed by a section on employer perspectives on the Indian presence in this sector, a section on the working/living conditions faced by Indian cow milkers and their families and also a brief section on the prospects for collaboration in the dairy industry between the two countries. The paper will also briefly mention the perspective of returnees from Italy and their family members. An analysis of the local Italian press where the coverage of Indian cow hands is highest will be provided in order to detect general trends in how Italian society perceives Indian residents and their children in the north of Italy. Finally, this paper will conclude by offering some policy recommendations especially geared towards the second generation of Indian residents in Italy.

Punjabi Aspiration and Migration to Europe

Indians started moving into Italy during 1960s, consequent to establishment of economic links between India and Italy, with Italian auto-industry (Fiat, Lambretta, Vespa) making its appearance in India. The initial entry of Indians to Italy was as theology students in early 1960s. Till 1962, the Indian community in Italy had minimal presence; mainly comprising businessmen, Catholic students and priests from South India. A "significant Indian immigration to Italy is a recent phenomenon, which started from 1990 onwards".⁶ Currently, there are 120,000 legally resident Indians, 70% of which are from the State of Punjab, most of them employed in the agriculture, dairy and leather industry. The number of professionals would be "less than 1%" and Indians owning business is quite low.⁷ Italy also "kept opening its doors" for new immigrants from time to time, granting them residence/work permits⁸ and were encouraged to apply for Italian nationality. There is now a decline in the number of fresh Indian immigrant, owing to the financial crisis in 2008.

There are three phases of Indian migration to Italy, which have been mainly from Punjab. These may be summarised as:⁹

⁶ Interaction of author based in Punjab with Secretary General, Indian Chamber of Commerce in Italy.

⁷ Interaction of author based in Punjab with Consul General, Milan.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Briefing by Senior Official, Ministry of External Affairs, India.

First Phase (1957-1984): When leather and textile workers were allowed. They numbered around 12,000 till 1984.

The Second Phase (1985-90): This was the period, when a number of Indians (mostly Punjabis) took advantage of the asylum facilities, available in Germany, UK, Italy and Spain. Italy is reported to have admitted 32,000 asylum seekers during the period 1985-90. Later, Indians also managed to get refugee status and another 11,000 were admitted during the period 1990-92.

The Third Phase (1992 – the present): Indians entered Italy either directly or indirectly, as agricultural workers.

Italy does not figure among the top destinations of choice for a prospective Punjabi migrant. Few surveys done in Punjab reflect the aspirations of the people to migrate, their understanding of challenges and preferred modes and destinations. One such survey done by the author at the Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development (CRRID) deserves a brief mention at this point. The CRRID conducted a field survey during December 2010 – February 2011, in conjunction with the IOM Awareness Campaign on Safe and Legal Migration. The survey focused on migration related issues. The survey was restricted to students in 15 educational and technical institutes in the Jalandhar District. A total of 1210 out of 1600 respondents answered the questions, which mainly dealt with all the facets of the migratory process.

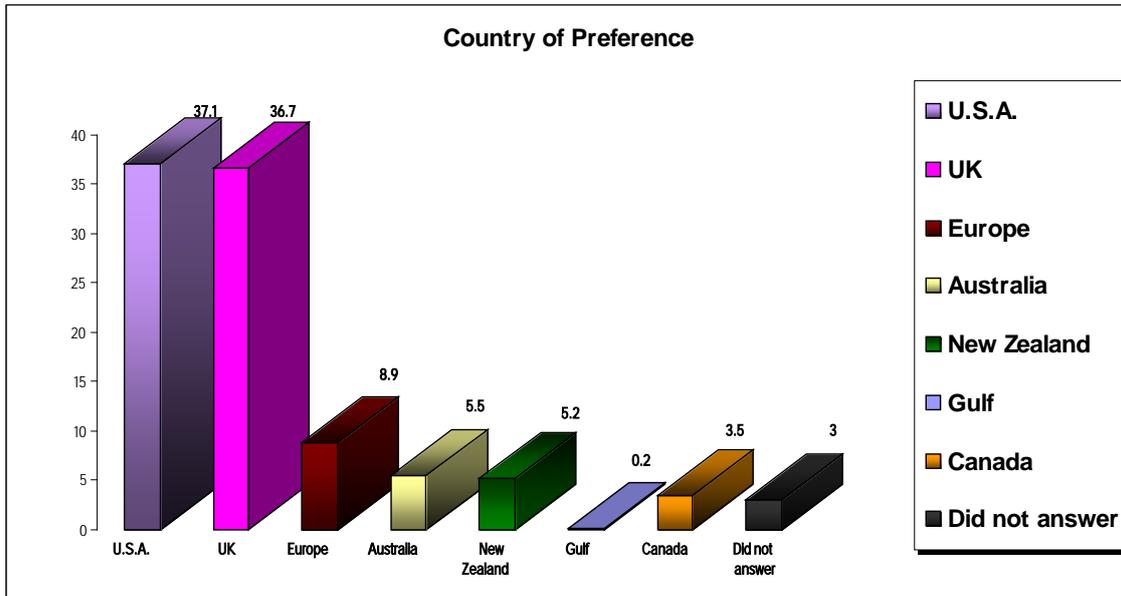
The respondents were targeted as they were likely to be future migrants. The respondents represented a good mix, based on gender, caste and religion. There was a preponderance of female respondents (58.3%) as compared to male respondents (41.7%), as a number of institutes were women colleges.¹⁰ Here data relevant for this study is presented.¹¹ 84.4% of the respondents indicated their inclination to go abroad. Out of these, 38.2% wanted to go for studies abroad, while 34.7% wanted go for work abroad. This confirmed the commonly held perception that many Punjabis want to go abroad.

Among the preferred destinations, USA topped the destination with (37.1%) respondents, which was closely followed by the United Kingdom (36.7%). These two destinations were the choice for around two-thirds of the respondents, which is also true of the actual pattern of migration from Punjab. Only 8.9% respondents indicated preference for continental Europe, followed by Australia (5.5%), New Zealand (5.2%) and Canada (3.5%). Preference for Australia and New Zealand was because of easier migration procedures (Figure 1).

¹⁰ The caste-mix was representative of the pattern in the Punjab State, with break-up, such as: General Category (59.1%), Scheduled Castes/ Scheduled Tribes (22.1%) and other Backward Classes (18.8%). The respondents largely fell in the unmarried category (99.7%). Religion-wise break-up was predominantly Sikhs, given the rural base of the population, with break-up, such as Sikhs (66.9%), Hindus (32.1%), Christians (0.7%) and Muslims (0.3%). The respondents belonged to the educated class, with all having passed the 10th class, with break-up like, Matriculates (40.06%), Plus Two (40.07%), Graduates (16.1%) and Postgraduates (2.6%).

¹¹ A detailed analysis of the survey results are published in a paper Sahai & Chand, in *Man and Development*, March Issue, 2012.

Figure 1



Source: Author's representation based on CRRID survey, 2010-11

Among European countries, only 2.1% respondents indicated preference for Italy, which was marginally lower than for Spain (2.4%) and France (2.3%). The results of the survey tally with the overall low preference for Europe, among the Punjabis, for whom it still remains a transit for their final destination, be it the USA or UK. For a majority of persons (54.5%), work abroad was the pull factor. Similarly, family and friends abroad were also the pull factor for 89.8% of the respondents, as they already had family members/friends settled abroad. There was a high level of connectivity with them, as 82.2% of the respondents' maintained contact with them. They were, thus, naturally lured to shores abroad, and 69.4% of respondents received encouragement for going abroad.

Much of the support for migration abroad comes from the family as was found in the course of the survey (Figure 2) and corroborated by the field study undertaken in Italy on dairy workers from Punjab in this paper. A vast majority of these respondents (66.4 %) imagined using family savings for the purpose of migration abroad, with the next largest segment (18.3 %) hoping to use bank loans to fund their travel plans (Figure 3).

Figure 2

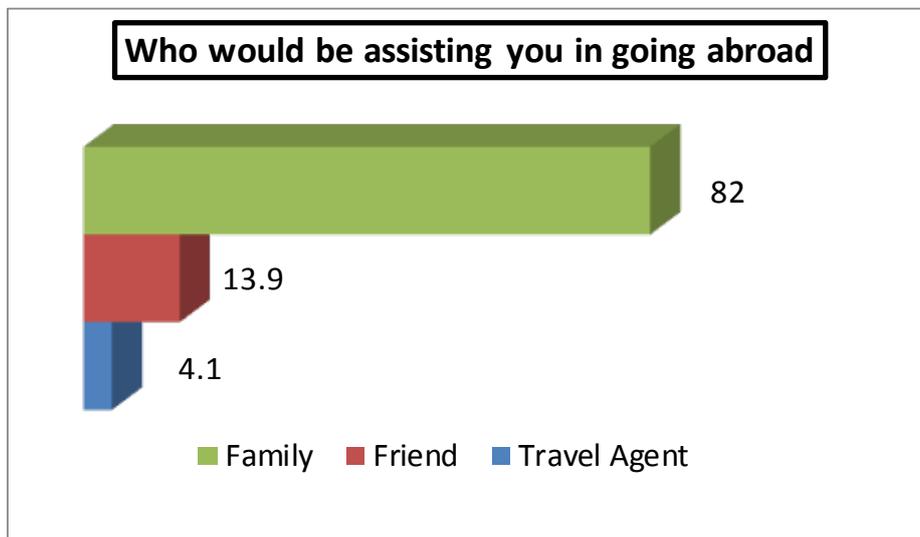
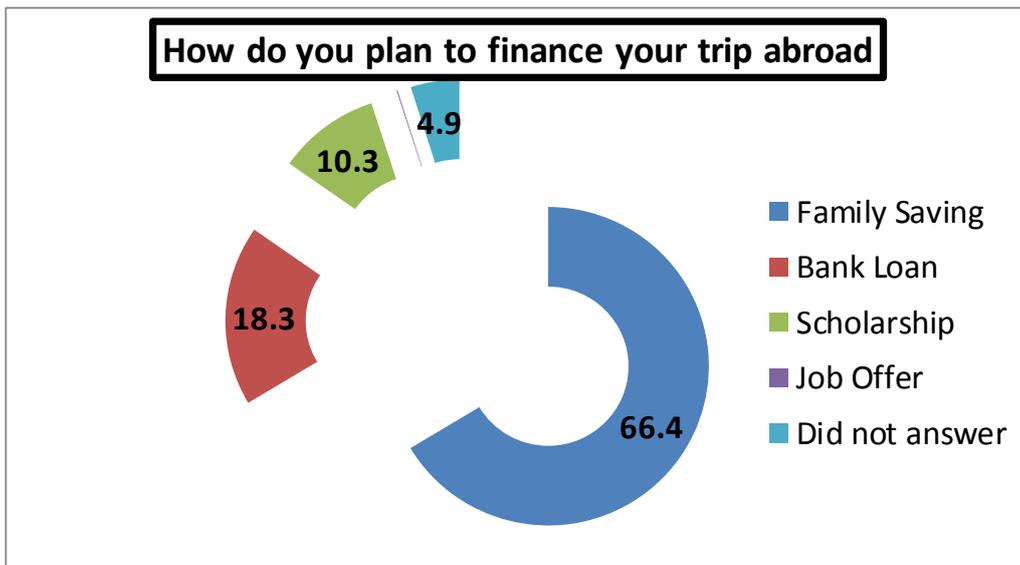


Figure 3



Background

The literature to date on the Indian presence in the dairy industry has been sparse, reflecting the relatively recent nature of Indian concentration in this sector. A notable exception is the research report published in 2002 “*Turbani che non turbano: Ricerca sociologica sugli immigrati indiani nel cremonese*” (Turbans that don’t disturb: Sociological research on Indian immigrants in the province of Cremona), that provides an in-depth look into the lives of Indian immigrants in this province, including their insertion into the local economy and their work strategies. The authors describe how in the region of Lombardia, the agricultural sector is distinguished, unlike in other parts of Italy, by the need for a specialised, stable and “regular” (i.e. legally documented) workforce that is highly available and productive, in order to be able to adapt themselves to the demanding rhythms of a dairy farm (Gardani et al. 2002: 34). The authors of “*Turbanti che non turbano*” found that all of the Indian workers that they interviewed had “regular” (official) work contracts, and that the rate of turn-over was low, implying that Indians were working long-term on dairy farms and not jumping from farm to farm. Two different economic insertion strategies were outlined: an informal one whereby one learns about job opportunities on dairy farms from fellow countrymen; and a ‘clientilist’ one in which an Indian relies on a relative/friend to sponsor him to come to Italy (Gardani et al. 2002: 36). The two main results to emerge from their interviews reveal that Punjabis view their current work in the *stalle* (cow sheds) as temporary, and as a means to an end to achieve capital accumulation for other projects, such as setting up their own businesses. Several expressed negative views about their work, and all affirmed that they would never do this sort of work in India (Gardani et al. 2002: 36.37). The second piece of work specifically focused on Indian cow milkers is Compiani and Quassoli’s “The Milky Way to labour market insertion: the Sikh ‘community’ in Lombardy”, which appeared in a volume (2005) dedicated to Asian migrants in various European labour markets. Although the authors problematically use the term Sikh to identify all people coming from the Punjab, they present a detailed labour market analysis of Indian involvement in the dairy industry. Compiani and Quassoli outline three main patterns of immigrant labour market integration in Italy: metropolitan, whereby mainly female immigrants concentrate in low-skilled service jobs in urban areas such as housekeeping and elderly care; industrial, where mainly male immigrants work in small and medium-sized factories; and seasonal, in which both male and female immigrants work as temporary labourers in the fields of agriculture and tourism (Compiani & Quassoli 2005: 139-141). They argue that Indian migration presents unique characteristics and has not conformed to any of these labour insertion models. They

distinguish between two different migratory projects followed by ‘Sikhs’: one based on capital accumulation, focused on returning to India, and a long-term migratory project, influenced in particular by family reunification and the school-going age of their children. The authors maintain that it is the second path that is more prevalent in Italy, and assert that increasingly Indians prefer to invest their savings in Italy rather than their home country (Compiani & Quassoli 2005: 146-147). Echoing the previous article reviewed, Compiani and Quassoli stress country ties, which they term “origins network” (in essence one’s clan), in facilitating both economic and social integration in Italy. Solidarity among Indians is high, and includes hosting new arrivals, helping them find a job, and assisting them with bureaucratic procedures (Compiani & Quassoli 2005: 149). The authors state that “caste hierarchies play a fundamental role in the life of Indian immigrants in the province of Cremona”, but found that their informants downplayed its importance in work and social contexts (Compiani & Quassoli 2005: 148). With regards to working conditions, the authors mention that the free accommodation provided on-site is often “in a dubious hygienic state”, that the wages are good, and that overtime pay is usually paid under the table (Compiani & Quassoli 2005: 151-152). The authors take great care to refute the popular notion that Indians are naturally predisposed to this sort of work due to their worship of cows. They underline the fact that most Indians aspire to entrepreneurship and are not satisfied with their current work.

Both articles explain the background of the Italian exodus from the cow milking industry, although Gardani et al. provide a more detailed analysis of this process. According to Gardani et al. the mechanisation of the industry beginning in the 1950’s led to a sharp reduction in the number of jobs available, forcing Italian youth to look for work elsewhere (Gardani et al. 2002: 30). Secondly, the economic boom that Italy experienced in the post-war period led to new aspirations that working in the *cascine* (dairy farms) could not fulfil. In particular, the houses on the *cascine* were increasingly abandoned in favour of more modern urban housing (Gardani et al. 2002: 30). Finally, the low social status associated with cow milking was an additional incentive to look for other work, even when the salary was raised and working conditions improved considerably with mechanisation. Gardani et al. make the interesting point that male *bergamini* (cow milkers) could not find local women willing to marry them and had to resort to finding marriage partners from other Italian regions (Gardani et al. 2002: 31). The socioeconomic context leading to the Italian exodus from cow milking provides the background necessary to understand how Indians from the Punjab have been able to exploit an important gap in the market.

Methodology

The results of this study are based on both secondary research and fieldwork carried out in various locations across Punjab and Northern Italy over a period of ten days by the authors in their respective locations. An anthropological methodology was employed, in which both participant observation on dairy farms and structured interviews using an interview guide (attached in the appendix) were used as research tools. The language of the interviews carried out varied: for employers, union representatives and those in local government, Italian was used; for Indian interviewees, most interviews were conducted in Punjabi, in the presence of an informal translator (either a friend or another family member). A total of twenty-eight interviews were carried out. The names used in the interview quotes below are all pseudonyms. The paper also includes inputs from interviews with government and mission representatives at both the Indian and Italian end and few field interviews conducted in districts in the Punjab--Hoshiarpur, Nawashahr and Rupanagar. The paper also provides inputs from interactions with a number of Indian returnees from Italy and their family members undertaken by one of the authors based in the Punjab, during field visit to the districts of Hoshiarpur, Nawashahr and Rupanagar.

Employer Perspectives

Interviews with the owners of dairy farms provide many of the keys to understanding how Indians have come to dominate the cow-milking sector. All the employers in our sample had only Indian employees, which depending on the size of the dairy farm ranged from one to seven employees, with an average of two. This reflects the fact that most dairy farms are small and medium-sized businesses in Northern Italy. In response to a question by the author based in Italy about how and why they hired their first Indian cowhand, several mentioned that their previous Italian workers had retired and that they had found it difficult to find an Italian replacement. Pappagardo expressed the sentiment of many employers when he stated:

“We find it difficult to find Italian staff. Thank goodness that we have them (the Indians)!”

It appears that as their long-standing Italian workers went into retirement, they tapped into local networks to find replacements; Indian workers were the ones available and recommended by other farm owners to fill these jobs. Their hard-working nature then solidified their presence in the industry. However, the question remains as to why Indians, and not some other immigrant group, came to dominate the industry. Egyptians are also active as cow milkers, although their presence is very much that of a minority compared to Indians (no statistics are available on the number of Egyptians working in this sector). Once again, employer perspectives can help explain what has become an Indian economic niche. When questioned, employers repeatedly stated their preference for Indians due to concerns that Egyptian workers are more “conflictual” and complain about their working conditions. Indians are seen as better workers because they do not challenge their employers:

“It is not that we prefer Indians per se, I started by coincidence with an Indian. They say that the Egyptians and the Arabs are more conflict prone, they file lawsuits against you. Better the Indians, they work less but they are more peaceful” (Benetton)

“They say that the Egyptians are people who create trouble, who fight. I learned from a colleague that hiring Egyptians is a big mistake” (Algeri)

“We prefer Indians because they are *tranquilli* (quiet). The Indian is quieter than the Egyptian or the Moroccan. I have heard from colleagues who have hired Egyptians- some are happy but many complain” (Pasquale)

Despite the large population of Romanians in Italy, not one of the employers interviewed had worked with a Romanian or knew of an employer who had hired one. It appears that Romanians have not even attempted to enter the dairy industry, but rather have gravitated towards factory work in Northern Italy. The above comments reveal the extent to which ‘ethnic reputations’ influence the hiring process and how employers informally consult one another about their experiences with workers from different ethnic/national origins. The attraction of hiring an Indian therefore lies to a great extent in his reputation for being a “quiet” person who will not be too assertive about his rights as a worker.

The goal of achieving a harmonious and stable workforce is a third factor that has contributed to Indian dominance in the dairy sector. Interviews with employers in Italy show that they rely on their pre-existing Indian employees when they seek to hire another worker. This has meant that once an employer hires one Indian cowhand, the entire workforce of the dairy farm is likely to be Indian, frequently composed of various relatives of the initial Indian worker hired. The following example of an employer who has seven Indian workers is illustrative:

“I hired my first Indian ten years ago when my Italian milker retired. I found him via a colleague. When I needed more, he found them- he brought over his brother, cousins, uncle, all relatives. We are happy with them. I prefer that they all come from the same ethnic group, to avoid arguments. All my workers get along” (Algeri)

Other employers, while stating that they preferred to hire Indians, mentioned that they had experienced problems in the past with in-fighting among their Indian employees, leading one to conclude “that the internal hierarchy among them should be well defined” in order to avoid conflict. Another asserted that while he prefers that his workers come from the same (Indian) group “I do not want a clan, which could become difficult to manage, only a small group of relatives”.

The general perception of their Indian employees is positive: all employers interviewed stressed that overall they were satisfied with their Indian workers, whom they considered “punctual”, “quiet”, and “not creating problems”. Contrary to popular perception, which associates Indians with cows and assumes their ‘natural’ aptitude for working with them, employers were well aware that most of their workers had had no prior experience in India as cow milkers. This lack of experience is not considered problematic, because Indians are perceived to be workers who are committed and patient. One employer declared: “one of my workers, before coming here he had never even seen a cow. He knew nothing. He was an engine driver before and now he does everything. It is the commitment (*l'impegno*) that matters- they are more committed”. Although their knowledge of the Indian culture, some demonstrated awareness that “they have their own religion and their own Mass on Sundays” (all employers used the term ‘Church’ to refer to the Sikh place of worship known as a *gurdwara*). The employer-employee relationship was described as for the most part cordial. However, their comments also reveal that the working relationship is not without its challenges, and as with employers in other sectors, what is most important to them is productivity.

Below are the assessments of some employers regarding their Indian employees:

“Not all are good cow milkers- just like not all Italians are good cow milkers. They are people who need to be supervised, but on the whole I am satisfied. They respect the timetable and are punctual. They aren't very clean like the Italians- they throw everything on the ground. But they don't cause trouble. They are not there for the passion, but for the money. Their passion comes from the economic factor (the salary). Eventually they will all return to India” (Algeri)

“I am quite satisfied. They are very good workers when they start. However slowly they become less good. They need to be supervised. They are quite accurate, but not very fast” (Benetton) (this employer has changed his Indian workers four times, always substituted by other Indians).

“They are punctual, they have to be, otherwise they will not have a job. It seems that they have a good attitude towards work...I have explained well the rules so I have not had any problems. They have to be supervised, like all workers. It is not an ethnic problem (the supervision), but universal” (Napolitano)

“With these Indians I get along well. They are polite, timid people” (Pasquale)

The main problems identified by Italian employers vis-à-vis their Indian workers were linguistic barriers (lack of Italian language skills when some workers are initially hired), which are soon overcome as the worker learns the language, and alcohol abuse, which several employers mentioned as problematic particularly among young men. This is why dairy employers often prefer to hire married men, who are perceived as more responsible and reliable workers:

“They have the tendency to drink too much. They drink liquor, whisky not wine with meals as we do...In my experience, you either have to find them young and train them well or hire them married with a family¹². The married ones behave better and drink less” (Mazzetti)

The problem with alcohol was also contextualised however, with one employer explaining that he felt that alcohol abuse was due to their tiring working conditions and limited social life.

¹² Italian government policy permits all long-term residence permit holders, as well as all foreigners who have a residence permit for at least one year (independent of the type of residence permit), to apply for family reunification. Foreigners can apply to sponsor their spouse, who must be at least 18 years of age, dependent children under the age of 18, and parents over the age of 65 who do not have other children in their country of origin who can take care of them.

Apart from these two problems, the only other challenge highlighted by employers was disputes between employees, which appear to be swiftly dealt with. One dairy farm owner succinctly stated: “I told them to resolve their dispute or leave”. Employers continually stressed how they had not encountered major difficulties with their Indian workforce: “*fanno la loro vita*” (they lead their own lives) was a common refrain, implying that they do their job and then live quietly, with many commenting that “their women are always at home”.

The advantages of hiring an Indian are therefore multiple. The leading benefit is that finding further employees is no longer onerous; Italian employers rely on their Indian employees to recommend another person. It is clear that they prefer to use informal networks when hiring, rather than formal processes, for this is not only quicker and cheaper, but also ensures that their new worker will likely be obedient and hard-working, having usually been recruited by a relative. The more experienced employee can furthermore help in training the new worker and ‘show him the ropes’. The concern to find workers who are reliable and “trouble free” encourages the practice of hiring relatives/friends of their existing workers, who are considered more trustworthy and controllable than non-recommended individuals. An additional, although largely invisible benefit is the unpaid labour carried out by the wives of Indian workers, who provide the hot food and tea when their husbands return home from work, and before they start their shifts (including at night and in the early morning), without complaining. A benefit that was explicitly highlighted by one employer, who compared their attitude to that of Italian women: “the wives don’t say anything, not like Italian women who complain!”). The overwhelming Indian majority in the dairy sector can thus be explained by Punjabi chain migration stimulated by Italian employers’ seeking a hard-working and acquiescent workforce. Having established a foothold in a sector abandoned by Italians, Punjabis have skilfully made use of their family-based networks to share the benefits of migration within their various *gotras* (clans). Combined with their image of ‘workers who do not complain’, Indians currently do not face competition from other national groups within this sector.

Working Conditions and Employee Perspectives

If Italian employers have found a readily available workforce to fill the gap left by Italians, Indians have found a welcome niche that has enabled them to insert themselves well into the job market in Northern Italy. Although the work is demanding and the work schedule tiring, it offers several benefits: a free home, free heating/electricity bills depending upon the employer, free milk and ample opportunity to supplement one’s basic monthly income (*busta paga*) with overtime and holiday pay. Workers who carry out checks on the cows in between their shifts earn 100 to 200 Euros more per month. Working four Sundays a month, considered holiday pay, gives you 350 Euros a month. Those who help deliver cows receive an extra payment for each calf delivered (5 Euros per birth). In addition, workers receive a bonus in December for good performance. Thus, a base salary of 1, 500 Euros can grow to as much as 3000 monthly with overtime, various supplements and a share of the profits for each quintal of milk produced. In a good year, this share of the profits can amount to 1, 500 Euros in total. Interviews with returnees and families back in Punjab suggest that the amount of remittances sent vary from individual to individual, as it would depend upon the actual hours spent on the job.¹³ Other benefits are not so widely publicised, but common practice: paying overtime ‘unofficially’, that is, apart from the formal pay packet. This means that both employer and employee save on tax, a mutually beneficial arrangement that has long existed in the dairy sector, as well as in other occupational sectors (indeed, according to press sources, Italy has one of the highest rates of tax evasion in the EU). Living in close proximity to the cow sheds or *stalle*, means that workers avoid having to commute to work each day, and can always be close to their families. The shifts of the

¹³ The yearly remittances could be in the range of Rs. 60,000 to Rs. 120,000, which was rather meager, given the initial average expenditure of Rs. 6 lakhs on migration. An individual incurred an expenditure of Rs. 40,000 for processing of papers unless he was cheated by the agent. In that case, it could range upto Rs. 6 lakhs (Rs. 6,00,000).

workers varies: some work from 2:00 to 6:00 and then from 13:00 to 17:00, others work from 4:00 to 8:30 and then from 16:00 to 20:30. Regardless of the exact timings, a common pattern is evident of a night or early morning shift, followed by an afternoon/early evening shift. There is also the possibility of moving up the internal hierarchy on the dairy farm; many workers start out feeding milk to the vitelli (baby calves), which is not as well paid, and then move on to becoming milkers and finally *capo* or boss, not of the entire farm, but in the sense of being leader and 'milker in chief'. When asked about the benefits of their job, apart from the obvious economic and housing benefits, interviewees in Italy¹⁴ mentioned factors such as having free time during the day for running errands and attending to bureaucratic paperwork, without having to ask for time off work. Several workers also appreciated being able to pick up their children from the bus stop or from school.

However, as with any job, there are a number of drawbacks, and working on a dairy farm also involves sacrifice. Surprisingly, when asked about the negative aspects of their job, not one of my interviewees mentioned their unsociable working hours, which could be related to the fact that "turni" or shift work is common in Northern Italy: those who work in leather factories, the second leading employer of Punjabis, must also work in shifts. However, they did complain about the cold during winter and humidity/ bad smell during the summer. In the winter, working at night means having to milk cows in temperatures that can plunge to -15 degrees below zero, without any heating available. The long winters in Northern Italy mean that for much of the year Indian workers are constantly being exposed to cold weather, which also freezes their machines, requiring them to pour hot water on them before starting work. Most workers affirmed that milking cows in the summer was much easier, and that fans helped deal with the heat on very hot days. Another common complaint concerned overtime payments; while some workers had no problems, others said that their employers did not pay all of their overtime.¹⁵ In fact, it appears that the economic crisis in Italy has led some employers to take advantage of high unemployment and growing economic uncertainty to reduce salaries. The following two quotes attest to this economic reality:

"My boss takes advantage of the unemployment situation by not paying all of our hours...but if I complain, I will easily be replaced and the job market is very bad at the moment in Italy. There are no jobs" (Bupinder)

"The *malik* (boss) knows that the Indians are good workers but they don't want to pay us as they do Italians. My boss pays me well, but they exploit us. The boss knows that there are no jobs so they are exploiting and paying less money" (Sukhwinder)

The night and early morning shifts worked by Punjabis also takes its toll. Although most workers preferred not to highlight chronic tiredness, which they took for granted, some did speak out:

"My health has suffered, no normal rest. You don't get proper sleep, even on Saturdays and Sundays. I only sleep 4 or 5 hours a night" (Vijay)

The quality of one's accommodation depends to a great extent on one's employer. It is he who decides whether he will cover their bills (gas bills are exorbitantly high in Italy). Some families had all their heating costs paid by their employer, while others had to pay their own, leading them to heat only their living room in order to save money. With two notable exceptions, the *stalle* houses were old and not well maintained. Although they were not "unhygienic" as claimed by Compiani and Quassoli, it is clear that Italian farm owners have not invested in them for some time. Only two of the homes visited by the author based in Italy were modern. Most families did not complain about the standards of their accommodation, describing it as "*tikke*" (theek hain) (all right), although one particularly articulate

¹⁴ A total of fourteen different Punjabi families were interviewed for this study.

¹⁵ Interview with returnees during the field visit by one of the authors based in Punjab revealed that workers are sometimes paid below the legal hourly wages, in the range of Euro 3-4 per hour, given the presence of surplus labour. We also learnt that working and living conditions could be tough, sometimes necessitating travel by bicycle for upto 12 miles. Some even complained that they were not provided accommodation by the employer. The lack of sickness and other benefits made it tougher for individuals, leading to a "double loss"-loss of salary and additional expenditure on medical treatment.

interviewee lamented the fact that “Punjabis accept such poor housing”. While the vast majority of families appreciated the free accommodation provided by their employer (only one man worked for a farm where accommodation was not available), two declared that they preferred to be independent and not live on the farm, in such close proximity to their boss. As one worker explained: “if you live in the *stalle*, the *malik* can call you at any time, just to talk or ask you to do something. The *malik* can control you more. I prefer to be a homeowner- to be free”. Both of these men had invested in property in Italy and were proud homeowners. In the case of Bupinder, although he lived in a tiny one-bedroom apartment in which he, his wife and his two daughters shared the same bedroom, he still preferred this independence to living in the *stalle* and being subject to daily scrutiny by his boss.

Relations with their employer varied. While a majority answered “he is okay” or “*changa*” in response to the question of “what is your boss like?”, further questioning revealed that as with any power relationship, it was sometimes fraught with tension. One worker said that although his current boss was “good”, his previous bosses were “very bad”. One yelled at him all the time, and the second fired him after he first had an accident and broke his wrist (he took leave), and then flew to the Punjab to attend his elder brother’s funeral. When he returned to Italy, he discovered that he had been fired, and was consequently homeless, since his home was linked to his job.

However, the following quotes summarise the general experience of most workers:

“The *malik* doesn’t care about us, only about making money. If you work well, they will treat you well” (Harpreet)

“He pays well but he is not polite. His language is not good” (Gurpreet)

Some of the men who had achieved the position of *capo* (leader) spoke of greater pressure to perform, as well as ensure the satisfactory performance of other Indian workers: “If you are a *capo*, there is more pressure, more responsibility. *Malik* is always criticising, saying you have been here so long. Also, you will be blamed if anything goes wrong with the person you have recommended”. Two mentioned that although relations with their employer were excellent, the Italian *capo* they had to deal with made life difficult for them. Outside of work, very little social interaction takes place with their employers. Out of a total of fourteen Punjabi families, only one cow milker mentioned inviting their employer to their home to celebrate events such as their children’s birthdays.

Mode of Entry into the Dairy Industry

The vast majority of Punjabis mobilised their family-based networks in order to find a job in the dairy industry.¹⁶ A common response was that my “*mamaji*” (maternal uncle) or a more distant relative helped them find their first job. In some cases, a friend from the Punjab was mentioned, usually from their *pind* (village). The route to subsequent jobs varied. Satwinder described how when the *stalle* he was working in closed down, his boss told him about another opportunity nearby. Bupinder found his first job via his brother-in-law, and his second job via the farm veterinarian who informed him about a job opening in another *stalle* and recommended him for the post. It is important to note that none had had previous experience in this field: most had worked in factories previously, or if ‘in agriculture’, were landowners rather than agricultural workers. Although the vast majority of cow milkers are men and their wives homemakers, there are exceptions. The author based in Italy interviewed one woman who worked alongside her husband for ten years in the *stalle*, while raising a family and tending to all the household tasks. Although exceptional, when women work in the *stalle* (the author learned of only two cases of husband and wife working together), they find their job via their husbands, and their labour force participation is legitimated by the fact that they are not working independently with unrelated men.

¹⁶ Field interviews in few districts in Punjab with returnees from Italy and their families showed their awareness of the two ways, in which Indian workers could go to Italy – as seasonal workers (upto nine months) and on long-term visa basis (upto three years). In all the cases, the sponsorship had to come from employers in Italy. According to them, sponsorship could turn out to be a long process extending anywhere between six months to a year.

Workers from the Jat, Brahmin, Saini, Lubana and Arora communities all found jobs via the extended family or friends. SC (Scheduled Caste) or Dalit workers, in contrast, followed a different pattern of labour force insertion. The last to have arrived in the dairy sector, they have found it more difficult to mobilise family and *gotra* networks in finding a job. As a result, Dalit respondents were more likely to have found their initial job either by themselves or via Italian contacts (such as veterinarians). The example of Rawinder, from the Ravidassia community, is illustrative. One of the few Ravidassias who arrived in Italy before the larger, more recent wave of Ravidassia migration, he has been living in Italy for 24 years, of which he has worked 13 years in one dairy farm, and 10 years in his current *stalla*. He found his first job in the dairy industry via an Italian friend of his boss and when that dairy farm closed down, he was sought out and hired by his current *malik*. He proudly stated “*bohut respect kardey*” (they respect us a lot). The same family and *gotra* networks that are mobilised to find jobs, are also used to share information about, and fill, further vacancies. Thus, the majority of workers worked with relatives or intracaste friends that they had recommended. In the *stalle* of the Brahmin family I interviewed, for example, Sharma works alongside his brother-in-law. Most Jats mentioned working alongside Jats, Sainis with other Sainis, and Dalits with fellow Dalits. However, there were also examples of inter-caste solidarity. Bupinder, a Jat, had recommended a Saini friend for a job at his *stalla*, and Satwinder had recommended a Ramgarhia friend in addition to a Saini relative at his dairy farm. However, it appears that inter-caste solidarity stops at the “pollution barrier” of the SC castes. SC interviewees stated that they were rarely helped by Punjabis from other castes, and singled out the Lubanas (an OBC caste) as being particularly hostile towards them in Italy. Only one Dalit interviewee had found work thanks to the recommendation of a Hindu “general category” friend. The following testimony by an SC (Ravidassia) man reveals that caste can at times poison working relations:

“I work with two more Indians (they are husband and wife), Jat. They were there first. At first, when I was working under them, they were happy. They even came to my house and we exchanged gifts. *Tu harda got kiya?* (what is your gotra?) *Tusi kiton?* (where are you from?) were the usual questions when I first arrived. They don’t say directly, but indirectly they express casteism. They are illiterate. Then when I became the *capo*, they become jealous, they don’t want to work under a Chamar....They don’t speak to me for 11 hours straight! Not even a greeting” (Vijay)

Family and broader *gotra* connections are thus critical to a successful migration project. These connections are drawn upon and then, once a worker is established, the favour is repaid, with some Punjabis claiming that they have helped up to 50 other countrymen in gaining a foothold in the dairy industry. Given that Indians of Punjabi origin have essentially carved an economic niche in the dairy industry, competition for new jobs takes place between Punjabis. In a time of economic recession, this competition is increasingly conducted along caste lines, leading SC interviewees to lament caste barriers to entering the *stalle*. Researchers who have studied ‘ethnic workplaces’, such as De Bock, have found that shared ties of language and nationality/region of origin deepened interpersonal relations between colleagues, and encouraged socialisation outside of work (De Bock 2012). However, it is important to recognise that the bonds of ethnicity are also criss-crossed with internal divisions that can weaken ethnic solidarity in the workforce. In the case of Punjabis living in Italy, caste continues to be a determining factor in gaining access to the dairy industry- giving some a ‘caste premium’ and disadvantaging others.

The Families of the Bergamini

How are the wives and the children of Punjabi bergamini affected by living in the *stalle*? Although the wives of Punjabi bergamini are frequently perceived to be invisible on the part of Italian society, they play a vital, if overlooked role, in dairy farms across Northern Italy. In several of the families visited by the author based in Italy, women would help their husbands wash down the cow milking area at the end of the day, allowing him to finish his shift quicker. They are important co-workers including during winter, donning hats and braving the cold in work that appears to go unacknowledged by

Italian employers. More broadly, the lives of Punjabi women are conditioned by the daily routine of their husbands: they rise when their husbands do in order to prepare food or tea for them, and have hot food ready for them when they come back. They thus suffer from the same disturbed sleeping patterns of their husbands. Their views on life in the *stalle* varied. They were happy with their husbands' salary, but not much else. The most frequent complaint was that of loneliness, since they often live in isolated hamlets where their social life is extremely limited. In Italy, they are usually completely dependent upon their husbands and the vast majority do not speak Italian.¹⁷ Social life is very much family based. However, being removed from an extended family in the Punjab has meant a lightening of their daily workload. Several women shared that living in a nuclear family unit in Italy has meant they have less food to prepare: "in the Punjab I was making at least 30 *rotis* a meal, here only 10". Others welcomed the fact that although more isolated, they were also freer from gossip and social interference in their lives. Harpreet, a Hindu Brahmin, described her life as the wife of a bergamino in Italy in the following way:

"I sometimes feel lonely but my (house) work keeps me busy, plus I pray, go to temple, help my husband in the *stalle*, so I keep my mind busy. My husband is good, he has no bad habits"
(Harpreet)

Others, however, feel that their time in Italy has been wasted. A woman who had studied mathematics for her 'plus 2' (final two years of secondary school), and had one year of college, confided that "*theran sal ku vich pa ditey*"; she feels the last thirteen years of her life have 'gone down the drain'. This sentiment was echoed, although more indirectly, by other Punjabi women, whose daily lives are monotonous and circumscribed by their families. For several women, their only social outing is to the gurudwara or temple, but if their place of worship is not close to home, these visits are few and far between. The wives of the bergamini are a wasted talent pool that unfortunately has not been harnessed; a problem accentuated by the fact that their husbands have not encouraged them to learn Italian or look for a job outside of the home. During one of the author's fieldwork in Italy, she met only one woman who was fluent in Italian, but she was the wife of a leather factory worker. This linguistic deficit is a strong barrier to their economic and social insertion in Italian society, and makes them much more vulnerable to gender-based violence in the home.

The decision to migrate to Italy was not taken by them, so rather than being active agents in the migration process, they are passive participants, which can compound their feelings of powerlessness and isolation in Italy. Even the sole woman in the author's sample who had worked alongside her husband for ten years before opening an Indian general store together, expressed mixed feelings about her work and life in Italy:

"It was my husband who wanted to go abroad, not me, but I had to follow him. Before, when I worked in the *stalle*, I thought about going back to India, but now that we have our own business, it is okay and I want to stay here, even though I don't like Italy. *India acha- yahan nahi hain* (India is good, here is not good) (Manpreet)

The children of Punjabi bergamini, who have feet in two cultural worlds simultaneously, suffer from prejudice, exclusion and bullying at school. Northern Italy is notorious for being a region intolerant towards outsiders: when Southern Italians or *meridionali* started migrating to Northern Italy in search of work in the 1960's, they were condescendingly called *terrone* (the term is linked to the Italian word for land), the implication being that they were uneducated, uncouth peasants. Northern Italy thus has a long tradition of internal racism that has now turned its attention towards external immigrants, a social current that finds its political voice in the openly xenophobic political party the Northern League. Discussions

¹⁷ An interview with Indian Council General, Milan also confirmed that the language barrier was felt primarily by the housewives. The Indian Consulate-General in Milan along with an Indian NGO-Navchetan Cultural Association, organizes courses for learning Italian, through the medium of Punjabi. Apart from that, the Consulate General reaches out to the Indian community through the Gurudwaras and Hindu temples. Consular camps are organized every fortnight on Sundays, outside Milan providing opportunity for consultations on consular matters, disputes related to property, family matters etc.

between the author based in Italy with the children of Punjabi bergamini reveal that there is strong social stigma attached to working as a bergamino. Although Italians may no longer want to work in this field, the strong Indian presence in this industry has nonetheless generated resentment and provoked feelings of jealousy. While the majority of Punjabi cow milkers and their wives disavowed experiencing racism (even the only man in the author's sample who wears the turban), this was not the case for their children, who come into closer daily contact with Italian society at school. Below are the testimonies of two daughters of Punjabi cow milkers who shared with the author how being Indian, and more specifically, the daughter of a bergamino, is not easy.

10 year old Gurpreet, the eldest of three, was born and raised in Italy, and speaks perfect Italian. Her parents are SC, and her father works alone in the *stalla*. Although she has visited India only once, she pleads with her parents to send her there permanently. With sadness in her eyes, she told the author based in Italy the following story of her experiences at school, which combine both racism and casteism:

“The Italians say I smell, that I don't wash, that why is my father a bergamino? Why are all Indians bergaminos? They have never come to my home, they say I don't want to visit a smelly, disgusting *stalla*. They make fun of me, the Italian boys are even worse. The girls, they don't talk to me. They say they want to be my friend, but then they treat me badly. They say that just for a joke...Once a boy said your father is so dark, he is black! I never told my father this, so he would not get upset. I only have one friend, an Egyptian girl who really understands me. There is a Jat girl who is good, but she has never come to my home. Whenever I invite her, she says I will think about it, or I will come when I am free. But she never does....Another Jat girl, who is one year older than me, also makes fun of me. Every time she sees me she says I smell, that I am ugly, that my hair is disgusting. She says my father is a bergamino. Her father works in a pig factory, and she says pigs are nicer than cows, that cows stink” (Gurpreet)

19 year old Mona, the eldest of two from an SC family, has completed technical secondary school and is currently looking for a job in the accounting field. She had similar experiences of being excluded and mistreated at school:

“There is a lot of racism in Italian schools. More on the part of Italian girls. They don't talk to us and behind our backs, they speak badly about us. They don't include us in any way. During school parties, they refuse to eat our food like *samosa* and *makhani*. They say we are brown, black because we don't wash. Once, in middle school, a boy even spit on me in the school bus. He told me that you are so dark because you don't wash. I know of one case where a girl was told she smelt and that her hair was disgusting because she oiled it, so she stopped oiling it....They have never asked me about India or Indian culture- they are not interested” (Mona)

The children of Punjabi bergaminos thus face systematic exclusion and stigmatisation at school, and are frequently bullied, often without the knowledge of their parents. Most parents, when asked how their children were doing at school, responded that they faced no problems, which shows that many Punjabi children are reluctant to reveal the full extent of their suffering. Since their parents do not tend to face an overtly racist culture at work and often have the benefit of working alongside relatives or friends from the same region, it may be difficult for them to understand just how isolated and vulnerable their children feel both in the classroom and outside of it. In addition, their limited knowledge of Italian perhaps protects them from fully assimilating the depth of local prejudice. Their children, on the other hand, are exposed to it daily, leading many of them to dread attending school. Even where children affirmed that they were not bullied, it is never easy to be a 'minority of one' in the classroom, as is the case of 17 year old Malwinder from a Sikh family, who is the only Indian in his school. When he arrived in Italy from India, he wore the *patka* (smaller version of the turban worn by schoolboys), but soon removed it after been teased and asked “what is that onion on your head”? He informed the author based in Italy that it is only possible to wear the *patka* if there are “many Indians at school”, otherwise the risk of being exposed to daily ridicule is very high.

Interviews with returnees in Punjab also suggested that concern over the education of children was more pronounced in the case of the girl child. Some claimed that lack of knowledge of the Italian

language was a stumbling block, forcing some to opt for correspondence course¹⁸ from India. Ironically, although parents were often critical of the Italian school system, it was not due to problems of racism but rather of discipline and worry that their children will be exposed to unhealthy habits and too much Western culture. Bupinder has sent his two daughters back to the Punjab for precisely this reason.

“My eldest daughter studied three years in Italy. Here the school is not good. The students are not serious. *Homework kita? Homework ne kita?* (Have I done or not done my homework?) There is no tension. The children here do not go for tuition. They are smoking, drinking, have many bad habits, girls also. They are not well-dressed as in India....I want my daughter to learn about Indian culture, values, respect, not Italian culture. When you are the only one (at school), you always feel different. In India, no. This is why I keep my *pug* (turban), because I don't want to lose my culture, my background” (Bupinder)

When discussing the situation of Punjabi bergamini in Italy, therefore, it is important to take into account the impact of their work on their families as well. While the relatively high salary and various financial supplements translate into concrete material benefits that enhance their *izzat* or status/respect back home (almost all of the men the author spoke with have invested in property in the Punjab), life in the *stalle* can prove to be a lonely, unsatisfactory experience for their wives. They experience upward social mobility as diaspora wives, but little social integration in Italian society. The children of Punjabi bergamini are well integrated, yet suffer a dual stigma at school: both socio-economic in nature due to the low social status attached to cow milking, and ethnic, for being Indian. While their parents, with great sacrifice, have improved their social capital in the Punjab, Indian children living in Italy are often faced with the necessity of conforming to Italian culture in order to survive at school—particularly when they find themselves in schools with a tiny Indian population. Unlike their parents, they cannot count on becoming “*izzat wallahs*” (highly respected persons) in their native village in order to compensate for the drawbacks of immigrant status in their adopted country. The generation gap is significant, and can only grow in the coming years, as the second generation becomes increasingly ‘Italianised’. A positive development, however, is that not one of the children interviewed has become, or aspires to become a bergamino. The dairy industry will thus continue to be nourished by first-generation Indian labour. All Punjabi parents were keen that their children find alternative employment. A Lubana man summed this up when he stated “I want my son to work like you, not like me, not as bergamino. All our money goes to our son and his future”.

Local Perspectives on Indians in Northern Italy

Discussions with those involved in local government have revealed that there are no particular policies in place concerning Indian bergaminini. Rather, local government officials have informally expressed concern about *kabaadi* (Indian wrestling) matches degenerating into alcohol-driven violence, and the use of public parks during the summer, during which cricket is played, often for hours at a time, resulting in complaints from Italian neighbours. Thus for local-level administrations, the Indian population is viewed simply from a law and order perspective as another extra-EU immigrant community that must be ‘managed’. Since the Indian population is still relatively small compared to other immigrant groups, it is often not high on the ‘radar’ of local government civil servants. This also leads to a lack of specific knowledge about Punjabi Sikhs, the majority of Indians living in Northern Italy. For example, on one occasion a civil servant mentioned to me about the Indian community having opened a “large mosque,” confusing it with the gurudwara that had recently been inaugurated. Discussions with a woman who has worked on integration issues with the *comune* or local administration of Treviglio (half an hour north of Milano) revealed a disturbing trend in which both Indian and other immigrant children tend to concentrate in technical and professional training high schools as opposed to academic high schools that prepare children for university. In Italy, all children

¹⁸ Correspondence courses provide the opportunity to non-resident students to receive lessons and exercises through mails and upon completion, return them for analysis, criticism or grading to the institute or university concerned.

must at the age of thirteen choose the type of secondary school they will attend: academic (which are further subdivided into 'classical', linguistic and scientific schools), technical high schools and finally professional training. All have the same duration of five years, and enable students to enter university if they pass the school-leaving exam, although in practice few technical institute and professional school students choose this route. According to Paola, very few Indians study in 'university track' high schools, in part because the children of bergamini are not encouraged by their middle school teachers to consider academic high schools. She sees the same pattern of automatically sending Italian working-class children to technical high schools being repeated with the children of immigrants, who are assumed to not be 'university material'. Indeed, one of the authors' sample of fourteen families in Italy, only two had children studying or had studied in an academic high school (in both cases this was a *liceo scientifico* or scientific high school). The rest attended or had studied in technical high schools that are not geared for university training. Thus while the children of Indian bergamini are not following in their parent's footsteps, neither are most of them proceeding to university after their secondary studies, a concern that is not being addressed by local administrations. An interview with a civil servant who works for the *comune* of Bergamo, however, shows that there are discordant voices. Pablo openly criticised immigration policy in Italy, which he accused of being "backward" and responsible for permanently stigmatising all minorities as "immigrants", including the second and subsequent generations. He argued that both local and national policies should distinguish between newly arrived immigrants and those who were already settled, rather than "putting them all in the same pot". Furthermore, he was of the opinion that general pro-diversity or diversity sensitive, rather than immigrant specific policies were needed at the local level. Currently, all non-EU immigrants are lumped together in the same category of 'immigrant' for the purposes of local government services, which not only means that the specificities of different immigrant groups are lost, but also that internal diversity within these populations is obscured.

More than local administrations, unions are more often involved with Indian bergamini. Almost all of the Punjabis in the author's sample belonged to the GGIL (Conferazione Generale Italiana di Lavoro) union, which is the largest union in Italy. However, while Indian bergamini faithfully pay their union dues, most affirmed that the union was not doing much for them: "they are just passing the time and taking our money". In the current economic climate in which dairy employers have the upper hand, few Indian bergamini seem inclined to seek union help to resolve disputes. None of the author's interviewees in Italy mentioned consulting their union recently, although one of her most articulate interviewee did agree that the union "is helpful". A different picture emerged from interviews with local union representatives, who claimed that many Indian bergamini came to them for help regarding their paychecks and their hours, although since none of the local union offices collect statistics on the number and demographic characteristics of the workers who visit them, no numbers are available to verify their claims. The Cremona branch of the GGIL union estimated that 50% of Indian bergamini are CGIL members, and that 80% are *regolari*, that is with legal contracts. According to the Cremona branch, 90% of cases involving Indian bergamini are resolved satisfactorily without recourse to the legal system. The Bergamo branch of CGIL stated that they received a visit from an Indian bergamino "every few months", which concerned, apart from their paychecks, also problems with the bureaucracy, their residency permits and their tax declarations. Legal proceedings initiated by Indians are "very rare", so it appears that when Indian bergamini turn to their union, it is usually for help with bureaucratic and contractual issues. The CGIL union therefore does play a role at the local level in helping some Indian bergamini negotiate the complex and complicated world of Italian bureaucracy, but equally many bergamini do not make use of their union as a resource. Although the CGIL union has not adopted any specific policy or campaign directed at Indians working in the dairy sector, their importance is recognised by the fact that they were able to cite how many of their members were Indian, and that some branches have hired Indian union workers (such as Bergamo and Brescia).

The Italian press has in general portrayed a positive image of Indian bergamini. They are consistently described as hard-working and dedicated, and following the publication of an article in the International Herald Tribune on the Punjabi contribution to the dairy industry, which several

Italian newspapers translated into Italian, they are praised for having “saved” the Italian milk/cheese industry. An article in *Il Messaggero*¹⁹, for example, extols the virtues of Indian cow milkers for being “*lavoratori seri e infaticabili*” (serious and indefatigable workers), “*non violenti*” (non violent) “*quasi mai al centro di episodi di cronaca nera*” (rarely in the news due to crime) and “*poco inclini a chiedere aiuto ai servizi sociali*” (not inclined to rely on social welfare programmes). In short, the ideal immigrant who is invisible, does not drain the welfare state, and does not “create trouble”. The author of the above article, entitled “*I sikh ci salvano il latte? Puniamoli col test d’italiano*” (The Sikhs have saved our milk? Let’s punish them with an Italian test”), is critical of the Italian government’s decision to introduce new Italian language tests for long-term residence permits, which the author argued would be difficult for Indian bergamini to achieve, given that they spend most of their time working with cows. The article also makes the point that although obligatory, Italian language courses are not funded by the government. In a similar vein, an article entitled “*L’industria del parmigiano salvata dai Sikh*” (The Parmigiano Industry saved by Sikhs)²⁰, from the *Italia dall’estero* website, presents a glowing account of the Indian presence in the dairy sector, quotes *stalla* owners who declare how committed and integrated their Indian workers are, and highlights how Indians are “patient with cows” due to their “sacred status in the Sikh religion”. This positive portrayal, apart from promoting erroneous stereotypes that associate all Indians with cows (and falsely states that cows are sacred in Sikhism), also overlooks the real motives driving employer satisfaction with their Indian workers: their reputation as an obedient and passive workforce.

A third article from the *Il Giornale* newspaper²¹ mixes both positive and negative assessments of the Indian presence, as reflected in the very title: “*La Riserva Indiana d’Italia invisibili, stakanovisti e innamorati della terra: In meno di dieci anni la comunità è quadruplicata e quasi tutta lavora nell’agricoltura. Libertà massima. Gratitudine a volte poca*” (The Indian reserve of Italy, invisible, extremely devoted to work and ‘in love’ with the land: In less than ten years the community has quadrupled and almost all work in agriculture. With maximum liberty. And at times little gratefulness). Thus while Indians are praised for their hard-working character, it is simultaneously implied that they are ungrateful to their host country. The article discusses Christian, Hindu and Sikh Indians, although a union representative of the latter community is accused of not returning the welcome shown to Indians in the city of Brescia, due to his statement on the Italian marine incident involving the killing of two Indian fishermen off the coast of Kerala. The article stresses how Christian, Hindu and Sikh Indians have been highly successful in establishing places of worship and organising a wide variety of events (often with government sponsorship/funding), asserting that Italy has “warmly welcomed” and “given ample social space” to the various sections of the Indian community.

A fourth article, from the *Cremona Oggi* online newspaper²², entitled “*Indiani da bergamini a imprenditori: E i Sikh guardano al mercato immobiliare*” (Indians from bergamini to businesspeople: Sikhs look towards the property market), presents a vision of Indians that goes beyond their perennial association with cow milking and the countryside. The article discusses how Indians are “big savers” and are now using those savings to invest in real estate and sometimes buying entire *cascine* (dairy farms). It is one of the most balanced articles to appear in the Italian press to date, for although it acknowledges the strong presence of Indian bergamini in Cremona province, it also brings to light how Indians have recently begun diversifying their occupational profile and especially setting up their own businesses. Two young brothers who manage a petrol station are interviewed, and one of them is quoted as feeling “well integrated” and “comfortable” in Italy.

¹⁹ http://www.ilmessaggero.it/home_blog.php?blg=P&idb=767&idaut=11

²⁰ <http://italiadallestero.info/archives/12945>

²¹ http://www.ilgiornale.it/interni/la_riserva_indiana_ditalia_invisibili_stakanovisti_e_innamorati_terra/08-03-2012/articolo-id=576129-page=0-comments=1

²² <http://www.cremonaoggi.it/2011/08/19/indiani-da-bergamini-a-imprenditori-e-i-sikh-guardano-al-mercato-immobiliare/>

Finally, although the general tenor of the Italian press towards Indian bergamini is positive and appreciative, this is not the whole story. The online comments that followed an article in *Corriere della Sera*²³ about Indians saving the famous Grana Padano cheese, reveal that while Italians acknowledge (and at times lament) that their youth no longer want to work in the *stalle*, some Italians are uncomfortable with the fact that this industry is now dominated by foreigners. Several readers expressed their frustration with Italian youth who look for work in other countries rather than accept “humble” jobs at home, as well as hinted at the growing competition posed by immigrants on the Italian labour market. There is thus a divergence between the successful integration stories of Indian bergamini presented by the press, and the underlying unease on the part of a portion of the local population towards one of their most emblematic industries being “taken over” by foreigners. The ‘quiet revolution’ that Indians have achieved in the Italian dairy industry is now increasingly well known, which brings both greater social visibility, but also the risk of economic jealousy.

Government of Punjab and Diaspora Engagement in Dairy Sector

The Government of Punjab is keen to connect with the agricultural and dairy sectors abroad.²⁴ The Government provides a number of incentives to the dairy farmers and is giving primary focus to the development of dairy industry. Punjab has emerged as number one milk producing state in India. Farmers are also taking to dairy farming, as this is proving to be remunerative.

A number of NRIs have also taken to dairy farming and theirs is a success story. Some NRI dairy farmers have even gone to the extent of creating their own milk brands. Some of them have benefited from knowledge, practices and technical knowhow acquired abroad. They are also involved in connecting socially with NRIs from other countries, including Italy, through social networking, as they venture to meet their religious and educational requirements. The success, to a large extent, is dependent upon their hard work and commitment and availability of technical support from the Dairy Development Department. Some dairy farmers from Italy have also made Punjab as their home.

The Government of Punjab has evolved a good training infrastructure in the dairy industry for rural farmers. The Government was also keen to enter into an arrangement with the Government of Italy on technological collaboration for mutual exchange of practices in the dairy sector. The Government had considered providing training facilities to Indian migrants, who wanted to join the dairy industry in Italy. This idea, however, did not lead to fruition, but the Government is still keen to revive the same.²⁵ This could be kept in view whenever Government of India decides to evolve training programmes with the Government of Italy for Indian migrants.

Conclusion

Over the last two decades, Punjabis have carved a successful niche for themselves in the Italian dairy industry, a remarkable feat that has attracted international attention and saved an industry that was in crisis. This quiet migration success story can be characterised as a win-win situation for both Italy and India. Italy gained a hard-working pool of foreign labour that replaced a dwindling native labour pool, as Italians abandoned cow-milking. Thus the frequent charge that is levelled at immigrants- ‘that they steal European jobs’, does not apply in this case. India, and in particular the state of Punjab, has

²³ http://www.corriere.it/economia/11_settembre_08/immigrati-indiani-salvano-produzione-grana-padano-nytimes_620818ec-d9f7-11e0-89f9-582afdf2c611.shtml

²⁴ The Government of Punjab sent a farmers’ delegation to Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan) and Ukraine in October 2010, which was led by the Agriculture Minister of Punjab (Tour Report, 2010). Some initial contacts were established, but the visit was not a breakthrough, given the uncertainty over land policies and lack of good, infrastructural facilities and working conditions.

²⁵ Interaction between author based in Punjab and the Director, Dairy Development, Government of Punjab.

gained, not only through remittances, but in enabling the family migration projects of thousands of Punjabis to be realised through the processes of chain migration. Punjabis have proven themselves to be hard-working and committed workers, which, along with their labour acquiescence, have earned them a good reputation among Italian employers. Italian employers now prefer to hire Indians over both other immigrant groups and ethnic Italians. Indeed, on several occasions, Italian dairy owners remarked that ethnic Italian workers “were not reliable”, since those few still hired often did not remain for long, in stark contrast to Indian workers who have made a career out of cow-milking. Punjabis are well-known for being an enterprising diaspora group, and Italy is no exception. Working as a bergamino represents a first step on the labour ladder for Punjabis. While future economic strategies varied, with some men desiring to return to India once they had accumulated enough savings, several also had their eyes on the ultimate dream for many: to establish their own business in Italy. Although only one family in the author’s sample had actually achieved this, there is no doubt that this trend towards occupational diversification beyond the *stalle* and factory work will continue to gather pace. Despite the multiple hardships of working in a dairy farm, the relatively high salaries combined with rent-free living, has enabled Punjabi families to achieve their economic goals abroad, enhance their respect back home, and give their children a better future that will not involve *stalle* work, there is every indication that the second generation will remain in Italy and make it their home. As one of the author’s second-generation interviewees stated: “I have grown up here, gone to school here, and speak Italian perfectly. If I now move to another (European) country, it will be difficult for me”. In this sense, the experiences of first-generation Punjabi bergamini are only part of the story: it is their children, who currently suffer from social stigma at school, who will make an even greater mark on Italian society, as they too leave the countryside in search of better and more socially prestigious opportunities in other economic sectors.

References

- Bureau of European Advisers (BEPA) (2010), *Opening Europe's Doors to Unskilled and Low Skilled Workers: a Practical Handbook*, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
- Compiani, MJ., Quassoli, F., (2005), "The Milky Way to Labour Market Insertion: the Sikh "community" in Lombardy", In: E. Spaan, F. Hillmann, & T. Van Naerssen (eds), *Asian Migrants and European Labour Markets: Patterns and Processes of Immigrant Labour Market Insertion in Europe*. London: Routledge, pp. 138-158.
- De Bock, J., (unpublished thesis chapter), *When and How does Ethnicity come into Play? Immigrant Workers' Social Contacts at the Workplace*.
European Journal, 2008. Deutsche Welle, 20 September 2008 08:12.
- Gardani et al., 2002. *Turbani che non turbano: Ricerca sociologica sugli immigrati indiani nel cremonese*. Provincia di Cremona: Osservatorio provinciale sull'immigrazione.
- Giustiniani, C., 2010. I Sikh ci salvano il latte? Puniamoli col test d'italiano. *Il Messaggero*, (online) 12 August. Available at: http://www.ilmessaggero.it/home_blog.php?blg=P&idb=767&idaut=11 (Accessed 12 March 2012).
- Lowell, Lindsay B., Kemper, Yvonne B., (2004), "Transatlantic Roundtable on Low-skilled Migration in the Twenty-first Century: Prospect and Policies," *International Migration*, 42(1): 117-139.
- No author., 2011. L'industria del parmigiano salvata dai Sikh. *Italia dall'Estero*, (online) 16 November. Available at: <http://italiadallestero.info/archives/12945> (Accessed 12 March 2012).
- No author., 2011. Indiani da bergamini a imprenditori: E i Sikh guardano al mercato immobiliare. *Cremona Oggi*, (online) 19 August. Available at: <http://www.cremonaoggi.it/2011/08/19/indiani-da-bergamini-a-imprenditori-e-i-sikh-guardano-al-mercato-immobiliare/> (Accessed 12 March 2012).
- No author., 2011. Senza gli indiani addio Grana Padano: L'inchiesta del New York Times: sono loro che mandano avanti l'industria casearia del nord Italia. *Corriere della Sera.it*, (online) 8 September. Available at: http://www.corriere.it/economia/11_settembre_08/immigrati-indiani-salvano-produzione-grana-padano-nytimes_620818ec-d9f7-11e0-89f9-582afdf2c611.shtml (Accessed 12 March 2012).
- Villa, G., 2012. La Riserva Indiana d'Italia invisibili, stakanovisti e innamorati della terra: In meno di dieci anni la comunità è quadruplicata e quasi tutta lavora nell'agricoltura. Libertà massima. Gratitudine a volte poca. *Il Giornale.it*, (online) 8 March. Available at: http://www.ilgiornale.it/interni/la_riserva_indiana_ditalia_invisibili_stakanovisti_e_innamorati_terra/08-03-2012/articolo-id=576129-page=0-comments=1 (Accessed 12 March 2012).
- EMN Focused Study (2012), Intra-EU Mobility of Third Country Nationals, Contributions from Italy, available at <http://emn.intrasoft-intl.com/>
- OECD Country Notes on Recent Changes in Migration Movements and Policies in Italy, available at <http://www.oecd.org/migration/48351326.pdf>
- Sahai, Paramjit S. and Krishan Chand (2012), "Promoting Safe and Legal Migration: Awareness Generation among Students in Jalandhar District", *Man and Development*, XXXIV (1), March 2012.
- Fargues, Philippe et al (2009), "EU-India Mobility Cooperation: a Strategic Asset and a Field of Opportunities", Scientific Working Group, Policy Brief no. 1, available at http://www.carim.org/public/policybriefs/EU-India_MigrationPolicyPaper-Nov09.pdf

Tour Report (2010), Report of Visit to Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Ukraine (October 10-20, 2010), Punjab Industries Corporation.

Judge, Paramjit S. (2012), "Mapping the Social Background of Punjabi Diaspora", in Sahai et al (eds.), *Indian Diaspora: Migration and Development with Focus on the State of Punjab*, Chandigarh: Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development (CRRID).

SOPEMI (2011), *International Migration Outlook*, OECD.

Appendix 1

Interview Guide (Italy) (prepared by author based in Italy)

How long have you been working in the stalle?

How did you find your first job in the stalle?

What work did you do before in the Punjab? In Italy?

How many other Indians do you work with?

Are they from the same community as you or relatives?

What is the accommodation like?

What is your monthly net salary?

What are the working conditions like? In winter? In summer?

Describe your boss. Is he familiar with Indian culture?

If you could, what job would you like to do in Italy?

Describe your shifts

Worst and most positive aspects of your job

What does your wife think about your work?

What are your future plans? Stay in Italy, migrate to another country or return to India?

Your father's occupation

The job situation of other family members

Do you belong to a trade union? How has the union helped you?

How is your overtime paid?

Where do you prefer to invest: in India or in Italy?

How often do you send money back home?

Appendix 2

Questionnaire for Respondents in Italy (prepared by author based in Punjab)

1. Please let us have a short profile on the Indian community in Italy.
2. What are the areas in which the Indian community is concentrated?
3. Is the Cheese Industry in Italy really dependent upon Indian migrants? If so, how?
4. How has the Indian community acquired this expertise? Was it acquired in India or Italy?
5. What are the problems or difficulties encountered by the Indian community?
6. How well is the community integrated with the local population? Are the facilities provided by the local government for adaptation adequate?
7. Did the community experience any difficulty in getting passports, visas, work or residence permits?
8. How well you remain connected with India or your State?
9. Do you face any problems in getting visas for family members?
10. How does the Indian community stay connected with Indian culture or their mother tongue?
11. Is the community involved in undertaking development projects in their State in India?
12. Do you experience any difficulties in sending remittances to India? If so, how these could be removed?
13. Is there connectivity among various Indian communities from Punjab, Kerala or other States?
14. Are there any Indian or regional Associations, which cater to the needs of the community?
15. What steps need to be taken by Government of India to look after Indians in Italy?
16. In what ways you would like your State Government to provide help in meeting your cultural needs?
17. What role the Indian Embassy or the Consulate General should play in staying connected with the Indian community? Do you have suggestions?
18. Any other useful information on the Indian community.

Appendix 3

Questionnaire for Indian Embassy in Italy (prepared by author based in Punjab)

1. As per Italian data, there are 120,000 Indians in Italy? Would you let us have their estimated numbers, in terms of their occupation (professionals, workers), and region-wise break-up from India (Punjab, Kerala, other states).
2. Could you trace the history of origins of Indian Diaspora to Italy? At what stage, it has emerged as the second largest Indian population in EU? What have been the factors for such an increase?
3. Indian diaspora to Italy is largely confined to two regions – Kerala and Punjab. Are there any specific niche areas for these groups? Do they have to compete with nationals from other countries?
4. Punjabis have been associated with Cheese Industry in Italy? How true is this? Would this Industry collapse in case there are no migratory flows from India? What steps has the government of Italy taken to ensure regular supply?
5. The Govt. of Italy declared India as a designated country for manpower recruitment with an annual quota allocation of 1,800 persons for 2010? What were the factors responsible for this? Is this quota earmarked for any particular occupation? What are the procedural steps taken to ensure that such quota is fulfilled?
6. How well is Indian community accepted in Italy? At times, there are reports of racial bias? How true are these?
7. How well adapted is the Indian community in Italy? What steps the Italian government has taken to ensure their adaptation? Is the knowledge of Italian language essential?
8. How is the Indian community organized? Does an association at the national level exist? Or are these organized on a regional basis? If so, how do these connect at the national level.
9. How are cultural and religious needs of the Indian community met? Do different communities maintain their separate religious places – Syrian Churches/ Catholic Churches, Gurudwaras for different denominations?
10. How well is the Sikh community integrated? Do they have separate Gurudwaras?
11. Has the Govt. of Punjab shown any interest in meeting the cultural or religious requirements of the community?
12. Indian Embassy played an important role in assisting the community in regularization of their stay under the Amnesty declared by the Italian government in 2009. Would you like to relate such steps?
13. Should India enter into a Labour Mobility Agreement with Italy? If so, what are its advantages?
14. What steps should be taken at the Indian or Italian end to ensure smooth flow of Indian migrants through safe and legal channels?
15. Are there any problems relating to remittances by the Indian community?
16. Has the Indian community participated in the development projects in India?
17. How well is the Indian Embassy or Consulate General, Milan connected with the Indian community? Have they brought any specific concerns of theirs to your notice?
18. Any other suggestions on the steps that needed to be taken to safeguard the interests of Indian migrants in Italy?

Appendix 4

Questionnaire in Punjabi (prepared by author based in Punjab)

ਮਿਤੀ:-

ਇਟਲੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਰਹਿ ਰਹੇ ਭਾਰਤੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਭਰਨ ਲਈ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨਾਵਲੀ

1.	ਉਤਰਦਾਤਾ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਅਤੇ ਪਤਾ	
2.	ਵਿਆਹੁਤਾ ਪੱਧਰ	ਵਿਆਹਿਆ/ਅਣ ਵਿਆਹਿਆ
3.	ਧਰਮ	ਸਿੱਖ/ਹਿੰਦੂ/ ਇਸਾਈ/ ਮੁਸਲਿਮ
4.	ਮਾਤਰੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ/ ਜੁਬਾਨ	ਪੰਜਾਬੀ / ਹਿੰਦੀ/ ਉਰਦੂ/ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ੀ/ਕੋਈ ਹੋਰ
5.	ਸਿੱਖਿਆ ਦਾ ਪੱਧਰ	ਦਸਵੀਂ/ਬਾਰ੍ਹਵੀਂ/ਗਰੈਜੂਏਟ/ ਪੋਸਟ ਗਰੈਜੂਏਟ/ ਤਕਨੀਕੀ/ ਕੋਈ ਹੋਰ
6.	ਪਿੰਡ	
6(ੳ)	ਬਲਾਕ	
6(ਅ)	ਜ਼ਿਲ੍ਹਾ	
7.	ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਟਲੀ ਕਿਸ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਆਏ ?	(ੳ) ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥੀ, (ਅ) ਨੌਕਰੀ-ਮੁਲਾਜ਼ਮਤ, (ੲ) ਉਦਮੀ, (ੳ) ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਨਾਲ (ਨਿਸ਼ਾਨ ਲਗਾਓ)
8.	ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਟਲੀ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਪਹੁੰਚੇ ?	ਭਾਰਤ ਤੋਂ ਸਿੱਧੇ/ਦੁਸਰੇ ਮੁੱਲਕ ਰਾਹੀਂ
9.	ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਵਿਜ਼ਾ ਲੈਣ ਵਿਚ ਕਿੰਨੀ ਦੇਰ ਲੱਗੀ?	ਦੋ ਸਾਲ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਧ ਇੱਕ ਤੋਂ ਦੋ ਸਾਲ ਵਿਚ ਛੇ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਤੋਂ ਇੱਕ ਸਾਲ ਵਿਚ ਤਿੰਨ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਤੋਂ ਛੇ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਤਿੰਨ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਤੋਂ ਘੱਟ
10.	ਕੀ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਵਿਜ਼ੇ ਨੂੰ ਨਿਯਮਿਤ ਕਰਵਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਵਲੋਂ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਗਈ ਆਮ ਮੁਆਫੀ ਦਾ ਫਾਇਦਾ ਲਿਆ?	ਹਾਂ / ਨਾਂ ਜੇ ਹਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਸ ਸਾਲ
11.	ਕੀ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਪਾਸਪੋਰਟ ਲੈਣ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ ਦਿੱਕਤ/ਮੁਸ਼ਕਿਲ ਪੇਸ਼ ਆਈ?	ਹਾਂ / ਨਾਂ
12.	ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਦੌਰੇ ਦੀ ਮਾਇਕ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰੀ ਕਿਸ ਨੇ ਲਈ?	ਪਰਿਵਾਰਕ ਮੈਂਬਰ/ਮਾਲਕ (Employer)
13.	ਕੀ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਰਿਹਾਇਸ਼ ਪਰਮਿਟ ਲੈਣ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ ਦਿੱਕਤ/ਮੁਸ਼ਕਿਲ ਪੇਸ਼ ਆਈ?	ਹਾਂ/ਨਾਂ
14.	ਤੁਸੀਂ ਕਿਸ ਹੱਦ ਤੱਕ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਸਥਾਨਕ ਸਮਾਜ/ਸਮੁਦਾਇ ਦਾ ਅੰਗ ਸਮਝਦੇ ਹੋ?	ਪੂਰਾ ਅੰਸ਼ਕ ਜ਼ਮ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ
15.	ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਤਾਲਵੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਕਿੰਨੇ ਪਰਬੀਨ / ਨਿਪੁੰਨ ਹੋ ?	ਪੜਨ ਵਿਚ: ਚੰਗੇਰਾ ਗਿਆਨ/ ਕੰਮ ਚਲਾਉ/ ਜਮ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਲਿਖਣ ਵਿਚ: ਚੋਖਾ ਗਿਆਨ/ ਕੰਮ ਚਲਾਉ/ ਜਮ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ
16.	ਕੀ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਸਭਿਆਚਾਰ ਅਤੇ ਅਪਣੀ ਮਾਂ ਬੋਲੀ ਨਾਲ ਸਬੰਧ ਬਣਾਈ ਰੱਖਦੇ ਹੋ?	ਹਾਂ/ ਨਾ
17.	ਕੀ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਅਪਣੇ ਪਿੰਡ ਨਾਲ ਸਬੰਧ ਕਾਇਮ ਹਨ?	ਹਾਂ/ ਨਾ
18.	ਕੀ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਅਪਣੇ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਨਿਯਮਤ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਪੈਸੇ ਭੇਜਦੇ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਹੋ?	ਹਾਂ/ ਨਾ
19.	ਕੀ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਅਪਣੇ ਪਿੰਡ ਦੇ ਵਿਕਾਸ ਨਾਲ ਸਬੰਧਤ	ਹਾਂ/ ਨਾ

	ਕਿਸੇ ਪ੍ਰੋਜੈਕਟ ਵਿਚ ਭਾਗ ਲਿਆ ਹੈ?	
20.	ਤੁਹਾਡਾ ਸਥਾਨਕ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਮੇਲ-ਜੋਲ ਕਿਸ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਦਾ ਹੈ?	ਬਹੁਤਵਾਰ ਕਦੇ ਕਦੇ ਕਦੇ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ
21.	ਕੀ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਟਲੀ ਵਿਚ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਰਤੀਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਸਬੰਧ ਕਾਇਮ ਰੱਖਦੇ ਹੋ?	ਨਿਯਮਤ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਕਦੀ ਕਦਾਈਂ ਅਨਿਯਮਤ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ
22.	ਇਟਲੀ ਵਿਚ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਭਾਰਤੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਦੇਖਭਾਲ/ਭਲਾਈ ਲਈ ਭਾਰਤ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਕਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਕਦਮ ਚੁੱਕਣ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ?	
23.	ਅਪਣੀਆਂ ਲੋੜਾਂ ਦੀ ਪੂਰਤੀ ਲਈ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਅਪਣੀ ਰਾਜ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਤੋਂ ਕਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਉਮੀਦ ਰੱਖਦੇ ਹੋ?	ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਸਿੱਖਣ ਲਈ ਸਭਿਆਚਾਰਕ ਸਬੰਧ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ
24.	ਇਟਲੀ ਵਿਚ ਰਹਿ ਰਹੇ ਭਾਰਤੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਇਟਲੀ ਵਿਚਲੇ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਮਿਸ਼ਨ/ ਪੋਸਟ ਬਾਰੇ ਕੀ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਹੈ। ਉਹ ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਸਮੂਦਾਇ/ ਕਮਿਊਨਿਟੀ ਲਈ ਹੋਰ ਕੀ ਕੁਝ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾਣ ਦੀ ਉਮੀਦ ਰੱਖਦੇ ਹਨ?	