see that the likelihood of abortion was about the same for women with a migrant husband regardless of wealth (predicted probabilities, 0.95–0.97). Among women with a nonmigrant husband, however, the predicted probability of abortion rose with increased wealth, from 0.87 at the lowest asset level to 0.99 at the highest. At the lowest end of household economic well-being, the probability of abortion was higher among women married to a migrant than among those married to a nonmigrant. At the highest end, however, the difference between the groups was negligible.

**DISCUSSION**

Research on migration and reproduction has focused mostly on permanent migration or on high-fertility settings. Research on seasonal migration and reproductive behavior and outcomes in the former Soviet Union—where vast societal and demographic changes have occurred in the past two decades—is particularly limited. Our study contributes to the literature on temporary migration and fertility regulation from a former Soviet country with below-replacement fertility, low contraceptive use, widespread abortion and high levels of male seasonal migration.

Our results suggest a negative association between temporary migration and contraceptive use in the low-fertility context of rural Armenia. As we expected, the use of medium- and long-term modern contraceptives was lower among women with a migrant husband than among those married to a nonmigrant in analyses controlling for other factors; women’s reduced perceived need for continuous protection from pregnancy during their husband’s absence is most likely the explanation. However, we found that the association between seasonal migration and contraceptive use was moderated by the level of household economic well-being. In nonmigrant households, greater affluence was associated with higher levels of contraceptive use. This is most likely explained by the improved access to family planning services and greater availability of modern contraceptives afforded by wealth. In comparison, no such wealth-related increase in contraceptive use was observed among migrant households. In fact, contraceptive use declined slightly as wealth increased.

We can propose several tentative explanations for this difference. Motivation to use contraceptives may be very low among women married to a migrant, so that increased access to modern methods does not affect their contraceptive use. Moreover, wealth in migrant households may be a proxy for longer history and duration of husband’s absence, which in turn may lead to women’s lower perceived pregnancy risk and correspondingly lower need for contraception. Longer migration has also been found to decrease spousal communication about contraception and sexual health. Although the national data show that the duration of the migration season is more or less uniform in rural Armenia, the possibility of a cumulative effect of the duration of husband’s absence on contraceptive use appears plausible. Unfortunately, our data did not allow us to directly measure duration of husbands’ absence.

**Migration and Abortion**

In our baseline multivariate model without controls, we found only a marginally significant association between migration status and abortion (Table 3, page 129). When socioeconomic controls were added in the second model, however, the finding lost even marginal significance.

To test whether economic well-being moderates the association between seasonal migration and the probability of a pregnancy termination, we added interaction terms for migration status and household assets in the third model. The lack of association between migration and abortion remained; however the household asset components were positively associated with the outcome. Each one-unit increase in the secondary or primary household asset components was associated with a 30% or 45% increase in the odds of a pregnancy ending in abortion, respectively. The interaction terms were not associated with abortion.

To understand the interrelationships between household wealth, seasonal migration and abortion, we look at the combined effect of household economic well-being measures, including interaction terms (Figure 2). By graphing the predicted probability of a pregnancy ending in an abortion by husband’s migration status at different values of the household asset components, we can see that the likelihood of abortion was about the same for women with a migrant husband regardless of wealth (predicted probabilities, 0.95–0.97). Among women with a nonmigrant husband, however, the predicted probability of abortion rose with increased wealth, from 0.87 at the lowest asset level to 0.99 at the highest. At the lowest end of household economic well-being, the probability of abortion was higher among women married to a migrant than among those married to a nonmigrant. At the highest end, however, the difference between the groups was negligible.

**Notes:**

*The large values of the predicted probabilities of abortions are due to the fact that they are calculated considering the woman has two or more children of both sexes, which is the modal value and probably the most desirable completed fertility outcome in this setting, after which couples are most likely to limit their fertility.*