



REPERCUSSIONS OF DESERTED FAMILY MEMBERS OF MIGRANTS: A CASE STUDY OF MADHYA PRADESH

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ABSTRACT Among all the elements related to migration, the labour migration for employment which comprises of more than 70% of total migration worldwide is very complex. Streams differ in duration, origin, destination and migrant characteristics. Economic and social impact on migrants and their families are variable. Due to migration, the left out families consisting of women, children and old aged people has to go through lots of positive and negative impacts. Problems aggravate, when there is absence of any male member within the household, as it effects their decision making also. Migration often involves longer working hours, poor living and working conditions, poor access to basic amenities and social isolation. However, because of lack of data, migration is largely invisible and ignored by policy makers. There is a large gap between the insights from macro data and those from field studies. The analysis is based on 2011 data.

KEYWORDS : Remittances, Quantitative, Qualitative, Trafficking

INTRODUCTION

Migration of labour for getting employment has become one of the most durable components of the livelihood strategies of people living in rural areas. Migration is not just done by the very poor people during the times of crisis for their survival and coping up but has increasingly become an accumulative option for the poor and non-poor alike. But what consequences do the left over families face after migration of these migrants? Does it really affect the lifestyle, decision making or child education of their family members?

Migration transforms the life of individuals who move, the societies they move into and even the societies they leave behind. Migration primarily means movement of people from one place or location to another, which is not of a casual nature. Migration is necessarily a pre-emptive move; it is the survival instinct that drives humans to seek better prospects (Deshingar, 2003). Conventionally, migration especially from rural to urban areas was seen as a positive and inevitable phenomenon in the process of development. The process of migration in its forms, particularly rural urban migration, has wide-ranging implications for the economy as well as for the society.

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Apart from the social, cultural, political and other factors relating to the migration, the most important concern regarding migration is the economic factor. It has been seen that traditionally, people move from one place to another mostly in search of jobs. This movement is governed by PUSH and PULL factors. There are various reasons of PUSH factors that force someone to leave his/her native place and move to a new place. Some economic factors can be stated here as Unavailability of jobs, Extreme pressure on limited land, low wages, family conditions, natural disasters etc. Whereas the **Pull factors** can be stated as, bright city lights, better job opportunities, higher wages, scope for better growth prospects, better education etc.

Pull factors on the one hand, attract the migrants and on the other hand push factors forces them to move to a new place.

In recent times, migration as a topic, has gained too much of attention all over the world. It is very important to study the migration patterns as to decide the broad economic policies. In the case of the less developed nations, where there is a significant effect of growing population on the economic policy formulation, migration has gained too much of importance. India is one of these nations where there is a need of studying the migration patterns, its causes and consequences.

As per the UN report there has been a high growth of urban population as against the rural population in all the third world countries. One of the most important factors for this is the migration of people from small places to the urban centres in search of better life. This has led to an excessive increase in population pressure in the urban centres and it leads to overcrowding.

The **Hypotheses of the Study** are as follows:

- Higher the incidence of migration among the workers, higher the rate of dropouts of their children in school education.
- Psychological well being of the family members particularly of women is adversely affected by migration of male members.
- Migration of workers creates obstacles for left out members of the family in decision making process.

The study is helpful in finding out the gap in terms of impact of male migration on the left over families in the household and hence the findings may be useful to the policy makers and non-government organizations interested in issues of rural community development, transnational migration, and women's well-being.

Literature review

The migration rate in recent years in India, has witnessed an increasing trend. According to the population Census of 2011, out of the total population, 37.8% (or 400 million) were migrants. The United Nations (1998) defines a migrant as a person 'who changes his or her country of usual residence'. Migration can be permanent if the individual never returns to his country of origin, long-term if he moves to another country for at least a year and short-term if he moves to a country other than his usual place of residence for at least three months but less than a year. In spatial terms, movement within a country is defined as internal migration, while inter-national migration occurs when an individual moves from one country to another and becomes transnational if migrants 'forge and sustain multi-stranded relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement' (Schiller et al., 1992).

The concept of internal migration now connotes much wider dimension that varies from daily commuting to nearby places on the one hand, to permanent shift of residence to distant places on the other. The nature and pattern of migration varies from one social group of migrants to another because of the fact that the rural migrant groups are not a homogenous group (Mitra and Murayama, 2008). Internal migration is defined as 'population movement across a political or administrative boundary, which entails a change of usual residence' (Bilsborrow, 1998).

The migration literature provides a diverse range of related definitions based on three dimensions; the motives for migrations (e.g., better public services, higher wages, more business opportunities, more employment opportunities etc.), the geographical aspect of population movement (e.g., the distance the migrant's travel and the direction of their movements) and the time (e.g., for how long does the migrant stay in the destination area and how often does he or she travel between different destinations), (Parida and Madheswaran, 2010). Thus, it is possible to classify migration in terms of distance, time, character of origins and destinations, motive and characteristics of the migrants, etc.

The first is a negative effect due to the lack of parental contact with children associated with long-term parental absence. This impact may differ for the absence of fathers versus mothers (or both) and may depend on the capabilities of substitute caretakers. Psychological

research has found that parental support is a significant predictor of student's capacity to deal with stress; anxiety and loss of control (DeMarry et al., 2005). Children with strong parental support do better in school and develop mature psychological traits. They aspire to do good work, experience pleasure in one's work, and develop both initiative and a sense of control over events, and are better behaved (Dubow et al., 1991; Evans, 2004).

A number of factors make it difficult to assess the overall effect of adult migration on the health of family members in their households. The effects of migration can vary with time. In a study on Mexico, Cortes (2007) shows that the general health of children declines during the first years of their parents' migration, but improves over time as remittances contribute to improved access to healthcare. Kanaiaupuni and Donato (1999) found that migration from a community raises infant mortality in the short term and lowers infant mortality in the long term, due to both household and community effects. The absence of men adds to material and psychological insecurity, leading to pressures and negotiations with wider family (Rogaly et al, 2001; 2002). Male outmigration has been seen to influence the participation of women in the directly productive sphere of the economy as workers and decision-makers and increase the level of their interaction with the outside world (Srivastava, 1999 and forthcoming). But given the patriarchal set up, women may have to cope with a number of problems which are exacerbated due to the uncertainty of the timing and magnitude of remittances on which the precarious household economy depends. This, in turn, pushes women and children from poor labouring households to participate in the labour market under adverse conditions. Thus, the impact of migration on the women can be twofold but the strong influence of patriarchy restricts the scope of women's autonomy (cf. Tee rink, 1995; Menon, 1995; Rogaly et al, 2001). The impact of male migration can be especially adverse for girls, who often have to bear additional domestic responsibilities and take care of younger siblings. The absence of male supervision further reduces their chances of acquiring education (Srivastava, 2001)

Research Methodology

This study analyses the extent, causes and impact of migration among rural households in general and the impact of male migration on left over families in particular. The present study primarily focuses on the impact of male migration on left over family member particularly whose family members are migrating from rural to urban or rural to rural areas.

Here universe comprises of all the households having one or more migrating members from rural areas. The impact of migration cannot be studied in isolation with the environment in which the migrant household live. Here in this study, those households whose one or more family members migrate from rural to rural or rural to urban for work only are inspected. Here the impact of migration in the household framework is studied. It is assumed that the migration takes place from rural areas particularly from a backward setting hence based on some indicators of backwardness like literacy, asset holding, infrastructural development in the state and district selected. On the basis of the selected indicators, the state Madhya Pradesh and district Satna were selected. While discussing with these people, some clusters/blocks from the district, with a high track record of migration were selected. Again, discussing with the local stakeholders, 6 villages with high proportion of migration as compared to other villages were selected. While selecting the villages, different aspects like domination of social/religious categories, urban exposure, villages near/distant to town, were ensured. After selecting the villages, a list of households was prepared which were frequently migrating from the villages. This list was made by discussing with the known people of village like teachers, government office bearers, Panchayat/ward members, senior persons from village etc.

The villages namely, Khamhariya Tiwariya, Baraha, Belha, Choraha, Dandi, and Amiriti have been carefully selected for the field study. In selecting the households, the considerations such as caste groups, village size, occupational structure and proximity had been taken into account. A total of 250 households had been taken for a detailed study. Selection of the sample has been done meticulously using listing method. The households identified, are from the listing of migrants' household on the basis of interval, ratio and circular method. Utmost care has been taken to choose an unbiased sample size.

This methodology studies subjective understanding of social realities. On the other side, quantitative methodology provides statistical

description and prediction.

Major Findings

The study is based on primary data collected from different sources for explaining the causes, pattern and impact of migration in the state of Madhya Pradesh. The following are the major findings of this study.

Trend, size and nature of Migration:

According to Economic survey, 2017, during last three decades the inter-state migration from Madhya Pradesh has been found to be increased manifold. Our study also revealed the fact that Madhya Pradesh is one of the most backward states among all the backward states which having high percentage of migrants in India.

- Majority of the migrants belongs to younger age groups (60.6%). The overall picture of education status showed that 18.5 per cent of migrants have got only primary education. Maximum number (74%) belongs to BPL category and most of the migrants (60 %) are casual wage labour and are doing work on wages and salaries. 66% of the migrants migrates for short term. Around 53% of the migrants prefer to move to urban area of other state. Delhi(29%) and Maharashtra (21.6%) are the most favourite destination for the migrants
- Around 56% of the migrants' households take advance in absence of migrants to fulfil the family requirements. Borrowings against utensils, jewellery and other assets are a common phenomenon. Most of the loan is taken from zamindar (48.2%)

Reasons of Migration

- Among all the push factors 'lacks of income' (71%) become a major factor which lead to migration of male members in rural areas.
- They migrate as their assets, investments and opportunities in the source are limited.

They migrate because they are not able to support their families or use their potential efficiently. They migrate because they do not have access to public transfers. They migrate because they see others in their social network migrating and they realise that migration is another option to make a living. In primary survey, it was seen that around 71.1% people migrate due to lack of income. 14 % people said that they do not get appropriate work at origin due to which they have to leave their family and go to other areas for finding work.

- During FGDs in the studied villages, it is found that the villagers having NREGA job cards are not getting 100 work days on a regular basis. The quantitative findings from the primary survey shows that four fifths of SC/ST households are holding the job cards but get work for only 31 days on an average in a year.

Around 64% of households from the high income group also migrate. Irregular rainfall, repeated droughts, unavailability of irrigation facilities, lack of incentives of improving land conditions and productivity are the causes due to which families with even 5 acres of land are found to migrate. It appears that migration is very much a family focused decision taken in order to support the family.

Impact of Migration on women

It was observed that the migration of men has brought about several changes in the life of women i.e. within and outside their household. Research tells us that women have been undertaking more agricultural, as well as non-agricultural work, which includes the management of farms, animal husbandry etc. While women who were agricultural labourers have continued their work as earlier, the burden of work has increased tremendously for women who work in family farms and as sharecroppers. On the domestic front, women are responsible for taking care of children, and the burden of their household tasks too has increased.

- Literature tells that women become more involved in taking decisions in the household, and in managing household finances and remittances after the migration of males (Referred in literature review). Around 59% of the households are there in which still important decisions of the family is taken by migrants instead of women. Whatever difficulty they face in migrant's absence the family members does not take the decisions independently. From this our third hypotheses is accepted that "*Migration of workers creates obstacles for left out members of the family in decision*

making process.”

- In the absence of the male members in the family, the women headed households suffer economically. The advance money given by the agents is utilized to repay the loans, debts and a very small amount is given to the wife by the husband before leaving. There is no monthly remittance from the husbands as maximum of the proportion of their income is spent on their daily expenditures. In emergency, the women have to borrow money from relatives or neighbours. In such miserable financial condition, the expenditure on children's education is mostly cut short; old parents get deprived of medicines etc.
- This study finds that the women heading the households in the absence of their husbands are facing with immense mental agony. They are socially marginalized. In the absence of the husbands women feels alienated and they were often ignored. They often neglect their health which sometimes becomes unbearable for them.
- The impact on women due to migration of husbands is specific to - economic, social and at times even physical. Due to irregular remittance; they need to go out for work. Rather than empowering them, it has led to food shortage, indebtedness, overwork and illness. They complain in accessing PDS facility also. 44% of women says that they face harassment by dealers.
- In 59% households' women were facing certain health issues but they do not discuss it with their family members. 58.3% of women said that they do not discuss their personal issues with their family members as in absence of their husbands they were totally ignored. They have no importance in family. They were ill treated. All these situations accept our hypotheses that **“Psychological well being of the family members particularly of women is adversely affected by migration of male members”**.

Impact of migration on children

- Deprived of their childhood and education, the children of the migrating parents are on the same path as that of their parents. The dropout rate of school children is a direct impact of migration. Those children, who migrate with their parents, discontinue their schooling for 6 months and after returning home, they continue in the same class. It is found that the children are continuing for three to four years in the same class. In the studied villages 71% of the total household has children who go to school irregularly after migration of their parents who were before regularly going to school.
- On the other hand, the increased burden of household work generates pressure to drop out of school or spend less time on educational activities. 50% of households are there where children dropped the school due to lack of time as there most of the time goes in taking care of old people of the house and other household activities. And 20% have to move out with their father to help them. Many people indicated that, due to low returns of education and the lack of domestic opportunities, many boys aspire to migrate or actually migrate as soon as they reach sixteen.
- Some people have pointed out that due to migration of rural males, children are not properly immunised. But they do not get enough time to take their child for vaccinations. On surveying 72% of total households do not even know about the importance of vaccinations.
- Many people interviewed considered that children in migrant households are more likely to perform household chores, as the burden of household chores increases in the absence of the father. Many people have expressed the opinion during FGDs and In Depth Interviews that children from migrant households are psychologically more vulnerable, due to the absence of the father and the more irritable attitude of the mothers. This can lead to a range of effects, including suicide, sexual abuse and trafficking, involvement of children in anti social activities like smoking, eve teasing, robbery etc. 52% of children of total households are found to be involved in such activities.

It is thus clear that migration matters for the education of children. Even though enrolment-wise children of migrant households are ahead of those of returned migrant and non-migrant households children, in the case of school attendance, continuation in education and educational attainment they lag behind the children in the latter two categories of household. In the case of children of migrant households school attendance is lower and dropout is higher at higher age groups compared to the children of other household categories because the girls are required to help their mother at home and the boys do domestic and outside work in the absence of the father and sometimes migrate

with father to work in cities. Children also demonstrated considerable emotional and behaviour changes after the departure of the father, notably lack of etiquettes, and temper tantrums in all age groups, specifically adolescent age groups, etc.

In the majority of households, primary care-giving responsibilities were taken up by female relatives or neighbours. Due to which children were completely ignored and are often harassed. Hence our hypotheses is accepted that **“Higher the incidence of migration among the workers, higher the rate of dropouts of their children in school education.”**

Impact of migration on old people

The impact of migration on old people of the family is also a matter of concern. The old and the helpless people are not in a position to take care of them and without the support of their sons and the families; their survival itself becomes a major problem. The old people in the women headed households are still in a more disadvantaged situation.

- 36% of surveyed households says that there is no change in treatment process after the migration of their sons.
- Some migrants remain in destination and forget their duties towards their families left behind. In many cases they do second marriage their and live their without informing anyone.

In nutshell we can say that migration does not improve the family condition as it is thought to be according to the research. Till today many families are there who are not only living in same condition as before the migration of their family members, but their condition has worsen after migration.

CONCLUSION

This study has examined the impacts of migration on left behind family members that have received limited attention. Migration has both negative and positive aspects. Sometimes it implies forced movement of a person. No one wants to leave his family and stay away. But for the sake of survival and better livelihood it's a duty of the head of the household mostly the male members to earn and give his family the fullest. The migrant send remittances to their family which helps them to live in better way. Another important aspect of migration which is analysed by the literature is the impact of migration from the perspective of left behind family members of the migrants and to provide a new outlook to the process of migration.

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