

Socio Economic Consequences of Human Migration : A Case Study of Saran District



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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the role of families in processes of rural-urban migration in India in the twentieth century. It shows that the continuous circular form of this migration should be explained as a consequence of rural family strategies. Already established kinship relations or marriage opportunities in the future Act as a centripetal force, drawing the labor migrants back to their communities time and again. In addition, the article shows how migration is informed by economic and cultural considerations which determine the socio-economic behavior of men and women.

Introduction

Migration phenomenon has been the most dynamic process of mankind from the very beginning of human life. In fact, it is the special movement of the people from the place of origin to the place of destination with a view to getting better job opportunities and enhancing socio-economic conditions. This phenomenon has been significant throughout the human civilization. In the past the people used to migrate from one forest to another in search of their livelihood. Certainly they led unsettled life and jungle life. With passage of time, the people divorced forest life and adopted civilized life. As such, the people developed relationship with domesticated animals and fertile lands. As a result mobility of mankind changed considerably. In the present time the trend of migration is different as compared to previous migration. The increasing industrialization and urbanization have caused another type of migration. It is relevant to mention here that the people of

undeveloped countries migrate to developed countries in order to get better job opportunities and other socio-economic facilities.

Internal migration has become a key component of livelihood strategies for an increasing number of rural households across many countries in the developing world. Importantly, unlike earlier periods when migration was often viewed as a problem, there is now a growing consensus among academics and policy makers on the potential positive effects of migration in reducing poverty and promoting sustainable human development. Concurrently, the significance of “food security for all” as an important development objective has been rising, particularly since the 2007-08 global food crisis. However, the academic and policy discussions on these two issues have largely tended to proceed in silos, with little attention devoted to the relationship they bear with each other. Using a case study approach, involving primary survey data collected from an equally representative sample of migrant and non-migrant households from the high outmigration district of Saran provides empirical household-level insights on the interface between migration and food security.

“Human Migration” is the movement of the people from one place to another place with the intention of settling, permanently or temporarily at a new location. In fact, it is the special movement of the people from the place of origin to the place of destination with a view to getting better job opportunities and enhancing Socio-Economic conditions. According to prominent scholars Demko, G.J-Ross, H.M-Schnell, G.A.(1970) “Migration is the most complex component of population change. It provides an important network for the diffusion of ideas and information and indicates symptoms of social and economic, and can be regarded as human adjustment to economic, environmental and social problem. CHAMPAN & KEITH considered, Migration as a good example of relocation diffusion since nobody can literally be in two places at once. OGDEN interpreted migration as a part of the wider study of population geography and as an important element in the understanding of the geographical organization of human society.

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domesticated animals and fertile land. As a result mobility of mankind changed considerably. In present time the trend of migration is different as compared to previous migration. The increasing industrialization and urbanization have caused another type of migration. In recent scenario, the people of underdeveloped countries migrated to developed countries in order to get better job opportunities and other socio-economic facilities.

Consequences of migration are multidimensional. It directly affected the economic and social conditions of origin place and destination place. The economic effects of migration vary widely. Sending countries may experience both gain and losses in the short term but may stand to gain over the longer term. For sending countries, the short term economic benefit of emigration is found in remittances. Remittances are funds that emigrants earn abroad and send back to their home countries, mainly in order to support families left behind. According to the World Bank remittances totaled \$59 billion worldwide in 2012, with \$401 billion of that money flowing into developing nations (2013). Significantly, these figures only account for funds remittances is likely much larger than these numbers suggest. A 2014 survey of the existing literature on emigration finds that a 10 percent emigrant supply shock would increase wages in the sending country by 2-5.5%.

Migration and remittances have both direct and indirect effects on the welfare of the population in the migrant sending countries. A cross country study of 71 developing countries found that a 10 percent increase in per capita official remittances will lead to 3.5 percent decline in the share of people living in poverty. Evidences from Latin America, Africa, South Asia and Other region suggested that remittances reduce the depth and severity of poverty. Migration remittances increase domestic saving as well as improve financial intermediation, which can improve growth prospects. Hence we can say that, migration helps in improving the quality of life of people.

The scenario of development and poverty in Bihar make it as critical example of the peripheral region in the entire space of development. Entire state is considered as the pocket of chronic poverty. The backwardness of the state of Bihar is reflected in the lower agricultural output, skewed distribution of land and higher incidence of landlessness, higher dependency on agriculture and lack of industrialization and several socio-economic

and institutional barriers. The stagnation in all sectors of economy in the past led to lower per capita income and higher incidence of poverty in the state. The lack of infrastructure, institutional barriers and poor governance in the state has developed a milieu of underdevelopment and the state is described as 'the state without hope'. This situation is considered as the leading factor of heavy out-migration from the state of Bihar (Sharma 1995, Sharma 2005).

The current phenomenon of labour migration from the state of Bihar can be traced back to colonial period. This region started to experience labour out-migration at the earliest. This phenomenon is largely attributed to the pattern of regional inequality and underdevelopment fostered in colonial period. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, when the British Raj stabilized, law and order and civil administration improved. In this period, some development in irrigation facility and improved trade due to improved communication networks (roads and railways), led some agricultural development and specialization in cropping pattern in the western tract of India, while the eastern region, where the population pressure was highest, couldn't experience such kind of development (Derbyshire, 1987). The Zamindari System of land settlement, in which the Zamindars were having the right to dismiss the rights of tenants in case of their incapability to pay high demands of rent, led to a much skewed distribution of land and a large proportion of landlessness among peasants. The commercialization of agriculture also increased without any increment of production, increased their misery further, which led them to migrate to the different parts of the country, particularly towards the eastern region of India and even foreign countries for their survival (Sharma, 2005). In the later half of the nineteenth century, an eastward trends of migration became well established, particularly migration from western part of Bihar to Bengal and Assam (Davis, 1951). The migration stream was dominated by lower caste and landless laborers, who were staying at bare subsistence level and ready to respond to the fair high wage gap between their native place and east. They found employment in the mills, factories, docks and coal mines, or on the roads and railways, or in harvesting the crops of other districts of West-Bengal. This migration was mostly seasonal, and improved communication through railways made it possible for them to migrate easily and come back for agricultural and other activities at their native place (Yang, 1979). The circular migration was critically important for agricultural laborers and marginal farmers of Bihar for their bare subsistence. When the peasants and laborers were

not able to get enough from cultivation, this migration was playing an important complementary role to fulfill their minimum needs (de Haan, 2002).

The westward wave of labour migration from Bihar started in the decade of sixties, when the green revolution started in the north-western part of India, created an unprecedented demand of laborers in agriculture. Starting in the early 1970s with a small trickle to the rural areas of Punjab it soon took the form of a flood during the next one decade. Soon the influx of migrants spilled over to the neighbouring state of Haryana (Bremar, 1985). After the decade of eighties, labour demand saturated in the area of green revolution because of the changes in cropping pattern and mechanization of agriculture in green revolution areas. The recent move of labour migration from Bihar is the move towards big cities such as Delhi, Bombay, Surat, Kolkata, and Hyderabad etc (Karan, 2003). Some studies have reported that the volume of migration also increased drastically since then. Out-migration started from all the section of the state, cutting across the hierarchy of caste and class. The migrants who used to migrate to rural area for agricultural wages, used to move seasonally, however the recent urban-ward movement is more permanent in nature (Karan 2003, Singh et al. 2005). Laborers are involved in a variety of occupations like those of security guards, rickshaw pullers and colliers, etc (Sharma, 2005). Migration is now viewed as finite stage of life-cycle of people of Bihar, as male member of household approach to a certain age, they send away to earn. The remittance is playing a critical role to support livelihood in the state (Dishankar et al. 2006).

Conclusion

Out-migration from Bihar is a well established phenomenon started back in the nineteenth century seems shoot up in the recent decade. The flow and direction of migration has also been altered in course of time and most of the migration is taking place towards the north-western and western parts of India. The states like Delhi, Maharashtra, Punjab, Haryana and Gujarat account half of the inter-censal migrants. The prime reason of such heavy out-flow is related to employment. People are migrating not only in the absence of employment at their native place but also to secure a better earning also. It seems that the out-migration for employment is taking place not only in poor and socially backward households but the members of relatively affluent households are also migrating either in

the same proportion or even higher. Around one fifth household has received remittances sent by the migrants of the household. The remittances comprise almost half to one third of the household expenditure, irrespective of economic status of the households. It is mostly spent on food and other items of consumer expenditure, health care and education of the family members. The use of remittances for food and other basic needs is almost similar across the different MPCE groups which suggest the importance of remittances for their survival as well as betterment across the economic classes. Remittances received through migration have provided an important cushion against food insecurity for many households in Bihar. This must be noted by the policy makers while formulating programmes for mitigating poverty in Bihar.

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