

Socio-Economic Analysis of In-Migration: A Report of the Field Study

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Abstract

Migration plays an important role in influencing the socio economic, structural, cultural transformation of the region. As per the study conducted by Narayana et al. (2013) in Kerala, the bulk of domestic migrant labourers over 25 lakhs are from different parts of India and also from parts of Bangladesh and Nepal. The study revealed that there were only 16 lakh Keralites working abroad; which is interestingly much lesser than the migrant workers in Kerala. An attempt has been made to study the socio-economic aspects of the in-migrants in Kuthuparamba municipality. The study revealed that most of the migrants were from North Indian states. Poverty and lack of opportunities in the place of origin were the main reasons for labour migration. Higher wages with the intention of creating livelihood attracts the labourers to the place of destination.

Keywords: *In- migration, Push and pull factors, Socio-economic conditions*

INTRODUCTION

Migration is a global phenomenon of movement of people from one location to another caused by various factors which may be economic, social, political, environmental, cultural and others. Though pull factors exist in the developed

areas, the push factors play a major role in comparison. Man has for long moved to places with better socioeconomic conditions which persist even today. This movement brings about transformation in social and economic level both in the place of origin and place of destination.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) Report 2018 estimated 258 million international migrants worldwide in 2017 out of which 164 million were migrant workers constituting a whopping 59.2 percent of all international migrants. Out of total migrant workers, 96 million are men and 68 million are women. Among the migrant workers 86.5 percent fall in the age group of 25 to 64 years. 8.3 percent constitute workers in the age group of 15- 24 years and workers aged 65 plus constitute 5.2 percent. Migration in India has a long history. Indians are spread all over the world; some of the major destinations being Gulf countries, North America and Europe in recent past. According to the World Development Report 2020, India has a migrant population to the tune of 17.5 million whereas the estimates of Indian overseas is greater numbering 31 million. The Report further reads that out of the total international migrants of 272 million, 164 million that is two thirds are migrant workers. As per the census of 2011, India has about 450 million internal migrants an increase of 45 percent over the recorded 309 million in 2001.

On the basis of origin and destination internal migration may be classified as: i) rural-rural, ii) rural-urban, iii) urban-rural

and iv) urban-urban. As per the census 2011, estimated 21 crore rural -rural migrants, 8 crore each of rural- urban and urban-urban migrants and urban-rural migrants around 3 crore. As per the study conducted by Narayana et al. (2013) in Kerala, the bulk of domestic migrant labourers over 25 lakhs are from different parts of our nation and also from parts of Bangladesh and Nepal. The study revealed that there were only 16 lakh Keralites working abroad; which is interestingly much lesser than the migrant workers in Kerala. Migration plays an important role in influencing the socio economic, structural, cultural transformation of the region. As per the 68th report by the National Sample Survey Office, Kerala has a very few natives contributing to the working force. The report also read that around 11.6 percent of migrants who had gone to their home town did not return fearing the uncertain and risky situations facing them. It is clear that the migrants face several socio-economic constraints in the region of destination, majorly related to wages, food, shelter, communication etc. The present study tries to identify the push and pull factors of the unskilled male migrants in Kuthuparamba municipality and also tries to understand their socioeconomic conditions.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- a. To understand the types and trends of migration.
- b. To identify the push and pull factors of migration.
- c. To analyse the socio-economic conditions of the migrants.

METHODOLOGY

The main focus of the study is the socio-economic conditions of migrant labourers. The benefits received by the migrant labourers in the new cities are identified in this study. The study also covers the problems faced by the migrants with respect to wages or social standing, the acceptance by the local crowd in the destination region. The study enables one to understand the push and pull factors of migration especially related to labourers considering Kuthuparamba municipality. It helps in understanding the issues related to migrant labourers and aids in formulation of effective policies benefiting both the migrants and also the native, ultimately leading to common welfare.

The selected region for study is Kuthuparamba municipality, Kannur, Kerala. As per the census 2011 the estimated population of this region is 32405. The total population of unskilled male migrants is approximately 6000 to

8000. Established on 1st of April 1990, Kuthuparamba is a main town, yet a village by heart. With a population density of 1767/km Kuthuparamba has an area of 16.76sq km. Community of Hindus, Muslims and Christians live here with distinct socio-cultural traditions. The average literacy rate here is 96 percent which is higher than the national average of 74 percent. The study concentrates on male unskilled migrant workers taking a sample size of 100 randomly. Primary and secondary data is used to analyse the objectives of the study. The primary data is collected from the migrant workers through questionnaires. Apart from this field visits are conducted to gather additional information. Various books, journals, newspaper reports, and websites relating to labour migration are analysed which form the secondary source of information. Based on the data collected, the problem statement is analysed using percentage method.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Migration has been a subject of interest from time immemorial across various dimensions of study. Many scholars have unraveled the facts and realities of labour migration.

The role of jobber-cum-contractors from the districts of Tamilnadu, serving as migrant labourers in Kerala have an upper hand in the migration stream as per the study conducted by Anand (1986). The push factors behind this migration being low wages and unemployment at home town while high demand with higher wages formed the pull factors. These jobber-cum- contractors starting unskilled workers later acquired skills to act as recruiting agents, supervisors and also having responsibility with power to pay wages to the migrants. The study also revealed that though the migrants received wages higher than the minimum wages, but they did not receive any benefits as per the Inter-state migrant Workmen Act 1979. Seasonal migration of agricultural workers as an element to understand the interrelationship between growth in agricultural output and changes in agrarian structure is analysed by Rogaly (1999). The study revealed that the factors like caste, class and religion determining the socio-economic relations changed due to seasonal migration. Dealing with the labour union movement in relation to the problems and prospects of migrant labours, Chand (2000) asserted that migration took place due to economic conditions in the host states. His study found that though there was no difference in the perception

of trade union movement by the migrants and locals, the locals participated actively in union activities. Migration has resulted in the lower wages and employment opportunities for the locals in the destination.

A study by Kumar (2000) on unskilled labour in Kerala found that a paradoxical situation in Kerala labour market exist of severe shortage of labour and high rate of employment. He says that higher educational attainment, higher household income, discouragement of parents to do manual work, trying to be self-employed, migrating to gulf countries were the foremost reasons for such a situation. Further a paper by Surabhi and Kumar (2007) says that a large influx of migrants to Kerala from varied parts of the country with multi cultural background has pressurised the civic amenities and also governance. Moreover these floating migrants are not taken in account while preparing population projection for planning.

Deshingkar and Shaheen's (2009) study on migration and human development in India shows a precariously dangerous living and working environment of migrant labourers. This is because the migrant labourers are not recognized at the

policy level and are not able to get better living standard. Dealing with migration and urban transition in India, Bhagat (2010) opine that internal migration is quite larger than international migration. The study deals with the ways and means to reduce the impact of push factors and enhance the influence of pull factors so that the return on human capital investment is maximised as migration helps in development.

Migrant workers lack skills related to local language, do not know about their rights, ignorant of prevailing wages in the job market as the local community isolates them. This allows the workers to be exploited by the locals without providing them the market wage or the required protection says Moses and Irudaya (2012).

Keshri and Bhaghat (2013) study reveals that around 13 million migrants in Indian are seasonal and temporary in nature with lower level of education and skills. Hence are subject to exclusions like the social security programmes including public distribution of health care, food, housing, education and so on. The same idea is revealed in the study of Ravi and Rajib (2016). They say that workers in destination have poor working and living condition, rights being violated and do not have any voice and entitlements. Their

study further sees that even though the wages are lower, somehow the migrant workers manage to save and remit the savings to their homes. Interestingly, the study observed that there is increase in income among migrant household leading to better consumption and spending for a better living including children's education, investment on productive assets, housing etc. Dealing with the homelessness of migrants in Mumbai, Jha and Pushpendra. (2016) asserts that these migrants continuously live in a condition under public gaze, prone to violence and also are denied of human rights. Arun and Ajay (2017) are of the opinion that the structural changes undergoing in the country has also changed the nature and pattern of migration. It is observed in the state of Kerala where the new trend of replacement migration especially the labour in migration is seen. They further assert that the state being the flourishing job market for labourers it has to deal effectively with the harsh realities facing these migrants.

Migration, urbanisation and development are linked with one another and the actual potential impact on development is presented by Bhagat (2018). The research says that there are lot many positive impacts both in the host region as well as in the destination. Similar opinion is given

Rajan and Zachariah. (2020) dealing with Kerala economy. The study revealed that the migration has brought about a change not only in economic but also in the social structure of the state.

Recently Rajan, Sivakumar and Srinivasan (2020) examine the contemporary migrant crisis due to COVID-19, by examining the condition of internal migrant labourers with respect to gender, mental health and social security provisions. Their study concludes that many migrants remain excluded from various governmental schemes due to their 'neither here, nor there' status. This should be done in alignment to the intent-impact gap analysis of such schemes. Further according to them it is also necessary to form a migrant collective for better voice and political agency of migrants.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Age Structure of Migrant Labourers

Age is a vital aspect that determines the capacity of a labour. It is very much evident in the Indian economy where nearly half of the population are youngsters. This forces Indian economy to grow faster. Table 1.1 explains age structure of the people who are working in the study area.

Table 1.1 Age Structure	
Age	Percentage
Under 25	37
25 to 35	43
35 to 45	13
45 to 60	7
Total	100
Source: Survey Data	

Table 1.1 depicts that 43 per cent of migrated labourers fall in the age group of 25 to 35 years. This shows that most of the labourers working here are youngsters so the productivity of the labourers is more. During the field survey it was understood that older labourers are not offered jobs as it is the manual work to be done. This can be clearly seen in the table 1.1, where labourers who are aged 35 to 45 are only 13 per cent as age increases the percentage of labourer's participation decreases. Between the ages 45 to 60 only 7 per cent are employed this clearly says the importance of age in working force. When it comes to the age under 25, the total percentage of labourers employed is 37 per cent. This data says that child labour in the job market is less because if there were child labour in the market then the percentage of labourers who are working under the age 25 could have been increased more than the age between 25 to 35 years.

PLACE OF ORIGIN OF MIGRANT LABOURERS

Labourers flock to the destination state from all over the country. Table 1.2 clearly explains how they are spread all over the study area. It is evident that 27 per cent of the respondents are from West Bengal and 23 per cent from Bihar. States like Uttar Pradesh and Assam have 14 per cent and 17 per cent respectively. Migrants from South Indian states like Tamilnadu and Karnataka are comparatively less. It is clear that there are less job opportunities in poorer states. **See table 1.2**

LEVEL OF EDUCATION AMONG MIGRANT LABOURERS

Education has a great role in making labourers more skill full. Table 1.3 gives data about the education qualification of the respondents. It shows that 36 per cent of the respondents know to read and write and only 19 per cent of the respondents are illiterate. The respondent who finished high school and plus two are 14 per cent and 4 per cent respectively. There is no labour migrant who is graduated or more. This reveals that the respondents are fairly educated and well aware of the situation. **See table 1.3**

Table 1.2: Place of Origin

State	Percentage
Tamil Nadu	7
Uttar Pradesh	14
Assam	17
W. Bengal	27
Bihar	23
Andhra Pradesh	3
Karnataka	9
Total	100

Source: Survey Data

Table 1.3: Education Qualification

Education	Percentage
Illiterate	19
Read and write	36
Primary education	27
High school	14
Plus two	4
Other	0
Total	100

Source: Survey Data

Family Status of the Migrant Labourers

The size of the family has a direct bearing on the economic condition of the family. Table 1.4 shows that 79 per cent of the respondents are coming from a family where there are only 5 members in the family and 21 per cent with 5 to 10 members. This data which is collected from the respondent says that most of the respondents are from nuclear family. This is in tune with the urbanisation trend at the national level.

Table 1.4: Family Status	
No. of family members	Percentage
Below 5	79
5 to 10	21
10 to 15	0
Above 15	0
Total	100
Source: Survey Data	

AREA AND TYPE OF WORK

Table 1.5 says that 46 per cent of the people are working in construction sector. 26 per cent in hotel sector, 22 per cent in mining. Only 4 per cent of the people are working in industries and they require better skill. One of the most interesting aspects which we can find from the data is that percentage of people who are working in the agricultural sector is zero. It may be because agriculture sector is not so lucrative as other sectors.

Table 1.5: Area and Type of Work			
Occupation	Percent	Type	Percent
Construction workers	46	Contract	13
Agriculture	0		
Industry	4	Daily basis	56
Mining	22		
Hotels	26	Task- based	31
Wholesale and retail	2		
Total	100	Total	100
Source: Survey Data			

It is also observed that 56 per cent of the respondents are working on daily basis and 31 per cent are working on task-based. Task based means they will work till a particular work finishes and after that they will move to another work. 13 per cent of the respondents are working on the basis of contract. It is clear that there is no job security to the labourers

LIVING PERIOD, WORKING HOURS AND REMUNERATION

Table 1.6 : Living Period , Workings Hours and Daily Wage

Time duration	Percent	Working hours	Percent	Daily wage	Percent
Less than one year	23	6 to 8 hr	23	Below Rs. 350	13
1 to 5 year	42	8 to 10 hr	32	Rs 350 to Rs 500	38
5 to 10 year	31	10 to 12 hr	45	Rs 500 to Rs 600	39
More than 10 year	4	Above 12 hr	0	Above Rs 600	10
Total	100	Total	100	Total	100

Source: Survey Data

Table 1.6 gives the detail about the duration of migrants in the place of destination, working hours as well as the wages. It is observed that migrant labourers stay at least for one year make some money and return to their home towns. 23 percent stayed for less than one year, 42 percent upto 5 years, 31 percent up to 10 years and interestingly 4 percent stayed more than 10 years in the place of destination. This implies that the labourers are satisfied with the working conditions and remuneration. Many of the respondents live with their families that may be one of the reasons too. Only 23 percent of the respondents were working for 6 to 8 hours. 32 percent of them worked for 8 to 10 hours and 45 percent worked for more than 10 hours. It is observed from the field survey that the respondents were unaware of the stipulated working hours. People who are over working are mostly from the hotel and

construction sector in order to finish the work for the day. It was also observed that some respondents were paid for the overtime work.

With regard to the wages, it is observed that 13 percent of the respondents get less than Rs 350 per day as their daily wage. Around 50 percent of the respondents get daily wages above Rs 500. This is an incentive for the migrants to choose the destination where remuneration is good.

STANDARD OF LIVING

Table 1.7 gives the opinion of the migrants regarding their standard of living after migration. It is observed that 56 percent of the respondents agree that their standard of living has improved after migration. Out of the 56 percent, 41 percent say their income has increased, 30.4 percent say they have learnt additional skills, 21.5 percent say that there is improvement in their health

and only 7.1 percent say that there is improvement in education.

Table 1.7: Standard of Living and the Type of Improvement			
Changes in standard of living	Frequency	Type of improvement	Percent
Yes	56	Health	21.5
		Education	7.1
No	44	Additional skill	30.4
		Improvement in income	41.0
Total	100	Total	100
Source: Survey Data			

LIVING CONDITION OF THE MIGRANTS

Living environment is an important aspect of health of an individual. Table 1.8 depicts that 93 percent of the respondents say that they have language problem and 33 percent have job satisfaction. Language

problem itself is a great hindrance in establishing relationship with the locals. 59 percent have health problems and none of them have health insurance. During the field survey it was observed that a small number of the migrants are covered by health insurance but they are not aware of that.

The health problems relate to body pain to the extent of 39 percent, external injury 22.3 percent, over stress to the extent of 30 percent. It is observed that the migrants living condition is not that good. They have to share a single room. It is observed that 44 percent of them share a room with 5 to 10 persons, 19 percent of them with 10 to 15 people and 37 percent with less than five people. This itself leads to quarrel and fight among themselves, drug abuse and other unwanted activities hampering health of the migrants.

Table 1.8: Living Condition of Migrants							
	Yes	No	No. of person in a room	Frequency	Health problem	Frequency	Percentage
Language problem	93	7	Below 5	37	Internal injury	5	8.47
Health problem	59	41	5 to 10	44	External injury	13	22.03
Job satisfaction	33	67	10 to 15	19	Body pain	23	38.98
Health insurance	0	100	Total	100	Over stressed	18	30.52
Source: Survey Data							

FACTORS RELATED TO MIGRATION

Table 1.9: Reasons for Migration					
Information about the Job	Frequency	Push Factors	Percent	Pull factors	Percentage
Friends	46	Lack of opportunity	34	Better living condition	14.91
Relatives	31	Low salary	56	Just followed other	17.54
Hired by employer	16	Worst living condition	0	Opportunity	28.07
		Political reason	0	High wage	24.56
Other	7	Communal violence	2	Low living expense	14.91
		Other reason	8	Education	0
Total	100	Total	100	Total	100
Source: Survey Data					

Table 1.9 depicts the details about the information regarding the job in the place of destination. It is clear that nearly half of them to the extent of 46 percent were informed by their friends, 31 percent by relatives and 16 percent were hired by the employer.

With regard to the push factors from the place of origin, the data reveals that 56 percent of them migrated due to low wages, 34 percent for lack of opportunity and 2 percent for communal violence. Regarding the pull factors the data depicts that 28.07

percent were attracted towards the opportunity, 24.56percent towards higher remuneration and around 14 percent for better living condition and lower cost of living. It is interesting to note that education is not the priority of labour migration. Thus, the table clearly says that the push factor being lower wages in the place of origin, many respondents migrated seeking higher wages in the place of destination.

REASONS TO RETURN HOME

Table 1.10: Reasons to Return Home	
Reasons	Percentage
Linguistic problem	24.57
Lack of security	3.38
Over time work	22.03
Missing home	27.96
Low wage	15.25
Other	6.77
Total	100
Source: Survey Data	

During the field survey it is observed that the respondents wanted to go to their home town. Table 1.10 give the details about varied reasons cited by the respondents.

Table 1.10 reveals that 27.96 percent of the respondents were missing their home, followed by 24.57 who cited linguistic problem, 22.03 percent opined overtime work and 15.25 cited low wages as the reasons for which they want to return to their home town. It is observed that whatever may be the reason they wish to go back. This is again in tune with the percentage of respondents who have no job satisfaction as depicted earlier. It is the job and the salary that attracts them to earn a livelihood and not out of interest they migrate.

CONCLUSION

Migration takes place for varied reasons. This study dealt with the in-migration of labourers to the destination. The study revealed that most of the migrants were from North Indian states. Poverty and lack of opportunities in the place of origin were the main reasons for labour migration. Higher wages with the intention of creating livelihood attracts the labourers to the place of destination. Migrants were able to save and remit their savings to their families back home. The migrants faced several problems related to health, language, living environment etc. Most of them wanted to go back to their home town. It is high time that the concerned authorities took steps to organise these migrants and see that labour laws are implemented properly, such that both the

parties are benefitted. The ILO (2020) has clearly visualised the problem of migrants. The report envisages the highly mobile nature of these migrants and recommends various institutions and structures to be evolved to facilitate them. We have a long way to go to make our nation a better place, creating an encouraging environment for the migrants in India.

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