

MIGRATION – CAUSES, CHALLENGES & CONSEQUENCES

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Abstract

Migration is a universal phenomenon which refers to the movement of either an individual or an entire family for their native place to a new place in search of better prospects, safety and security of life, etc. Migration brings development in the life of the migrants that influences other people also to migrate for want of better employment opportunities. Many pull and push factors are responsible for such migration from one region to another region. Pull factors are those that attract an individual or family towards the place of destination and push factors refers to those factors which force and compel an individual move to other region. Major reasons behind such migration may be unemployment, natural disaster, threat for life, career development, etc. Migration leads to urbanization where people from different regions come and settle in another region for development purpose. This paper attempts to study the causes for migrating from one region to another, challenges faced by migrants in the new place and consequences of migration on the life of migrants as well as on the native place and the place of destination.

KEY WORDS: MIGRATION, INTERNAL, INTERNATIONAL, EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES, BETTER PROSPECTS.

“Migrants and refugees are not pawns on the chessboard of humanity. They are children, women and men who leave or who are forced to leave their homes for various reasons, who share a legitimate desire for knowing and having, but above all for being more.”
Pope Francis, World Day of Migrants and Refugees (2014)

Introduction

Migration refers to the movement of the people from one place to another, generally from rural to urban areas or from less developed region to developed region with the intention of permanent settlement in the new area/region/location. The place of birth is referred to their native place or place of origin and the place /region to which migrate and settle is called as the place of destination. Many pull and push factors are responsible for such migration from one region to another region. Pull factors are those that attract an individual or family towards the place of destination and push factors refers to those factors which force and compel an individual move to other region. Major reasons behind such migration may be unemployment, natural disaster, threat for life, career development, etc. Migration leads to urbanization where people from different regions come and settle in another region for development purpose. Migration is a old phenomenon where in people in olden days have also migrated for want of employment opportunities, safety and security and also as refugees to other countries. There are various **types of migration** as explained below:

- **Internal migration** movement of people within the country or geographical boundary in search of better prospects.
- **International migration** is people from one country move to other country for the purpose of employment, education, safety etc.
- **Emigration** is when a person leaves one country and moves to other country for living purpose.
- **Immigration** is moving to another country permanently for making home.
- **Seasonal migration** when a person moving to other country in response to change in climate and season.’

- **Return migration** is when a person moves back to his native or place of origin.
- **Voluntary migration** is when a person or a family moves from one region or country to another region or country for better economic conditions and employment opportunities.
- **Involuntary or Forced migration** when an individual or a family is forced to move from their place of origin to another country by the government due to war, forcefully sent as a slave or prisoner or due to other political factors.

Review of Literature

Anju Bala (2017) investigated the causes and consequences of migration in India. The study concluded that migration of the people had positive and negative impact on the economy. Rural-urban migration was predominant and this could be controlled through intensified policies of the government in the development of agriculture and allied activities, employment generating and training programs.

Bhagat (2010), studied the trends and patterns of international and internal migration in India and also investigated whether and under privileged and poor people migrated more in search of employment and better wages. The study revealed that both inward and outward migration had positive effects on the Indian economy as there was an increase in the per capita income and non agricultural employment opportunities.

Dilip Saikia (2015), examined the socio-economic conditions of migrant labourers in Kerala. The socio-economic indicators refer to income, consumption, savings, living conditions, remittances, occupation of migrants and skill acquisition after migration. The study revealed that majority of migrants earned less income and hence found difficult to face their basic expenditures. Thus long distance migration, employment and income, better living and working condition played vital role for migrating to Kerala.

Jaber Hasan Khan et al (2011), examined the causes for migration in general and sex-wise and also based on distance in India and also highlighted the socio-economic factors determining migration in India. The research concluded that socio-economic factors like employment , marriage were the major reasons for migration from rural to urban areas.

Margaret Walton et al (2017), made a cross country analysis on the causes and impact of migration and government policies on health labourers in four countries – Jamaica, India, Phillipines and South Africa. The impact of migration of health workers had serious effects on the availability of nurses and specialists. The availability of general physicians were not affected by the availability of specialists, particularly in the rural areas were highly affected. This shortage of specialists and nurses in rural areas led to non-attending of sickness and death in some cases.

Rajakumar and Shantha Astige (2015) studied the social perspective of migration in India and also identified the causes and impact of migration on the place of destination. The result showed that women had gained empowerment in decision making, managing land and other assets and also earned income which supported their family.

Rani Srivatsava and Sasikumar (2003), investigated the internal and international migration at large scale and its effects on developing and economy and reducing poverty. The effect of migration on the source areas was adverse in nature as out migration reduced the availability of labour in the source areas and in some cases women and children were replaced for male migrants. The effect of migration in destination area compensated the shortage of labour and also led to wage reduction.

Sangita Kumari (2014), explored the factors that determined the rural-urban migration in India. The study was done all four types of migration – rural to rural, rural to urban, urban to rural and urban to urban migration of these rural to urban migration was very prominent. Majority of men migrated from rural to urban areas and female migrated from rural to rural

areas. The factors determined migration among male were employment and high wages and female it was dominated by marriage.

Smitha Dubey and Varsha Mallah (2015), examined the causes and effects of migration in India. The major impacts were brain drain and lack of talented and skilled human resource, outflow of knowledge and capital resource. Effective policies to bring back the professionals who were settled abroad would lead to sustained growth of India.

Srinivasan and Illango (2012), focused on the social, economic, health and working conditions, nature of migration, problems and exploitation faced by female migrants. Majority of the respondents viewed that no safety, health and social security measures were provided to them including maternity leave and benefits. Hence the conclusion derived was that since construction was an unorganized the government laws were not followed in this industry which led to the deprivation of female migrant workers in the quarry industry.

Research methodology

Need for the study

Migration is an universal phenomenon which is in practice from the traditional days. It is due to the normal tendency of the people either for self development or for the development of the family. An individual migrates mainly due to better employment opportunities available in the place of destination and this leads to the dearth in the availability of human labour in the place from where people migrated. This also reduces the rate of population and the supply of labour in that region. Hence it becomes imperative to study and analyze about human migration, its causes, problems and impact on both the regions.

Objectives of the study

- To list out and explain the causes for migration.
- To analyze the problems faced by migrants in the place of destination.

- To study the impact of migration on the individual and place of destination.

Source of data

The study has made a descriptive analysis using information gathered from articles published in various journals, books, newspaper and websites.

Limitations of the study

Due to the current situation of lockdown because of COVID 19 primary data were not collected and only descriptive analysis has been made.

Causes for migration

The causes for migration can be broadly classified as push factors and pull factors. Push factors can further be classified as economic, social and environmental factors.

Push Factors

Push factors are those which push an individual or a family from their place of origin and force them to move to another region or country as refugee. This may be internal migration or international immigration. Internal migration occurs within the country for example from rural to urban areas. Rural areas are characterized by farm activities which is seasonal in nature. During off season i.e. the gestation period of crops the farm activities does not require labourers and hence they are unemployed and move to urban areas in search of jobs in industrial sector. Other reasons for push factor are explained below:

- **Economic factors** such as **low wages and salary** earned by an individual may be insufficient to meet out the requirements for self and the family and hence may lead a low standard of life, struggling to fulfill the needs of the family and this may result in **indebtedness**. Most of the time loan are taken from local money lenders who are unorganized sector charging high rate of interest and also indulge in unlawful practices to get back their money. This leads to stress and mental agony and to overcome this an individual migrate internally or externally in search of better prospects. Another vital cause for migration may be **unemployment and lack of career prospects** in the

native place. An individual may be highly educated, skilled but lack of availability of jobs suitable for his skill, or even if he is employed there may not be any better prospects for career development. These might urge an individual to migrate to regions or countries where jobs with better prospects are available.

Migration from rural to urban area may also be the result of **crop failure** due to monsoon failure, excess of rainfall, no irrigation facilities, lack of fertilizers and manures. All these may affect the farm productivity and income and hence lead to migration. **Lack of infrastructure facilities and better amenities** such as transport, communication, banking, power supply, no proper housing facilities, etc will affect the standard of living of the people and may induce them to migrate to a better region.

- **Social factors** The major social factor that motivates people to migrate from one place to another are all related to the societal setup of a nation, **safety and security reasons, denial of human rights**, etc. All these are man made that affects the survival of other people in that society. **High crime rates, discrimination** and poor human rights based on religion and community, **frequent war and internal conflicts** all these leads to lack of safety and security for the people and hence they migrate to other region to lead a peaceful life. **Marriage** played a major role in the migration among women and **low or poor inadequate medical facilities** in an area also influenced people to migrate to a better region.
- **Environmental factors** Environmental degradation such as pollution, natural disaster, drought and dryness also influence people for migration. Certain areas are worst affected due to **pollution** such as air, water and noise pollution. Industrialized areas are severely affected by all three pollution pose serious health threats to the residents of that region. Geographically, certain regions are prone to **frequent natural disasters** such as **flood, tsunami, earthquakes** hence people of these areas when they are directly affected by these disasters migrate to start up a new life. Drought or dryness leading to crop failure severely affects the life of farmers whose survival is entirely dependent of farm income. They migrate

to industrial regions and take up jobs in industries which gives regular income.

Pull factors

Pull factors are those which attracts an individual or family to leave their place of origin and migrate to place of destination. **Rapid industrialization** attracts and motivates people to migrate from rural village to urban towns and cities. **Friends and relatives settled in other region or country** also tend to influence people as they may render helping hand by seeking employment and providing accommodation till they settle. Sometimes the **less population in a region** also influences people to migrate because of **enhanced quality of life** better environment and attractive climate and internal stability and peace.

Problems faced by migrants in India

- **Language and communication** Language tops the first in the problems faced by migrants internally and globally. Language is the way to express our wants, desires, right from buying food to communication in work place. Of course, English is the universal language which everyone knows but there are few regions/ countries where English play a passive role and the local language dominates everywhere.
- **Employment** The next problem faced by migrants is finding a job and settling in life in a new place. As stated earlier language can be a major hindrance in getting job because employer would prefer a person having atleast speaking skill in regional language. Other barriers related to employment are long distance of travel, lack of training and skills, night shifts and long hours of work. Another problem which may be common among migrants is lack of recognition of the credentials and efficiency. In other words, the skill and efficient work of a migrant may not be identified and appraised by the employer.
- **Accommodation** Seeking accommodation and housing also pose a serious threat on migrants because they are new to the region and hence

the local residence might be reluctant to provide house for occupying. In some cases, migrants become road side dwellers without proper shelter.

- **Accessibility to service** Services such as banking, transport, communication service providers, networks, healthcare may be different compared to their native place. Migrants find it difficult to get driver's license, family card and other benefits provided by the local government.
- **Cultural difference** does not have major impact on elders by children and adolescents might get confused with the new culture and what to be adopted and followed. This may be from social customs to be followed, religious beliefs and diversity, attitude towards gender, etc.
- **Feeling lonely and isolation** An individual migrant might feel lonely until he gets acquainted with the neighbours and friends. Again language stands as a barrier and they miss their family and friends support and feel isolated and lonely. People coming from traditional support and background feel even more alienated from the society.
- **Weather** This problem persists with external migration or foreign countries. The weather condition in western countries are entirely different and initially the migrant would have to face some inconvenience but later on gets used to it.

Impact of migration on the life of migrants

Initially migrants face few problems till they settle and get accustomed to the environment and after settling migration have positive effects on the life of migrants as listed below:

- Better job opportunities and regular income.
- Enhanced standard of living.
- Better quality of life.
- Repayment of loan.
- Adapting to new culture, customs and language.

- Better education for siblings and children
- Development of cognitive skills and communication skills.
- Improved personal traits.
- Safety and security of life.
- Increased savings.
- Purchase of assets – essentials and luxury.
- Better health conditions.
- Abroad opportunities in employment.

Impact of migration on the place of origin and destination.

Movement of people from one place to another has both positive and negative effects on both the regions as listed below:

- Increase in urban population.
- Creation of slum areas.
- More pressure on the local government.
- Increased competition in employment, education, etc in the place of destination.
- Leaving behind family, friends and family occupation.
- Loss of rural population.
- Dearth of agricultural sector.
- Exploitation of migrant workers

Conclusion

Migration is an old phenomenon very common in all the countries. People migrate for want of good education, better employment opportunities and income, life

safety and security. There are social, cultural, economical and political differences and migrants face problems due to such difference but ultimately settle down in the place of destination and find a living over there. Migration develops the standard of living and quality of life of migrants but it affects the place of origin of these people up to some extent. Moving away from one's place of origin tends people to lose their family occupation, native identity. Other family members and friends in few cases they had sacrificed or left behind a small piece of land holdings or cattle reared and moved to a new region or country for betterment. At some point people miss their native place and wish to visit their home town and develop contacts with their missed relations and friends. Migration has positive impact on the place of destination because of availability of human labour both skilled and unskilled, new culture, tradition, food habits, weather and people get used and adapt to the new life style. The government also takes measures to safeguard the interests of migrants and it is imperative that the government supports them with more measures particularly migrants in the unorganized sector in terms of wages, working conditions, provision of accommodation, and security in job, provision of gadgets required for their job, etc. Migrants are people who leave their native place, family and live in other regions for the better prospects that support and uplift their family and it is the responsibility of that regional government, society and people to support their livelihood.

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