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REVIEW ARTICLE

EFFECTS OF INTERNAL MIGRATION ON POVERTY REDUCTION, INCOME AND GENDER INEQUALITY, RURAL TRANSFORMATION (INCLUDING URBANIZATION OF TOWNS) AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY

\*Gayatri Oleti

Ph.D Student Population Studies Department, Annamalai University Tamil Nadu, India

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ABSTRACT

Migration has become an integral part for the growth and development of the global economy. According to the UN, Migration from rural to urban areas has played a key role in the social and economic development of a country. Migration can have many implications on the individual as well as their families (<http://migratingoutofpoverty.dfid.gov.uk/files/file.php?name=wp2-impact-of-migration-on-poverty-and-development.pdf&site=354>).

Key words:

Migration,  
Rural poverty and gender.

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INTRODUCTION

There is a lack of data on internal remittances and hence it is difficult to completely understand the role of migration in poverty reduction and development. But there are various studies that show that migration can reduce poverty and lead to economic development. In India, temporary internal migration mainly comprises of the socially marginalised population such as the poor, lower castes, and the less educated. Temporary internal migration/circulatory migration have become a routine strategy for people living in such marginalized communities. Internal migration can bring in cash. Remittances which can be used to prevent a household/a family to slide further into poverty and even facilitate the households exit from poverty (<http://essays.ssrc.org/acrossborders/wp-content/uploads/2009/08/ch8.pdf>). A study conducted by Dayal and Karan stated that among the migrants from twelve villages in Jharkand 98% of migrants reported an improvement in their lives after migration. Another study by Mukherjee on migrant women from west Bengal who moved to delhi stated that the additional income earned has helped them to come out of poverty and earn some dignity. These remittances can be used to finance a range of expenses including food, weddings, schooling etc and such spending can have an overall impact by freeing resources for other productive uses.

Remittances are also thought to stimulate the land market in the sending areas, increase local wages and the demand for local goods and services and thus generally improve the economy. Also migrants that come back to their source regions bring back skills technical skills which they can invest in their hometowns and thus leading to economic development in their hometowns.

Impact of migration on Gender inequality

Survey conducted by NSSO (2007-2008) stated that 327 million people were internal migrants out of which 80% of them were females. Individuals who had changed their usual place of residence any time in the past comprised of 48% of rural females and 46% of urban females. Since women are ready to work for any wage, and perceived as passive and docile they are in great demand resulting in feminization of labour migration. A study by Hugo states that female migrants constitute nearly half of all Internal migrants in developing countries.

1. According to a study conducted by Acharya *et al.* they stated that women migrants are exposed to the risk of sexual exploitation and harassment. According to Breman, these women will have to work till the last stages of pregnancy and resume work immediately after child birth which leads to consequences for both the mother and the child. Another study by Saradmoni stated that female migrant labourers in the fish processing industries in Gujarat faced a lot of hardships and

\*Corresponding author: Gayatri Oleti,  
Ph.D Student Population Studies Department, Annamalai University  
Tamil Nadu, India.

exploitation under their supervisors ([http://www.mse.ac.in/pub/santhi\\_wp.pdf](http://www.mse.ac.in/pub/santhi_wp.pdf)). Thus there is a pressing need for the policy makers for the contribution and advocacy for the inclusion of migrant gender issues in various projects/programmes (<http://www.iom.int/cms/iom-and-gender>).

### **Impact of internal migration on Rural transformation, Urbanization**

2. The international union for the scientific study of population stated that the 21<sup>st</sup> century will see a rapid urban expansion and massive internal migration taking place in the developing countries. According to UNs projection major development will be in the urban areas and internal migrants would be the major component in urban growth and socioeconomic transformation (<http://www.iom.int/cms/iom-and-gender>). According to the centre for advanced studies of India, Urbanization in India is growing in a steadfast rate. Majority of this urban growth would be due to the movement of migrants from other rural areas (<http://www.iom.int/cms/iom-and-gender>; <http://casi.sas.upenn.edu/iit/mann>).

United Nations stated that rapid urbanization and migration would lead to tripling of slum population by 2050 and thus hinder the attainment of the MDG goals. But it is important to note that migration into urban areas is not only a negative phenomenon. We should look at internal migration as an opportunity taken up by people to improve their socio-economic conditions. Migration and urbanization will also lead to the emergence of globalization (<http://casi.sas.upenn.edu/iit/mann>). The international migration institute stated that financial transfers/remittances help in the improvement of the households and families left behind. Hence they would be living in a better socio-economic space.

According to a study by Lucas remittances may serve as an insurance to improve or counter crisis situations. <http://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/pdfs/migration-rural-development-poverty-and-food-security-a-comparative-perspective>. Thus in case of adversities such as drought agricultural failures, these remittances would be an extra saving which would help in the stability of the rural household left behind. Also these migrants would return with improved skills and innovative ideas and invest in their own region which causes better employment opportunities leading to a rural development or transformation (<http://www.iom.int/cms/iom-and-gender>).

### **Impact of internal migration on agricultural productivity**

Juna miluka *et al.* stated that the major impact of migration on agricultural productivity would be through the relocation of labour and capital through migration. In their study, Members in a family with migrants would work for very few hours in agricultural productivity. The remittances received by these Albanian households are used to move out of agriculture (<http://casi.sas.upenn.edu/iit/mann>). Amrita Sharma stated that a large proportion of the youth from the countryside are on their way out of agriculture. Opportunities in other booming sectors pulls them out of agriculture thus reducing agricultural productivity ([http://www.unicef.org/india/Migration\\_VOL2\\_v3.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/india/Migration_VOL2_v3.pdf)).

This withdrawal from agriculture can also be good for the economy as it reduces the burden on agriculture and raise effective income for the family members left behind. But certain studies show that while a large mass of youth is moving out of agriculture not many are skilled to move out of farming profitably. Due to which farming households would still have to depend on farming. In such a case these farms would be left to manage by older men and women ([http://www.unicef.org/india/Migration\\_VOL2\\_v3.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/india/Migration_VOL2_v3.pdf)). Thus policy makers must work on policies and strategies to overcome such a downward trend in agricultural productivity due to migration and help in utilizing these remittances in the development and productivity of the agricultural sector.

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