Causes and Impact of Seasonal Labour Migration: A Case Study of Karabadinni Village in Manvi Taluk

Mahammad Habeeb[1] and H. H. Uliveppa[2]

Abstract: *Seasonal migration in India is mostly from semi-arid zones of the country where poor households adopt seasonal migration as a routine livelihood strategy during the lean agricultural season. The present study is undertaken in a second largest arid region of India and the study relies on primary data collected from field survey. The primary focus of this study is to assess the socio-economic and demographic background of the households involved in seasonal migration as well as to examine whether it isa coping or accumulative strategy in the study area. It also tries to find out the reasons behind and impact of seasonal migration with special focus on left behinds. The majority of the households involved in seasonal migration are characterized with higher level of dependency ratio, low literacy level, agriculture as a primary source of income, marginal size of land holdings and indebtedness. The problem of seasonal or internal migration in our country is it is being looked more as a negative phenomenon than positive, This study has concluded that seasonal migration can be an engine in reduction of surplus labour from agricultural sector over the period of time.*

Keywords: Seasonal labour migration; Short term migration; lefts behinds; MGNREGA, Karnataka, Hyderabad-Karnataka region, Manvi.

Introduction

The volume of short term or temporary migration is significantly increasing year after year, large section of people involved in this are from agriculturally backward and rural areas of the country. The National commission of rural labour (NCRL) has estimated the number of circular/short-term/seasonal migration in rural areas alone at around 10 million (Cited in Deshingkar P and Denial start, 2003). Though the volume of internal migration is higher in comparison with international migration in India, especially of the temporary or seasonal type has been either overlooked or attracted little attention from academicians and policy makers in contrast to the international migration (Keshri and Bhagat, 2013; Rogaly et al, 2001). The growing part of migration taking place in India is seasonal and cyclical in nature (Korra, 2010). Seasonal migration in India is mostly from semi-arid zones of the country where many poor households adopt seasonal migration as routine livelihood strategy during the lean agricultural season (Bag, 2011 and Keshri and Bhagat, 2012). People remain unemployed after the harvesting activities, in the absence of appropriate institutional arrangement, seasonal migration plays a vital role in providing gainful employment opportunities. Parida and Madheswaran (2012) unveiledthe root cause of seasonal migration for employment; lack of employment options in the agrarian sector, distress factors like unemployment, indebtedness, low wages and irregular income in the villages push the people and families out. Whereas Sinha and Mishra (2012) found lack of irrigation facilities, small size of land

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[1]Doctoral Student, DOS in Economics, Karnataka University, Dharwad.
[2]Professor, Dept of Economics, Karnatak University, Dharwad, Karnataka.
 Corresponding author: Mahammad Habeeb can be contacted at: mahammadhabeeb@gmail.com
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holdings, acute poverty, improper and untimely implementation of MGNREGA were the major causes of seasonal migration. With this background Manvitaluk from Raichur district has been chosen for the study to findcauses, impact and status of seasonal migrant's households in terms of social and economic aspects. Since last decade the study area has been witnessing seasonal migration of the labourers in search of livelihood opportunities during agricultural lean season. Manvitaluk of the Raichur district is one among the most backward taluks of the Karnataka state as per Dr. D.M. Nanjundappa committee report on 'High Power Committee for Redressal of Regional Imbalances in Karnataka'.The taluk is located in Hyderabad-Karnataka region which is also known as second largest arid regions of the country, where most part of the landis dry and agricultural activities depend only on monsoon. So, during post harvesting period people who are dependent on agriculture find no alternate source to lead their life, these circumstances push rural labourers towards urban areas in search of livelihood opportunities. Against this background the study assumes a great significance and the following objectives have been set for the present study.

Objectives of the Study
This paper aims to address mainly the following aspects of seasonal migration.
1) To study the household characteristics of seasonal migrants.
2) To analyse the pattern of seasonal migration.
3) To identify the factors contributing to seasonal migration.
4) To examine the impact of seasonal migration on household economy.

Methodology
The methodological section envelops a brief discussion of the study area, sample design, nature and sources of data andanalytical framework employed in this study for addressing the set of objectives.

Karabdinni Village of Manvitaluk from Raichur district of Karnataka state has been selected for the household survey. Hence it is a pilot study, Manvitaluk of the Raichur district has been selected by using convenience sampling technique to avoid the cost and time involved in selection of taluk and district. The selection of village has been made after some consultations with local authorities, members of the various civil societies and press reporters in Manvitaluk. As per the observations of these groups Karabdinnni in Manvitaluk is one among the villages which have been witnessing seasonal migration over a decade.

The study is mainly based on primary data collected from household field survey. The sample size of the households of migrants has been determined after having consultations with village authority, local people by taking from them a rough idea on total number of households in the village and total number of households witnessed migrants. After this the sample size of the households has been finalized to 60 households. Purposive sampling method has been used for collection of information from each household whereas a structured interview schedule has been used to gather information needed for the study.

Information collected during the time of household survey were scrutinized and tabulated. The descriptive statistics of Frequencies, Weighted Averages, Cross-tabs were used to analyze the data as per the objectives of the study.The detail of another tool used in the present study is given below.

Henry Garret Ranking Technique
This technique is used to evaluate the determining factors of seasonal migration. In this method respondents of the migrant's household were asked to list out the ranks-wise reasons for seasonal migration according to the magnitude of the reason. The orders of the merit given by respondents were converted into ranks by using the following formula.

$$\text{Percentage Position} = \frac{100 \left(R_{ij} - 0.5\right)}{N_j}$$

Where,

$$R_{ij} = \text{Rank given for i}^{th}\text{item j}^{th}\text{individual}$$
$$N_j = \text{Number of items ranked by j}^{th}\text{individual}$$

The percentage position of each rank thus obtained was converted into scores by referring to the table given by Henry Garret. Then for each factors the scores of the individual respondents for whom the scores were added. These mean scores for all the factors were arranged in the order of their ranks and the factors having highest mean value are considered to be the most important factors.

Results and Discussion

Background of Seasonal Migrant Households
This section deals with demographic and economic aspects of the migrant's households with a special focus on social category, gender, level of education, occupation and land holdings. Demographic and economic aspects of the households help us in understanding background of the households witnessing seasonal migration. The detailed discussion is presented below.

The data provided in Table1indicate that households belong to OBC and SC recorded highest male (52 percent) and female (51 percent) population respectively. Overall the population size of the migrant households belonging to OBC is found highest in comparison with SC and ST households.

Table 1: Distribution of population by gender and social category (in Percentages)

Category	Household Population		
	Male	**Female**	**Total**
SC	49	51	100
ST	51	49	100
OBC	52	48	100
Total	51	49	100

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

The details on education level of household population by social category are provided in Table 2. The level ofeducation is an important tool to predict the type of activity/work in which the members of the household have involved. It is observed from the table that 54.6 percent population of the migrant's household is not literate. Majority of the persons within a group of not literates are from ST category and there is only a slight difference between SC and OBC. By looking at these figures it can be assumed that the most number of migrants are not literates, mostly unskilled and depended on farming activities. During the lean agricultural period they use to be idle due to lack of alternate work opportunities, so, it compels them to migrate seasonally in search of other alternative jobs.

Table 2: Distribution of household population by Level of Education and social category (in Percentages)

Education level of the household population	Social Category			
	SC	ST	OBC	Total
Not Literate	51.6	63.0	51.3	54.6
Primary	20.3	13.0	19.2	17.9
Upper Primary	10.9	9.3	9.0	9.7
Secondary	6.3	9.3	10.3	8.7
Higher Secondary	4.7	3.7	7.7	5.6
Graduate	4.7	1.9	2.6	3.1
Post Graduate	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.5
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

The data provided in the Table3 shows the distribution of migrant'shouseholds' members by their occupation. In rural India, agriculture is still a primary source of income for large chunk of people and seasonal migrants are not an exception to this. It is observed that out of total members of the households 93 percent have found as agricultural labourers whereas 2.1 percent and 0.7 percent have found self employed and regular wage/salaried respectively. It is also found from these figures that only few household members have engaged in activities other than agriculture. Hence, agriculture activities depend on monsoon, single crop system is prevailing in most part of the country and it is the main factor behind unemployment during post harvest period.

Table 3: Distribution of household members by their occupation (in Percentages)

Occupation	Social Category			
	SC	ST	OBC	Total
Agri-labourer	93.2	90.7	94.6	93.0
Non-AgriLabourer	6.8	2.3	3.6	4.2
Self Employed	0.0	7.0	0.0	2.1
Regular Wage/Salaried	0.0	0.0	1.8	0.7
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

Table 4 shows distribution of households accordingly the size of the land holdings. Previous studies (reviewed by present study) on migration have found that households having low access to land are more likely to migrate than the household having high access to land. It is seen from the table that more than 50 percent of the migrant's households accounted marginal land holdings (less than 2.5 acre). 27 percent of the households possess the land holdings between 2.5 to 5 acre and only 6.67 percent households possess medium sized land holdings. It can be assumed from the figures given in the Table 4 that there is a correlation between migration and the size of the land holdings. If the size of the land holdings is small then the income from agriculture will be less, in these situations people seek new waysof alternatives to feed their families when they don't find opportunities in their places, they migrate to other places in search of employment opportunities.

Table 4: Details of migrant's household by size of the land holdings (in Percentages)

Land Holdings	Irrigated	Dry land	Total
Land less	90.00	23.33	13.33
Marginal (>2.5 Acre)	6.67	56.67	53.33
Small (2.5-5 Acre)	0.00	16.67	26.67
Medium (5-10 Acre)	3.33	3.33	6.67
Total	100	100	100

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

Causes and Impact of seasonal migration

Rural labourers migrate seasonally to urban areas of the state, majority of them are migrating to Bengaluru, a capital city of Karnataka. Almost all labourers have reported construction industry as their prime choicefor work, they easily get employed there as most of seasonal migrants are unskilled and uneducated. The duration of their migration lies in between one to five months. They usually return before monsoon foragricultural activities in their respective native places. The details on gender pattern, causes and patterns have been presented below.

The detail on migrants of the households by their social category and gender is presented in Table 5. It is found that out of total number of migrants 60 percent are male and rest are females. This figure is a supporting proof of an assumption that'number of males involved in short term migration for employment purposeis higher than that of females. 64 percent of males of ST households and 39 percent of females of SC households are migrating seasonally in search of work and it is found highest in comparison with migrants of the other community. Males of the SC and females of the ST community have migrated in less in number but the difference is marginal among each other.

Table 5: Distribution of migrants of the households by gender and social category

Category	Migrant's		
	Male	Female	Total
SC	61	39	100
ST	64	36	100
OBC	62	38	100
Total	60	40	100

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

Causes of Seasonal Migration

Seasonal migration is the result of numerous factors but the following factors listed here are based on the information collected from the field survey.

The figures placed in the table6 are calculated values found after using the Garret Ranking Technique. The reason with highest average score is accorded first rank and lowest score with last rank. Table 6 presents the reasons for seasonal migration. Seasonal migration from the study area is mainly taking place for six reasons, namely, drought, seasonal unemployment, low wage rate, indebtedness, poverty, single crop. According to the calculated values, seasonal unemployment or unemployment during post harvesting is accorded with first rank, indebtedness with second, poverty with third, single crop with fourth whereas low wage rate with fifth and drought or famine with sixth rank by the respondents of the migrant's households. In the study area seasonal unemployment, indebtedness and poverty have found main factors responsible for seasonal migration because on the one hand agriculture sector has failed to generate enough income or source to the labourers with which they could survive during the off season without migrating somewhere, on the other hand there is no alternate in the study area during the agricultural off season. In this way seasonal

migration at least shields rural labourers from sliding further into the poverty, if it could not help them to come out of poverty.

Table 6: Causes seasonal migration

Reasons	Average Score	Rank
Drought or Famine	23.36	6
Seasonal Unemployment	43.34	1
Low Wage Rate	23.7	5
Indebtedness	38.08	2
Poverty	27.98	3
Single Crop	24.16	4

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

Impact of seasonal migration on left-behinds

Seasonal migration from the study area has various impacts but for the convenience of the study the focus is given only on impact on left behinds. The detailed impacts on left behinds is presented below.

The data provided in the Table 7contain a detailed information on left behinds of the migrant's households. It is seen from the Table7 that 77 percent of the households reacted as can't say to a question on left behind women's movement, it is due to the fact that there are no restrictions for rural women because, they are also bread winnersof the household. 80 percent of the households agreed that seasonal migration increases the work burden on left behinds. With respect to left behind children's regularity in going to school in their parents (migrants) absence most of the respondents answered as can't say and few households have disagreed. This is because they might have not having school going children in households. 20 percent of the households have strongly agreed with respect to disciplining of left behind children.

Table 7: Particulars on left behinds (in Percentages)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Agree	Strongly Disagree	Can't Say	Total
Left behind women of HH can Roam freely in the absence of male migrants	0	3	17	3	77	100
Seasonal Migration has increased the workburden on Left Behinds	40	40	3	3	14	100
Children of the Household go regularly to school in migrant absence	13	20	10	4	53	100
Difficult to Discipline Migrants Children in their Parents Absence	20	10	20	3	47	100

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

The data given in the Table 8presents detailed information on care takers of left behind's of migrant's households. It is seen from the Table 8 that day to day management of the 50 percent of the households of the migrants are being taken care by parents of the migrants. 46 percent of the households have reported that there are no one to take care of food and health care of elderly, they have to manage themselves along with they act as a care taker of house, livestock and children if being left by migrants (maximum households have reported the same). These situations points out that most number of young aged labourers are migrating seasonally because,increasing transportation helps them to reach destinations easily, advanced technology and communication helps them to connect easily with their family members in this respect young age labourers are migrating in more number.

Table 8: Details on care takers of the left behinds (in Percentages)

Care Taker of	Self	Spouse	Parents	Children	Relatives	Respondent	Total
Day to day management	0	13	50	20	0	17	100
Food & Health of Elderly	25	13	46	8	4	4	100
Children Health & Education	5	18	59	5	14	0	100
Livestock	0	20	40	30	0	10	100

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

Factors helpful in addressing seasonal migration

Table 9 shows the factors which would be helpful in arresting migration. It is observed that 67 percent of the households have responded that if they get regular work at their place of origin they won't migrate. 20 percent of households have reported that if they get alternate livelihood opportunities during post harvesting they would avoid migrating seasonally. Remaining households have reported that they will stop migrating seasonally if they get good monsoon and if their debt burden decreases. The only way to address seasonal migration is to address the unemployment problems during agriculture lean season. MGNREGA somewhat playing a good role in the study area but delay in the payments, middle men intervention, lack of awareness in seeking employment under the programme are the factors which are responsible for failure of the programme. This is the only option available to create employment opportunities to local labourers.

Table 9: Factors helps to stop seasonal migration in search of work (in Percentages)

Particulars	Percentage
Regular work	67
Reduction of Debt Burden	3
Alternate livelihood opportunity	20
Good Monsoon	10
Total	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

Summary, Conclusion and Policy Implications

Seasonal migration in study area has characterized with high dependency ratio, low literacy level, dependent on agriculture sector, marginal size of land holdings and indebtedness. More numbers of male labourers are involved in seasonal migration than females in the study area and more than half of the households in the study area have reported more than one migrant. This depicts the economic conditions of the household as well as of the village. Most of the households witnessing seasonal migration are from economically weaker section and socially backward classes of the study area. Though migration in search of work is very old phenomena but in study area, seasonal migration has witnessed only since last decade.Study observed that previous contacts and contacts of the friends and relatives play a vital role in search of employment in destination. As per the respondents' experiences, finding a job has become an easy task to migrants because of an improved technology and communication the village hasexperienced in a last decade. Seasonal unemployment, indebtedness and poverty have found to be the most prominent reasons behind seasonal migration from the study area. The direct benefits to households from seasonal migration are the amount of remittances it gets. The remittances generated from seasonal migration are being used for the purpose of consumption and for multi-purpose; interestingly no households reported the use of remittances for any productive purposes. The impact part of the study has found that seasonal migration has increased the work burden of the left behinds and its impact on elderly is found at its worst because many households reported that there are nobody to take care of elderly

population's food and health in absence of migrants. The study observed that the seasonal migration from the study area is a coping strategy rather than an accumulative. The study does not deny the chances of seasonal migration transforming from a coping to an accumulation because as reported by other studies first it starts as a coping and further it will end as an accumulative strategy.

Seasonal migration is a routine practice in the study area, where less educated, unskilled or partially skilled agricultural labourers migrate seasonally to urban areas for employment. Almost all of them join urban informal sector as manual labourers and work for long hours at lower wage rates. In this respect there is a need of a pre-departure training to the labourers for improving their skills and awareness on their rights and privileges at destination areas, so that they could save themselves from every form of exploitation at their place of destination. Seasonal migration is a one way movement from rural to urban areas, in this connection addressing regional imbalance, reduction of the gap between rural to urban areas in terms of employment generation, health, education and infrastructure facilities are need of the hour. Seasonal migration involves not only physical and monetary costs but also mental cost, leaving home in search of temporary employment for two to six months is very challenging for rural labourers especially when seasonal migration becomes only way for sustenance or a must do task in slack season. To avoid or to reduce the mental cost involved in seasonal migration, help desks should be set up at block levels in the source area and in the area of destination. As it has already been discussed in this paper, researchers and policy makers have a negative notion towards migration, if the data is collected on outcome/benefits of internal migration in general and seasonal, circular migration in particular it is sure that it will exceed the amount of remittances being generated from international migration in our country.

Seasonal migration in the study area is more of a coping rather than accumulative purpose. Rural labourers move after agricultural season and return before monsoon begins, the situations of the seasonal migrants is like a nomadic culture and there is no way to come out from these conditions, especially the unskilled, less educated and dependent on agriculture source. These kinds of situations can be handled by men but the thing is women also joining the flow in more number. So the situations of seasonal migrants especially for females are terrible. Of course seasonal migration is also having positive factors; it is contributing rural India directly or indirectly by transforming the skills and flow of money informs ofremittances. With the flow of money it indirectly contributes towards increase of per capita income of rural persons and also strengthens the purchasing capacity of the same. The most important advantage of the seasonal migration is it can be an engine in reduction of surplus labour from agricultural sector over the period of time.

Acknowledgement

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