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OBJECTIVES

HYPOTHESIS (ES)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS

CONCLUSIONS

LIMITATIONS

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THE ECONOMIC REASONS OF RURAL TO URBAN LABOUR MIGRATION: A STUDY ON MURSHIDABAD DISTRICT OF WEST BENGAL

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ABSTRACT

Migration, as defined in various literatures is the relocation of residence from the place of origin to place of destination due to certain issues. These issues can be identified as demand for human capital in the place of destination, lack of earning to sustain the livelihood in the place of origin, dependency on agricultural earning, which itself depends on monsoon etc. This movement can arise due to regional imbalances in development between origin and destination. The main causes of this imbalance can be considered as socio, economic and political factors. But the impact of economic factor seems to be more as compared to other factors.

KEYWORDS
migration, economic factor, rural area, urban area.

INTRODUCTION

Migration, as defined in various literatures is the relocation of residence from the place of origin to place of destination due to certain issues. These issues can be identified as demand for human capital in the place of destination, lack of earning to sustain the livelihood in the place of origin, dependency on agricultural earning, which itself depends on monsoon etc. This movement can arise due to regional imbalances in development between origin and destination. The main causes of this imbalance can be considered as socio, economic and political factors. But the impact of economic factor seems to be more as compared to other factors. The movement poses some problems in the rural as well as urban areas. The rapid shift of workable population from rural to urban areas will lead to deteriorating economic condition in the rural areas, leading to chronic poverty and food insecurity. This is because most of the rural young population opted for migration thus leaving old age people to participate in the agricultural and allied activities.

THE ECONOMIC REASONS FOR MIGRATION

Migration can be seen as a part of normal livelihood process, where poor people move from one place to other to meet the basic survival needs. Many people move to those places where work can be found and thus the movement becomes voluntary. But voluntary movement is not the normal case all the time. Sometimes people forced to move from place of origin because of the political factors. Initially the movement remains temporary, but that may become permanent in nature if the situation does not improve.

Economic factor is one of the important determinants of rural – urban migration. It is considered as both push as well as pull factor of migration. It is push factor in the sense that people tend to move from under developed rural sector to well developed urban sector, because of lack of economic opportunities as well as access to resources which they can use for more productive purposes. On the other hand, it is a pull factor in the sense that since the urban sector is better developed as compared to rural counterpart, chances of getting employment, access to resources are high. The other aspect can be directly linked to the higher dependency on agriculture. Due to seasonal nature and high uncertainty in agricultural production, income of those individuals (mostly marginal labours and land less labourers, who do not own any land) related to agricultural productivity, is also uncertain. This uncertainty in income forced them to think for some alternative source of earnings, at least during lean period so that they can earn sufficient amount of money for their survival needs.

The first comprehensive analysis on rural – urban migration, we can get in Lewis model (1954). The Lewis phenomenon of rural – urban migration was dominated by the fact that, there is a surplus labour market in the rural sector. It also highlights the fact that to take the opportunity in the urban areas, an individual should posses some human capital which will become essential to take a migration decision. This is because employers in the industrial sector expects a minimum level of educational qualification to fit for the job and these educated people can involve themselves more in job search activities in the urban sector. Further in the Lewis Model of rural – urban migration, we found that Lewis has identified two different sector – agricultural sector, characterized by little capital, large labour force and fixed supply of land, and industrial sector, termed as modern sector where capital could be accumulated and labour can be absorbed as and when required. Due to economic improvement it is the industrial sector rather than agricultural sector will develop rapidly. This will bring more capital accumulation and hence demand for labour will increase. This extra demand for labour can be met with the help of surplus labour force in the rural sector. Thus the basic understanding of the Lewis model, point out that, due to development differential between industrial sector and traditional sector, there will be a difference in terms of wage. This expected wage differential will attract underemployed or unemployed rural youth from rural areas to urban areas. So, it is implicit in the model that because of this wage difference rural – urban migration happens. It ignores the influence of social, cultural and political dimensions of rural – urban migration.

In their study Dubey, Jones & Sen (2004), highlighted that the key prediction of Lewis model that rural – urban migration happens areas where there is a surplus labour, is true. Moreover, this kind of migration is mostly caste selective. According to them this caste system operates as a 'surrogate network' for employers in the city. This is because urban employers try to depend on their existing labour force to get extra labour from rural counterpart as these labours provide reference of those prospective labourers who belongs to the same caste in their locality. Yamauchi & Tanabe (2003), on the other hand argued on the same line that probability of getting suitable job in the urban area depends on vast network of people belongs to the same origin. But this may affect negatively to prospective migrants if they compete for the same job in the urban sector.

However, in some research it was pointed out that the poor people are so poor that they do not possess the minimum amount of funds necessary to make the move from village to the city. The model developed by Aroca, Hewings & Sonis (2002), pointed out that rural – urban migration becomes inefficient if migrants do not have access of borrowing funds or own funds. They categorize the prospective migrants into three different classes. First group represent those workers who migrate as and when they decided to do so, because they are able to finance the moving cost. Second group represent those workers who first save and arrange the moving cost and then take a decision to migrate. The third group, is not able to migrate (although they are willing to do so), because they are not in a position to arrange the moving cost. On the same line Kabir & Seeley (2008), in their empirical work covering rural areas of Murshidabad in West Bengal and Gaibandha in North – Western Bangladesh, found that people belongs to extremely poor category are unable to move. In their study they divided total sample (444 respondents) into four different classes, viz. rich class, middle class, poor class and extreme poor class to find out the status of migration. The below mentioned table is an extract from their study:

TABLE 1: MIGRATION STATUS

Wealth Category	Migration Status			
	Presently Migrating	Previously Migrating	Never Migrating	Total
Rich Class	1	1	14	16
Middle Class	7	14	52	73
Poor Class	136	68	91	295
Extremely Poor Class	9	5	46	60

Source: Social Protection by & for temporary work migrants & their households in North West Bangladesh, Development Research Center on Migration, Globalization & Poverty University of Sussex, January, 2008, Page No. 35

The table clearly gives an indication that people belongs to extremely poor category are not able to move because they are not in a position to finance the moving cost.

It is quite obvious that poor people who do not have land of their own and belongs to the lower social class are unable to move. Simultaneously their agricultural income during lean period is also deteriorating which makes them more vulnerable in the rural set up, thus exclude them from social amenities.

Exclusion means denial or not providing basic facilities to poor segment of the society although they are entitled for that under normal circumstances. Prof. Amartya Sen pointed out two important dimensions of social exclusion, viz. "Unfavorable Exclusion" and "Unfavorable Inclusion". In the first case, some people intentionally left out from the basic services. Whereas in the second case, people do include in the social and economical activities but terms and conditions are not favorable, often treat them unequally in terms of wage, working hours, living conditions etc. This group of people although included growth process but this inclusion is not sufficient enough to maintain the standard of living in a specific society.[1] So, when an individual migrate to its nearest urban location for better opportunities, they also face the same situation. They migrated to place of destination with the expectation that, this choice will increase their standard of living. But they, often, misjudge the cost of living in the urban location and most of the time they landed up in urban informal sector jobs. This situation can be termed as "Unfavorable Inclusion" which is explained above.

The Harris – Todaro's Model also explains the reason behind rural – urban migration. The model highlights on the fact that, rural – urban migration happens because of the difference in wage between urban and rural and the probability of finding a job in the urban sector. But the probability of getting a job in the urban sector depends on rate of job creation in the urban areas and this again depends on the industrial growth of that area. This also leads to the conclusion that more unemployment may be created as more job opportunities increase the level of migration.

But the H – T Model is not a full proof model as some of its limitations can't be matched with the real life situation. The assumption that the migrants have full information about the nature of jobs that they are expected to get and the potential migrants are risk neutral, is not practical (Sridhar, Reddy, Srinath). The ground reality is that most of the migrants are risk averse, since they try to maximize their gain from migration in the form of higher wages and better standard of living, which they are not getting in the rural areas. If this is not going to happen after migration, then entire decision will become a poverty trap for them.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The present study would like to identify the major economic factors which force the people to migrate from the study district.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

The sample respondents are the migrants who are migrating from the study district for economic reasons only.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

For the present study judgmental sampling technique is applied. Since, the research is being conducted on migrants who are migrating for economic reasons only, other factors are excluded. Thus, to get the appropriate response it has been decided to go for this type of sampling technique.

SAMPLE SIZE

For the present study it has been decided to collect approximately 300 sample respondents and the questionnaires are distributed with the help of surveyors to get the desired result. But ultimately 145 respondents are received in correct form and the same has been included in the final study.

VARIABLE IDENTIFICATION

Identification of variables is very important as it will provide meaningful conclusion to the research. In this study 12 variables have been identified with the help of review of literatures.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire is an important instrument to conduct a primary study and for this purpose adequate care has been taken to make the questionnaire full proof. The questionnaire has been divided into two parts. Section A of the questionnaire deals with the basic demographic variables related to migrants and section B of the questionnaire deals with the main research variables as identified through review of literatures. For the second part of the questionnaire a 5 point likert scale has been incorporated to know the response of the respondents.

PILOT STUDY

Pilot study of the questionnaire has been conducted to know the reliability of the variables included with the help of Cronbach's Alpha and the result is shown below:

TABLE 2: RELIABILITY TEST RESULT

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.823	.835	12

Normally it is assumed that if the value of alpha is more than 0.70, then the questionnaire is reliable. In this study the above result shows that the alpha value is 0.823 which clearly indicates that the present questionnaire is reliable and can be used for final research.

ANALYSIS

The study has been conducted based on 145 respondents. The respondents are asked to give their responses against each of the 12 variables identified through literature review. The 5 point likert scale has been used to know the degree of agreement to disagreement. The weight of the scale is described below:

5 = Strongly Agree
4 – Agree
3 = Neutral
2 = Disagree
1 = Strongly Disagree

A simple rank order table has been prepared to know which factor influences most in terms of decision to migrate from rural areas to urban areas. The response is shown in the table below where total score has been calculated by multiplying the respective weights with the number of responses and the result has been added to get the ranking.

[1] Human Poverty and Socially Disadvantaged Groups in India, Sukhadeo Thorat, Discussion Paper Series -18, UNDP, India

TABLE 3: ECONOMIC FACTORS AFFECTING RURAL TO URBAN LABOUR MIGRATION DECISION

Sl. No.	Variables	5	4	3	2	1	Total Score	Ranking
1	Variable 1: Lack of finance from government controlled banks does not give you adequate opportunities for nonfarm activities, which compels you to migrate	76	59	1	4	5	632	4
2	Variable 2: Number of dependent family member is very high, which require extra source of income	67	74	0	3	1	638	3
3	Variable 3: You are migrating to locate better market for farm products	2	5	12	47	79	239	12
4	Variable 4: Remittances send by you help family members to increase asset base	34	89	3	12	7	566	6
5	Variable 5: Migration gives you better job opportunity and better income	81	56	0	3	5	640	2
6	Variable 6: Remittances send by you help family members to overcome credit constraint	67	42	4	21	11	568	5
7	Variable 7: It reduces the risk of income loss during the lean period of agriculture	103	34	1	4	3	665	1
8	Variable 8: Strict repayment mechanism of micro credit institutions forces you not to take loans from them, but to migrate to earn sufficiently for your family	5	6	16	78	40	293	8
9	Variable 9: Remittances send by you is used to avail better healthcare facilities which motivates you to migrate	4	6	12	87	36	290	9
10	Variable 10: Increased income from migration helps you to pay school fees of your children/ siblings	2	7	5	71	60	255	11
11	Variable 11: You have less land to earn sufficiently for your family, this compels you to migrate	32	84	15	9	5	564	7
12	Variable 12: You would like to get training which you can implement to start your own business & migration gives that training opportunity in urban location	4	5	2	88	46	268	10

The table shows that out of the 12 factors some of the factors like variable 1, variable 2, variable 4, variable 5, variable 6, variable 7 and variable 11 are strongly favoured by the respondents. Respondents are either strongly agreeing or agreeing against each of these 7 variables. For rest of the variables the respondents are either disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with the statement. So, it can be concluded that these 7 variables are the main economic reasons behind rural urban labour migration from the study district. The ranking column will give more in depth study of the response. It can be observed that out of the 7 variables as identified by the respondents as the major reasons for migration, variable 7 has got the highest ranking. This indicates that people are moving from the study district mainly because of income loss during the lean period of agriculture.

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

Most of the developing countries like India faces rural to urban migration situation, but it is largely undecided by the policymakers, whether it develops the economy or it detrimental for the growth of the economy (Mendola, May 2005). Migration often termed as risk diversification strategy, on the other hand it often considers as a means of foregone skills, yield and income for those, who migrate to other destination from the place of origin (Mendola, May, 2005). Rapid migration creates the problem of urbanization. This process of movements of general population from a less develops areas to urban areas in search of better prospects and improved standard of living, is termed as migration. It is generally, believed that urban sectors provide jobs, good education and health care facilities and other services more efficiently and effectively as compared to non urban areas. Migration which is a global phenomenon, normally considered as a survival strategy of poor people when they have lack of income generating opportunities in their own place.

The study has raised some important dimensions which the policy makers should be taken into considerations. It can be seen that despite several measures like skill development and financial inclusion, certain portion of the rural poor are still out of the reach of these government provided services and thus depending on agriculture alone to maintain the livelihood. Even there also development has not been witnessed. A uniform developmental approach in agriculture sector is still missing. The point to be noted that only implementing various programmes will not be effective until and unless the same is not been monitored properly. A policy needs to develop in this regard otherwise this problem of migration will surely affect both the rural economy and the urban economy as well.

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I am sure that your feedback and deliberations would make future issues better – a result of our joint effort.

Looking forward an appropriate consideration.

With sincere regards

Thanking you profoundly

Academically yours

Sd/-
Co-ordinator

DISCLAIMER

ABOUT THE JOURNAL

In this age of Commerce, Economics, Computer, I.T. & Management and cut throat competition, a group of intellectuals felt the need to have some platform, where young and budding managers and academicians could express their views and discuss the problems among their peers. This journal was conceived with this noble intention in view. This journal has been introduced to give an opportunity for expressing refined and innovative ideas in this field. It is our humble endeavour to provide a springboard to the upcoming specialists and give a chance to know about the latest in the sphere of research and knowledge. We have taken a small step and we hope that with the active co-operation of like-minded scholars, we shall be able to serve the society with our humble efforts.

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