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Nibedita Mishra
PG Scholar, MS Swaminathan
School of Agriculture, Centurion
University of Technology and
Management, Paralakhemundi,
Gajapati, India

Chitrasena Padhy
Associate Professor, MS
Swaminathan School of
Agriculture, Centurion
University of Technology and
Management, Paralakhemundi,
Gajapati, India

Aakaas Dash
PG Scholar, MS Swaminathan
School of Agriculture, Centurion
University of Technology and
Management, Paralakhemundi,
Gajapati, India

Payal Mishra
PG Scholar, MS Swaminathan
School of Agriculture, Centurion
University of Technology and
Management, Paralakhemundi,
Gajapati, India

Saikat Mukherjee
PG Scholar, MS Swaminathan
School of Agriculture, Centurion
University of Technology and
Management, Paralakhemundi,
Gajapati, India

V Prasanna
PG Scholar, MS Swaminathan
School of Agriculture, Centurion
University of Technology and
Management, Paralakhemundi,
Gajapati, India

Corresponding Author:
Chitrasena Padhy
Associate Professor, MS
Swaminathan School of
Agriculture, Centurion
University of Technology and
Management, Paralakhemundi,
Gajapati, India

Impact of migration on rural youth in India

Nibedita Mishra, Chitrasena Padhy, Aakaas Dash, Payal Mishra, Saikat Mukherjee and V Prasanna

Abstract

The migration of rural youth from rural communities to urban areas stimulates urban development and enhances job opportunities, lifestyle of migrants and their families also improve. Maximum rural youth are migrating to urban areas for better employment and send money back to their families. Migration among rural youth in India has multifaceted impacts. While it offers economic opportunities and contributes to agricultural transformation, it also creates challenges. By implementing targeted policies and interventions, there are many steps taken by the government like ARYA, STRY, AC & ABC to attract the youth towards agriculture. Due to several reasons the rural youth are not involved or motivated for the development of agriculture sector. The extension educators should provide proper awareness for the rural youth and retain them in agriculture. The migration of rural youth has both positive and negative effects. On one hand, it can lead to increased economic opportunities and better quality of life for young people. On the other hand, it can also lead to the loss of valuable human resources in rural areas and can contribute to urbanization and overcrowding. Hence the policy makers should create policies and initiatives that promote balanced regional development and address the challenges faced by rural youth to ensure that migration is a choice, not a necessity.

Keywords: migration, opportunities, rural community, rural youth, targeted policy

1. Introduction

Return migration is said to be the voluntary movement of migrants back to the native region. Return migration was caused due mainly by economic factors are responsible but some other factors were also included like social, political, cultural, environmental, health and education also shows an extreme role in overall process (Parameswaranaiik and Jha, 2018) [26]. In the state of West Bengal, a need to explore the long term, life cycle implication of such circular labor migration were made to focus on the short-term and static gains of out-migration (Sarkar and Mishra, 2021) [29]. The demography of Indian agriculture found to be altering at a higher pace. Clear gestures and signs were found where masses of people quitting agriculture and migrating to several portions of the nation (Sharma, 2007) [30]. Evidences have been monitored, analyzed and presented that the intra-rural inequality was the major cause of rural-urban migration. Migrants provided high amount of remittances which reduced the burden of the women and increased the decision making roles, thus empowering them (Maharajan *et al.*, 2012) [14]. Seasonal migration found to be a very important aspect of the rural livelihoods of Western part of India (Mosse *et al.*, 2002) [8]. It was important to spread awareness regarding rural transformation in order to create more employment opportunities on local scenario and attract the attention of rural migrants to return and establish own business (Ge *et al.*, 2020) [10]. In India 60 percent of people is in internal migration i.e. for getting better job and opportunity they migrate. Maximum people are migrating rural to urban because they thought that in village there is no job and also they all are not interested for doing agriculture as a profession. According to 2011 census India had 45.6 crore migrants i.e. 38% of total population. Between 2001-2011 the population was increased to 18% and also the migrants increased by 45%. In 2011, 99% of total migration was internal and immigrants comprised 1% (Census, 2011) [6]. In Odisha especially tribal people are migrating to out of state for work as a labor. In Kandhamal and Kalahandi rural youth and tribal youth are going to Kerala to work as an unskilled labor and these trends are continuing from last 25 years (Rana *et al.*, 2022) [27]. In southern Odisha especially Ganjam, Gajapati, Kandhamal, Kalahandi districts 18-31 percent of households had at least one person who had migrated and less than 20% are seasonal migrates. (Rana *et al.*, 2022) [27].

Mobile phones have one of the highest adoption rates of any technology developed within the last century. Digitalisation will bring consumers and farmers closer together. In the long run smart farming will affect agricultural production. If farmers are educated enough about the information and communication technologies in agriculture, it will help for retaining the youth in rural area (Padhy *et al.*, 2022) ^[23].

Poverty, food insecurity, lack of employment, climate change and environmental degradation are among the root causes of migration (FAO, 2016) ^[9]. Extension workers and advisors should understand the mental well-being of farmers. Social activities must be encouraged and avenues for entertainment must be created in rural areas for farmers to get away from farm stress (Padhy and Raju, 2020) ^[22]. Leadership is very much essential for taking advantage of the opportunities and overcoming the complex difficulties that humanity faces today. Empathy is just the ability to comprehend and care for others. Empathetic leadership produces partnerships in which leaders actually understand and care about their followers' well-being and development (Padhy *et al.*, 2022) ^[24].

2. History

In 2005, the Indian Parliament had introduced The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and came into force on February 2, 2006. The scheme was initially implemented in 200 districts across India, covering about one-fifth of rural households. It was later extended to cover all rural areas in the country in 2008 (Ehmke, 2016) ^[8].

Over the years, the MGNREGA scheme has been successful in providing rural employment and reducing poverty in rural areas. It has also been instrumental in empowering women and marginalized sections of society by providing them with an opportunity to work and earn a livelihood. The scheme has also contributed to the development of rural infrastructure and natural resource management.

3. Causes of migration and leaving agriculture among India rural youth

Youth unemployment and under employment are found to be major problems in most of the nations for migration (White, 2012) ^[33]. Limited access of agricultural land, due scarcity of land and market restrictions proved to be enhancing migration of rural youth (Bezu and Holden, 2014) ^[5]. The small and marginal farmers found quitting agriculture due to certain obstacles like low viability but in trend to that direct relationship between farm size and willingness towards could retain some youth (Sharma and Bhaduri, 2009) ^[31]. Consistency of stagnated productivity and profitability of different enterprises were posing serious challenges. Thus, poor income index of farming youth declared to be a matter of national discussion (Narain *et al.*, 2016) ^[20]. Inadequate financial services, limited access to land, improper involvement in policy dialogue and high risk in agricultural sectors were the noted reasons for rural youth migration (Bello, 2015) ^[4]. Farmers were engaging their children in academics more rather making them practice agriculture (Balarubini *et al.*, 2017) ^[3].

4. Impact of migration and leaving agriculture among India rural youth

Youth participation found to be declining in the agricultural sector (Deotti and Estruch, 2016) ^[7].

Migration and leaving agriculture among rural youth in India

have several significant impacts, both positive and negative.

4.1 Economic Growth

The economic growth is affected due to the migration of rural youth. As they all are move to the urban areas for their better opportunities of job, higher wages and secured their future. This influx of labour can boost productivity and drive economic development in urban centers.

4.2 Remittance

Maximum rural youth are migrate to urban areas for better employment and send money back to their families, these remittances play a vital role in helping their rural communities and especially they reduce the poverty and increase the standard of living of the rural community.

4.3 Agricultural Transformation

From the day onwards, when the rural youths are showing their less interest in agriculture; on that day the reduction of labour force may lead to shortage of labour and increases the mechanization and adaption of new agricultural technologies. That's why the agricultural productivity and efficiency increases.

4.4 Urbanization Pressure

Migration of rural youth can put a great impact on urban structure such as housing, transportation, water supply, sanitation etc. Without any adequate planning and infrastructure development can destroy the local resources and leads to overcrowding, slumps and inadequate living condition due to rapid increase of urbanization.

4.5 Rural Dependency

Migration and leaving agriculture can relate a dependency on remittances for rural communities. If the urban job market becomes unstable or there is any problem arises, then it can leave families vulnerable to economic shocks and poverty.

4.6 Social Impact

Migration can directly affect to the change in social structure and plays a dynamic role in rural community. The absence of youth from villages can disrupt traditional community life and may impact social cohesion, cultural practices and the intergeneration transfer of knowledge and skills related to agriculture.

5. Strategies to attract rural youth and reduce migration index

Leveraging youth for agriculture could be an instrumental remedy for modernization and future growth of agriculture (Som *et al.*, 2018) ^[32]. There was a serious need to enhance and expand agricultural sector by employing youths in apiary, mushroom, seed processing, poultry, dairy etc. (Mahapatra and Patra, 2020) ^[15]. Development of agriculture as a career option, training and improvement of income index, use of social and implementation of Swaminathan Commission were being profounded as strategies to attract rural youth (Kulkarni and Chaudhary, 2022) ^[12]. By improving infrastructure, promote entrepreneurship and creation of more job, modernization in agriculture, enhancing the skill development training, encouraging community activity, facilitate asses to information and networking and government policy and initiatives rural areas can become more attractive to youth, providing them with opportunities for growth and

development while reducing the need for migration to urban centers (Mishra, 2016) ^[17].

5.1 MGNREGA scheme

The MGNREGA is a very essential scheme for India's citizens those who belong to rural areas. It is the major antipoverty relief programme across the world. MGNREGA is measured as a "silver bullet" for alleviating rural poverty and generating large amount of employment, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India (Ehmke, 2016) ^[8]. India is a country where maximum of population live in rural areas or belongs to rural community (almost 68.8 percent, according to 2011 Census). A statistical measure shows that the people who are living in rural areas were found to have poverty and this observation is keeping in the National Rural Employment Guarantee Bill which was passed on 7 September, 2005 by Parliament. Initially 200 districts were selected for the implementation of the act NREGA scheme which came forcefully on 2 February 2006 by a total budget of 11,300 crore rupees, Ministry of Rural development, Government of India. At Bandlapalli village in Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh, the NREGA scheme was first started. But in the year 2008, it was executed in all 640 districts of India. On 2nd October 2009, the Government of India had changed their name NREGA as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). Those who are willing to do unskilled manual work at the statutory minimum wages this scheme offers a legal guarantee for one hundred days of employment in every financial year to adult members of any rural household (NSSO, 2013) ^[21].

5.2 ARYA (Attracting and Retaining Youth in Agriculture)

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research introduced this project which is being existence implemented in 2015. In 25 states ARYA project will be implemented through KVKs, one district from each state. For the skill development in entrepreneurial activities and establishment of micro-enterprise units 200-300 rural youths will be identified in one district (Indian Council of Agricultural Research 2019) ^[11].

The objective of this scheme is to attract and empower the rural youth to establish various agriculture, and allied sector enterprise for sustainable income and more employment. To establish network groups by using local resource and capital and preparing demanding activities like processing, value addition and marketing etc. for empowering rural youth or farm youth.

For convergence of opportunities which are available under various schemes/program for development of youth to demonstrate functional linkage with different institutions and stakeholders.

5.3 DAY-NRLM scheme

The Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India was launched Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana in June 2011.

The aim of the mission is at creating well-organized and active institutional platforms for the rural poor to facilitating better opportunities, increase household income by giving financial support and sustainable livelihood and main vision is to educate and empower them. In Country with the help of self-managed Self Help Groups (SHG) and federated institutions NRLM has fixed with an agenda to cover 7 crore

rural poor households, across 600 districts, 6000 blocks, 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats and 6 lakh villages which can support to the rural people for livelihoods collectives in a period of 8-10 years. In accumulation, the poor people would achieve to get their rights, powers and public services, also get the ability to tolerate risk and well empowerment and social position (My scheme, 2023).

6. Challenge (blog.forumIAS.com, 2023) ^[2]

6.1 Urban infrastructure: The influx of people into urban areas has put a strain on the existing urban infrastructure, including housing, water supply, sanitation, and transportation. As a result, the urban poor often live in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions, leading to health issues and poor quality of life.

6.2 Unemployment: Although rural-urban migration provides better employment opportunities, the increasing demand for jobs in urban areas often exceeds the supply. This leads to unemployment and underemployment, especially among young people who migrate to cities in search of work.

6.3 Social and political exclusion: Rural-urban migration can cause social and political exclusion as families are separated, and traditional social structures are disrupted. Children and elderly people left behind in rural areas often suffer from loneliness and social isolation, while those who migrate to urban areas may experience discrimination and difficulty integrating into the new society.

6.4 Brain drain: Rural-urban migration leads to a loss of skilled labor from rural areas, which can have a significant impact on the agricultural sector. The migration of skilled labor to urban areas can also contribute to a shortage of labor in rural areas, leading to reduced agricultural productivity.

6.5 Environmental degradation: The increasing population density in urban areas can lead to environmental degradation, including pollution, deforestation, and loss of biodiversity. This can have long-term consequences for the health and well-being of both urban and rural populations.

Overall, the challenges of rural-urban migration in Odisha are complex and multifaceted. Effective policies and strategies are needed to address these challenges and ensure that the benefits of migration are equitably distributed.

7. Conclusion

The migration of rural youth in India has both positive and negative impacts on various aspects of economy, society and agriculture. Agriculture and rural development can address the root causes of migration, including rural poverty, food insecurity, inequality, unemployment, lack of social protection as well as natural resource depletion due to environmental degradation and climate change. Many individuals and families migrate from rural areas to urban areas for developing their economic status as they see no alternative option for moving out of poverty within their own communities (Reliefweb.int, 2020) ^[28]. Rural youth could be retained in agriculture by involving them in secondary and specialty agriculture and giving them proper incentive for their involvement in agricultural activities. Rural youth need to be engaged in multifarious activities around, plough to plate, so as to make farming both, attractive as well as lucrative profession (Ali, 2018) ^[1]. The Agriculture Extension

officials should implement the proper strategies to broaden the knowledge and skills of the farmers by enhancing their capacity building so that they can adopt the suitable crop management practices to enhance crop yields and increase revenue (Padhy *et al*, 2021) ^[25].

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