

An Economic Analysis of Labor Migration in Thanjavur District, Tamil Nadu

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Abstract

The study focuses on the paper in migration wage rates, working conditions in expenditure patterns. It reveals that migration from the study village is essentially seasonal and cyclical in nature and differs for the rural and the urban emigrants. It may be seen cultivators small and marginal labor, agriculture labor, land less labor all have limited purchasing power due to seasonal jobs they hold frequent occurrence of natural calamities working in unorganized sector further reduce their purchasing power. The helpless unemployed workers leave their village home and join already over populated areas viz., town and cities. It also finds that migration takes place mainly for survival and repayment of debts, and that a large proportion of their earnings from migration are utilized for day to day expenses.

Keywords: Types of Migration, Expenditure Patterns.

Introduction

A study of rajendram village in thanjavur district Tamilnadu. looks at the forms/types of migration and analyses wage rates, working conditions and the expenditure pattern of earnings from migration. The increase in population demands higher level of saving and capital formation [Nambiar 1995] networks extent in scale and reach, migration agents are predicted to become increasingly influential in international migration, further generating the social migration industry.[martin-2010]

Objective

To analysis the socioeconomic nature, characteristics and effect of migration works in the study region.

Methodology

In the study is based on primary and secondary data. In order to achieve these objectives, the data for the present study was collected from a primary survey conducted in mid-2018 (May-June) from study of Rajendram village in thanjavur district Tamilnadu. The survey enumerated all the households in the village. The primary data have been collected from the migration household's respondents in the Rajandiran village two hundreds household in Thanjavur rural block. Thanjavur 200 household out of 114 household migrations

but 431 respondents migrated in the study area. The 200 household rural migrations 51 household, urban 63 household and non-migration 86 household in the villages. The survey enumerated all the households in the village.

The study is divided into four sections. The first section discusses the characteristics of both migrant and non-migrant households. The second section deals with the nature and form of the migration process in the village. The third section brings out the migrants' working conditions, expenditure patterns in the studies. The final section is the conclusion.

Characteristics of Migrant Households

In this study the households are divided into three categories for analysis, viz., rural migrant, urban migrant and non-migrant households. Fifty-one households migrated to rural areas and 63 households to urban centers for work/employment (Table 1). In more than half of the households, one or more of their family members have migrated from the village. This indicates that a large number of households depend on migration and shows how important migration is for them. It seems to be one of the main sources of livelihood. On the whole, there are 431 migrants, out of whom 38% migrated to rural destinations and 62% to urban. Females mostly migrated to rural destinations and males mostly to urban destinations. Rural households migrated mainly to the villages in Thanjavur, Tiruchirapalli districts and to the nearby villages (migrated locally) and urban migration is mainly to Chennai (Table 2).

Table 1 Distribution of House Hold as Per Migration Status in Rajendram Village

Types of house holds	Rural migration	Urban migration	Non migration	Total
No of house holds	49 [24]	65 [33]	86 [43]	200 [100]

Figures in parentheses indicate proportion of the households.

Source: Field Survey, 2018.

Table 2 Number of Migrants According to Destinations and Sex

Type of Migration	Destinations	No of Migrants			
		Households	Male	Female	Total
	Villages in	17 [15]	24 [40]	36 [60]	60 [100]
	Thanjavur District	27 [24]	36 [42]	50 [58]	86 [100]
Rural migration	Villages in Tiruchirappalli District	5 [4]	5 [28]	13 [72]	18 [100]
Urban migration	Nearby villages	65 [57]	141 [53]	126 [47]	267 [100]
Total migration	Chennai	114 [100]	206 [48]	225 [52]	431 [100]

Figures in parentheses indicate proportion of the households.

Source: Same as for Table 1.

If we look at the overall landholding pattern in the village, we find that a major portion of the land is owned by the non-migrant households with an average is 7 acres per household. Urban migrant households own an average of 6 acres, while rural migrant households own an average of 4 acres of land. However, urban migrant households are largely from the small farmer category followed by the marginal, medium and large farmer households. Though the number of medium and large landowning households is few, the land in their possession is larger than that owned by the other groups. Correspondingly, rural migrant households also possess land like the urban migrants but they are in a disadvantaged position.

Table 3 Main Occupations of Households According to Migration Status

Occupations	Rural Migration	Urban Migration	Non- Migration	Total
Cultivators	16 [15]	14 [14]	72 [71]	102 [100]
Labor	31 [43]	32 [45]	8 [12]	71 [100]
Non farm	4 [14]	17 [64]	6 [22]	27 [100]
Grand total	51 [26]	63 [31]	86 [43]	100 [200]

Figures in parentheses indicate proportion of the households.

Source: Same as for Table 1.

Non-farming households primarily belong to artisan families (caste-based occupations) such as, carpenters, tailors, dhobis (washer men), pot makers and blacksmiths. These occupations/ families are basically service providers linked it directly or indirectly to farming. They get more work during agricultural and festival seasons. Their family members also migrate seasonally during the post- agricultural season.

Reasons of Migration

The main reasons for migration in the village are: for survival, for employment, to pay up debts, and to earn money. Interestingly, these answers came up in an open-ended query from migrant households and are presented here as the prime motive for their migration. On the whole, large numbers of households migrated for survival purposes followed by those who have migrated for earning a wage income and to clear their debts. Out of the total number of persons who have migrated for survival purposes, 46% migrated to rural areas and 54% to Chennai city. While 55% have migrated to rural areas and 45% to urban areas in order to clear debts, 37% of households have migrated to rural areas and 63% to Chennai for supplementing their income (Table4). In fact, survival migration is a result of two Extreme economic difficulties: first, lack of employment locally, and second, shortage of food grains and to avoid starvation (Korra 2009).

Table 4 Reasons for Rural and Urban Migrant Households in the Village

Reasons	Rural Migration	Urban Migration	Total
Survival	22 [46]	26 [54]	48 [100]
Employment	7 [47]	8 [53]	15 [100]
Debts	11 [55]	9 [45]	20 [100]
Marriage	2 [67]	1 [33]	3 [100]
Earnings	7 [37]	19 [63]	26 [100]
No land	2 [100]	-	2 [100]
Grand total	51[45]	63 [55]	114 [100]

Figures in parentheses indicate proportion of the households.

Source: Same as for Table 1

Nature of Migration

Rural migrants mainly migrate to villages in thanjavur, tiruchirapalli districts and to nearby villages. They engage in cotton and paddy cultivation. Initially, they work in the cotton fields (until end of that activity), then shift to paddy cultivation in the same village or in neighboring villages. Urban migration is mostly to Chennai. They engage in various kinds of work such as construction of buildings, brick-making, poultry farming, auto driving, paper collecting and other private sector jobs. On the whole, 57% of the males and 43% of the females are engaged in different kinds of work. Most of them are construction labourers, followed by brick-kiln labourers, auto-rickshaw drivers and factory labourers (Table 8). Notably, illiterate and unskilled migrants belonging to deprived communities Work as manual labourers. In contrast, literate and semi-skilled workers are employed in Factories and in the private sector, but they are in less number.

Table 5 Occupation of Urban Migrants at Destination

Nature of work	Male	Female	Total
Construction labour	25 [55]	20 [45]	45 [46]
Driver	8 [80]	2 [20]	10 [100]
Masson	5 [100]	-	5 [100]
Carpenter	8 [100]	-	8 [100]
Brick makers	4	8	12 [100]
Factory labor	2 [50]	2 [50]	4 [100]
Poultry	2 [50]	2 [50]	4 [100]
Tailors'	2 [67]	1 [33]	3 [100]
Paper collections	3 [28]	8 [72]	11 [100]
Cerement works	4 [31]	9 [69]	13 [100]
Hotel server	11 [58]	8 [42]	19 [100]
Total	79 [57]	59 [43]	138 [100]

Figures in parentheses indicate proportion of the households;

Source: Same as for Table 1.

Working Conditions and Wage Rates at Destinations

Most of the migrants have expressed satisfaction with their working conditions and with their employers. Conversely, majority of urban migrants work in the Construction labor, Driver, Masson, Carpenter, Brick makers, Factory labor, Poultry, Tailors, Paper collections, Cerement works and Hotel server. The weekly average Working days are between 5 and 6. Employers provide vehicles for transportation to the Workplace or they pay the transport charges. They work from 9 am to 6 pm. urban migrants face a huge work burden. Wage rate differs for different work, but all manual laborers' wage rates range from Rs 200 to Rs 350 for females and Rs 350 to Rs 500 for male migrants. With regard to migrants' expenditure from earnings, a major portion goes for day to day expenses, conducting their daughter's marriages and repayment of old debts (Table 6). Significantly, these 70.

Table 6 Expenditure Pattern of Migrant Households

Nature	Rural Migration Household	Urban Migration Household	Total Migration Household
Consumption	23 [54]	20 [46]	43 [100]
Agricultural invest	2 [50]	2 [50]	4 [100]
Debts	10 [50]	10 [50]	20 [100]
Health	2 [29]	5 [71]	7 [100]
Marriage	2 [34]	4 [66]	6 [100]
Dig well	3 [37]	5 [63]	8 [100]
Education	2 [14]	13 [86]	15 [100]
House construction	7 [64]	4 [36]	1 [100]
Total	51 [45]	63 [55]	114 [100]

Figures in parentheses indicate proportion of the households.

Source: Same as for Table 1.

Conclusions

The study village has witnessed mass seasonal migration to both rural and urban areas mainly for survival, settling their debts and to earn money to get their daughters married off. The migrants earnings are spent mainly on day to day expenses in rural migration household 54% and urban household 46% repayment of debts and conducting their daughters' marriages, and consequently, there is little surplus left for them To invest in farm activities. Indeed, due to lack of employment and inadequate food grains from cultivation, they migrate to other regions every year in search of work during the post-agricultural season. Besides, due to poor resources and inadequate earnings from migration, these migrants are caught in a vicious circle of distress conditions and unable to come out of this ring. It seems that until and unless there is an improvement in their economic status and resources and cultivation becomes profitable and viable, migration to other regions will not end.

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