



A History Of Women Migration & The Livelihood Challenges Of Migrant Women Working In The Fish Processing Industries.

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Abstract

Migrants are the biggest portion of the huge unorganized labor market in India. There are many inherent obstacles to their entrance into the labor sector. Deprived of essential skills, knowledge and negotiating power, migrant workers are frequently caught up in exploitative working arrangements that compel them to work in low-end, low-value, dangerous jobs. This issue is exacerbated by the lack of identification and legal protection. The difficulties of migratory workers are more widespread when state borders are crossed and the distance between the "source" and "destination" grows. Migrants may also be easy victims of politics of identity and parochialism. Economic development in India now depends on labor mobility. Migrant workers' contribution to national revenue is huge yet nothing is being done in exchange for their safety and well-being. Fish/prawn processing industries were set up all along the coastal areas because of the growing; the importance of this industry as a source of foreign exchange. This industry all over India prefers migrant contract labourers. The term fishery also comprises one more stock of fish that can be traded as a unit for purposes of conservation and management. The fishery is a stock or stock of fish and the enterprises that have the potential of exploiting them. Because of pearl fishing in the city, Thoothukudi is known as "Pearl City." It is a commercial seaport serving South India's interior towns and is one of Tamil Nadu's Sea passages. The Present study brings out The Study of Migrant Women / Girls Working in the Fish/Prawn Industries in Thoothukudi District, Tamilnadu.

Keywords: Migration, Women Studies, Problems of Women Migrant.

Introduction

Migrants are a 'floating' and invisible group that alternates spring and target regions and remains on the edge of society. In India, the government gave very little attention to internal migration and Indian laws generally failed to provide any kind of legal or social protection for this vulnerable population. Migration takes occur in pursuit of better lives for jobs, education and other amenities from one region to another. Migration is an essential element of development and changes in women's position and status are also caused by development. Migration studies focused earlier on men. In recent times, however, the emphasis has changed more towards women, which is known as migratory feminization [UN, 1993]. Women's education still falls behind that of males in many nations. Few women are entrepreneurs, investors, attorneys, reporters, doctors, scientists, academics or politicians. Although the situation continues to change, women still lack a role in decision-making, particularly in the key sectors of economic, civic or political life. The nation is in a transitional stage since economic liberalization began in 1991 in particular. The fast speed of growth in the social, economic and other sectors must have an impact on the mobility and movement of the general population and women in particular. The 2001 census migration data provides a chance to clarify the internal movement of women in India. Migration of women is for economic reasons, such as jobs, education, etc. The Indian Constitution (Article 19) entitles all citizens to 'travel freely throughout India'; live and settle in any region of India.' The entire population of India, as reported in the 2011 census, is 1.21 billion. Internal migrants in India number 309 million, or 30% of the population, and more recently 326 million, or 28.5 percent of the population. This significantly surpasses the predictions of 11.4 million Indian immigrants.

Let us consider long-term migrants for whom the reasons for leaving the last usual place of residence are collected under the following heads:

- (a) in search of employment
- (b) in search of better employment
- (c) to take up employment/better employment
- (d) transfer of service/ contract
- (e) proximity to the place of work
- (f) studies
- (g) acquisition of own house/at
- (h) housing problems
- (i) social/political problems
- (j) health (k) marriage
- (l) migration of parent/ earning member of the family and

Laws Applicable to Migrant worker

Nearly all labor rules also apply to migratory employees. A particular Act concerning migrant workers from across states is the Inter-State Migrant Workers Act 1979. The Act only concerns intergovernmental migrants recruited by contractors or intermediaries and institutions that employ five or more of such employees every day. Contractors and institutions must be licensed and registered by a notified registrar. The contractor must provide a passbook for all employees, including payments and advances, with information about the employee.

Other legislation includes:

1. Minimum Wages Act, 1948
2. Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923
3. Payment of Wages Act, 1936
4. Bonded Labour Act, 1976
5. Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970
6. Building and Other Construction Workers Act,
7. 1996 Equal Remuneration Act, 1976

Migration is mainly of two kinds in India:

Long-Term Migration

This results in the migration of a person or family;

Seasonal / Circular Migration or Short-term

This migration entails movement between two points. Estimates for short-term migration vary between 15 million and 100 million.

The majority of short-term migrants are members of socioeconomically disadvantaged groups, such as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, who have restricted access to education, belongings, and resources. The majority of migrants work in the following subsectors: construction, domestic labor, textiles, brick-making, transportation, mining, quarries, and agriculture. Migrants often face denial of basic rights, such as access to subsidized food, housing, drinking water, sanitation, public health, education, and financial services, and frequently lose their social security and legal protection. The beneficial benefits of migration are unknown.

MIGRATION PATTERN EVOLUTION

India has a lengthy history of migration that has influenced its social history, culture and growth pattern. The causes for the movement of people were primarily for religious and commercial interests in the pre-colonial era. Migration also had a significant influence because of military moves. People also traveled with their livestock in search of pastures. Nomadic migration was a significant characteristic beyond the gangetic valley, even over small distances. This tradition is still prevalent in some areas of Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, in Central India, and is one of the oldest types of circulation in human migratory history.

A History of Women Migration – A Global Scenario

Migration within Europe took place during the modern period as religious groups like the Jews and the Huguenots sought to escape persecution and for economic reasons as farmers migrated to find work in newly emerging industries. Seasonal or circular migration, which is the term for people who go to another country and then return home every year, was a routine factor in workers' lives during the 17th and 18th centuries.

Africa also has a rich history of population movement that pre-dates the colonial period (Afani, 2013). This included seasonal or circular migration for hunting, agriculture or pastoralism, migration in search of greater security and

subsistence, to escape natural disasters and warfare, for trade and pilgrimage. For example, migration from Nigeria during the 17th-18th century was often linked to pilgrimage to religious places in the Arabian Peninsula.

Trade has always played an important role in the mobility of people in Asia. Arab and Chinese traders travelled across well established sea routes to the Malay peninsula and the Indonesian and Philippine archipelagos. There were also well established trade routes between India, the Arabian peninsula and West Africa. Circular migration was a common feature of working life for blacksmiths, and acrobats and singers who travelled in small social groups within South Asia.

Largely marked by a feminine presence since the nineteenth century, labor migration arriving in, crossing through, and leaving the European continent opened new possibilities for migrating women. Whether they were farmers with their partners, industrial laborers, or employees in different kinds of service, they were for a long time just as active as native-born women, if not more. However, for some marriage and the interruption of family networks led to additional domestic work and a break with work outside the home during certain highly gendered phases of the family life cycle. The World Wars and the extraordinary transformations experienced by European societies, in addition to decolonization, accelerating globalization, and the ease and speed of transport, changed the volume and nature of migratory flows within and toward Europe. Older and newer occupations now coexist in composite flows that are henceforth majority female.

A History of Women Migration – Indian Scenario

Migration, one of the three basic components of population growth of any area, plays an important role in improving the economic and social conditions of people. The Indian Constitution provides its people the basic freedom to move to any part of the country, and the right to reside and earn a livelihood of their choice. A number of economic, social, cultural, political factors influence the decision to move. The effect of these factors varies over time and place. An analysis of the migration pattern helps understand the changes taking place in people's movements within the country and is the most volatile component of population growth.

According to 2001 Census, of 309 million migrants based on place of last residence, female migrants constitute 218 million while it is 91 million for male. Thus migrants constitute around 30 percent of the total population; where as male and female migrants constitute 18 percent and 45 percent of their population respectively. Not only in terms of magnitude but also from the perspective of development, internal migration of females is an important factor influencing socio-economic development of the country as it has greater potential for reducing poverty, bringing about social change and also meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

Labour migration is getting feminized especially in developing countries. Trade liberalization and market orientation have had far reaching consequences on the pattern of demand for labour. In many developing countries export led economic growth and an invitation to foreign capital have given a big boost to electronic, chemical, information technology and garment industries which by and large employ significant number of females. While the international changes have had favourable impact on the highly skilled professional educated manpower, unskilled uneducated casual labour-force faces an increasingly competitive labour market for a comparatively low wage under undesirable working conditions. Since women are ready to work for any wage, and perceived as passive and docile, they are in great demand, contributing to feminization of labour and feminization of labour migration. No doubt these labourmarket changes have had their impact on rural-urban migration as well, female economic migration being more pronounced in the recent ten to fifteen years. Changes in the rural economy have contributed to this increased female migration. Increasing productivity in agriculture has been associated with decreasing opportunities for wage employment in agriculture for women when compared to that of men.

Migrant Women in Fishing Industries

Fishing is an important activity in India. Fish is the main source of animal protein for the people accounting for 80% of the animal protein consumed. The improvement of socioeconomic circumstances is crucial for fish and fisheries resources. It also plays a key role in fighting malnutrition, gaining foreign money and generating jobs in India. India has vast bodies of water in the shape of rivers, canals, reservoirs, etc. India has extremely large coastal, estuarine and inland waterways, with a huge fishing and farming potential. Thoothukudi is one of Tamil Nadu's major coastal districts. Many socio-demographic variables, including the age, literacy, religion, caste, living conditions, sanitation, health, social habits, occupation, income, expense, savings and debts, affect their work participation. The socio-demographic factors also influence the amount of fishing activity. There are numerous seafood processing facilities in this district. They export the marine products to many countries. There are plenty of migrant peoples working in these industries across our country.

Problem

The Present study brings out The Livelihood Challenges of Migrant Women/Girls Working in the Fish/Prawn Industries in Thoothukudi District, Tamilnadu.

Objectives

1. To evaluate respondents' socio-economic conditions.
2. To identify the reasons for migration.

3. To find out the wage, working hours, working and living conditions.

Method

There are more than 17 fish/prawn processing industries in Thoothukudi district. The researcher purposively selects one industry for study, because this industry has more migrant people, particularly women labourers. Only the migrated women were taken for the present study. The sample size is 48 which became the census method. To extract facts on the issue, a well-structured interview schedule was used.

Results and Discussions

According to the above data, all 48 responders were female. (52.08 percent) of respondents were between the ages of 16 and 20 years. The majority (25%) of them are between the ages of 21 and 25. (22.92 percent) of them were above the age of 25. At the community level, the majority (72.92 percent) of them were classified as SC, followed by ST (18.75 percent) and others (8.73 percent). Following that, the majority of responders (72.92 percent) were illiterate. (18.75%) of them had completed their elementary schooling. (8.73 percent) of them had completed middle school. The majority (72.92 percent) were Hindu, followed by (14.58 percent) Muslims, and the remainder (12.50 percent) Christians, and religion had no role in their migration. In terms of marital status, the majority (70.83) of respondents are single, while 29.17 percent are married. Weekly wages were paid. The vast majority of responders (52.08 percent) earned less than 800 rupees each week. (37.50 percent) of respondents earned between 800 and 900 rupees per week, while 10.42 percent earned more than 900 rupees per week. In terms of working hours, 52.08 percent of respondents worked 12 hours each day. 25% of respondents worked ten hours each day. They were compelled to work longer hours throughout the season. Local residents will not work more than ten hours a day. (22.92 percent) of respondents reported working more than 12 hours per day and overtime in near-freezing conditions.

Finally, the majority of them (83.33%) having savings in the bank for sending their income to their family. The rest of them (16.67%) were not having savings. They use to send money to their family by friends account. Living arrangements differ based on the experience of working as a migrant worker or based on companies are clearly related to the control that they space at the work place. The women are provided with accommodation either on the permission of this processing units or nearby. There are also very few number of Women staying in private accommodation. The accommodation provided to them is unfurnished and overcrowded, where 15 to 20 women live together depending on the size of the halls. They cook, eat, Sleep and dry clothes in these rooms. The basic amenities like water, toilet, bathrooms etc. seem to be highly insufficient, for them.

Majority (77.08%) of them were not satisfied in the place of staying and (22.92%) were satisfied. Then (31.25%) were satisfied on water facilities remaining (68.75%) of them were not satisfied. The majority (81.25%) of them were not satisfied in toilet and sanitation facilities. Very few (18.75%) of them were satisfied in toilet and sanitation facilities. Majority (91.67%) of the respondents were working as packers the rest (8.33%) of them working as graders. There are two kinds of work in fish processing units, namely Packers and Graders. Most of the women migrants in these industries work as packers. The management prefers local women as graders because they are skilled, quick in their work, and maintain good hygienic conditions. But in the case of packers, they are unskilled labours, they work a lot more than graders.

The data shows the majority of the respondents (43.75%) were migrated from Uttar Pradesh. (31.25%) of the respondents migrated from Jharkhand. Followed by (16.67%) of the respondents who migrated from Maharashtra. The rest (87.33%) of the respondents migrated from Orissa. The data shows the majority of the respondents (43.75%) migrated due to unemployment. (39.58%) of the respondents migrated due to poor salaries in their native places. Followed by (16.67%) of the respondents were migrated due to bad working conditions. When compared to their village, they are getting more money from industries.

The data shows the majority of the respondents (43.75%) were having Anemia. Because they are working in ice plants for more than 10-12 hours per day. (29.17%) of the respondents were having skin disease. (16.67%) of the respondents were fatigued. Finally (10.41%) of the respondents were having more pain while doing work by standing. The data shows the majority of the respondents (41.67%) were visits their village once a year. (33.33%) of the respondents visited their village after 2 years. Finally, one-fourth (25%) of the respondents were visits their village once in six months. The data shows the majority of the respondents (39.58%) were having quarrels with local people in their workplace. They were beaten by them very often. (31.25%) of the respondents were having language as a major problem Followed by (29.17%) of the respondents were blackmailed or tortured while working. They are verbally abused too.

Conclusion

Despite India's remarkable development rates over the last thirty years, large numbers of Indians remain unable to establish substantial livelihoods. In 2010, 29.8% of all Indians were under the poverty level in their homes, while 33.8% of rural Indians were below the poverty line in rural areas, according to World Bank. The volume, variety, and associated distresses of internal migratory movement in India are enormous. A thorough examination of this complex matter reveals that while

migrants are making a significant contribution to the Indian economy, their welfare is still limited. In India, civil society actions across many high migration areas provide a range of effective and context-based solutions that government may tailor to safeguard this disadvantaged part of the workforce, whereas the state and the market have not protected millions of internal migrants. In order to create a sustainable and fair route forward, a coordinated national policy that guarantees access to rights and minimum working conditions is necessary.

Micro-level case studies indicate high levels of rural-urban migration among females for reasons of employment. Secondary data analysis though indicative of this trend does not help us to arrive at the magnitude of such migration. Moreover, unlike in earlier years where male selective migration was predominant, the latest trend is one of family migration where both the male and female migrate, irrespective of the fact whether female employment opportunity is reckoned or not at the time of making a move. But women's labour force participation after migration steeply increases and this is evident from the NSSO 55th round data. In view of rising urban ward migration and increased labour force participation of women after migration, questions related to sanitation, water housing, and educational and infrastructural needs require greater attention at the level of policy planning and implementation. Since women are a highly heterogeneous group migration among females should not only be understood as a poverty-reducing strategy but also as a strategy of economic diversification, upward mobility and desire for personal growth and autonomy. Micro-level case studies are warranted to understand the intricacies involved in female migration.

The effect of other factors like literacy and minority group status on female migration is interesting. Higher female literacy and development of more educational institutions indicate scope for better job opportunities which tend to induce female migration. Caste and minority group membership tends to increase migration through the network effect. From various case studies it is evident that a significant number of females are employed in domestic work after migration and that they are largely from the scheduled caste category. NSS data also supports the findings of the study that a significant proportion of females join as domestic workers after migration as compared to other occupations.

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