

Migration- Its Multidimensional Impact on Mountain Women

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KEYWORDS Migration; migrants; life style, agricultural and livestock activities

ABSTRACT There is an urgent need to study managerial problems faced by the wives where husbands migrate to seek better economic gains. The present investigation was carried out in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh, an abode of migratory families, to ascertain the impact of migration on mountain women and their households. A multi stage random sampling technique was used to select a sample of eighty households through proportional allocation method. Pre-tested interview schedule was used to assess the impact of migration on mountain women and their households. There occurred a change in the decision-making, time-use pattern, income, expenditure and savings. Significant difference was found between the total time spent on household, agricultural and livestock activities. The significant difference between the total family income, savings and total expenditure before and after migration was also found. The aggregate decision making pattern was found to be significantly different before and after migration for all major aspects. Hence, it is imperative to create viable development programmes, employment and educational facilities in the villages at a policy level so that extent of migration could be reduced.

INTRODUCTION

Migration of the husbands alone leads to a tremendous change in the lifestyles of the families left behind. Members of households particularly wives staying back at home have to make major adjustments in their lifestyles as a result of the migration of a male member (Gulati, 1987). Migration of the husbands put the wives in an all together new situation mainly in the nuclear families. Wives staying behind are confronted with the responsibilities of managing the households single handedly. Thakur and Kishtwaria (2002) showed that the wives of the migrants faced number of problems due to the absence of their husbands in the various aspects which included personal, psychological, managerial, social and child related issues. There occurs a considerable change in the decision making responsibilities, related to money, education of children and time use pattern. Changes also occur in the financial management practices, expenditure and saving patterns. Jetley, 1987 depicted that the workload for women and children increases, as they have to take over many male- specific activities. The present study has been undertaken in order to examine the changes occurred in the above mentioned aspects.

Objectives: To assess the impact of migration on the life style of mountain women in terms of

- Decision making
- Time use pattern
- Income, expenditure and savings

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study was carried out in the Kangra District of Himachal Pradesh. A multi-stage random sampling technique was used to select the blocks, villages and ultimate sample of eighty respondents through proportional allocation method. Structured interview schedule was used on the wives of the migrants to record the complete data. The data were analyzed by applying descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, mean, standard deviation, scores) and relational statistics such as paired t- test and chi-square test to arrive at the objectives of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Personal and Family Characteristics

A majority of the respondents (81.25 percent) belonged to the age group of 21-40 years prior to migration. Similar was the case after migration. Regarding education, majority of the respondents (28.75 percent) had matric qualification followed by almost an equal number of respondents (26.25 percent) who were qualified upto primary level. Majority of the households (68.75%) had income in the range of Rs. 15000 and below prior to, whereas, after migration majority had income in the range of Rs.45,001-60,000, that is, 22.50 percent. Sampled households were mainly nuclear families (74.00 percent) and had family size upto 4 members (Table1)

Table 1: Personal and Family characteristics of the respondents

S. No.	Personal characteristics	Before migration	After migration
1.	Age(years)		
	Below 21	14(17.50)	-
	21-40	65(81.25)	72(90.00)
	41-60	1(1.25)	8(10.00)
2.	Education		
	Illiterate	15(18.75)	-
	Primary	21(26.25)	-
	Middle	15(18.75)	-
	Matric	23(28.75)	-
	Above matric	6(7.50)	-
	Technical qualification	-	-
3.	Income(Rs.)		
	15,000 and below	66(82.50)	-
	15,001-30,000	9(11.25)	24(30.00)
	30,001-45,000	3(3.75)	14(17.50)
	45,001-60,000	-	22(27.50)
	60,001-75,000	-	2(2.50)
	75,001 and above	2(2.50)	18(22.50)
4.	Caste		
	Upper caste	25(31.25)	-
	Intermediate caste	42(52.50)	-
	Lower caste	9(11.25)	-
	Scheduled tribes	4(5.00)	-
5.	Family size		
	Upto 4	44(55.00)	-
	Above 4	36(45.00)	-

Decision Making Pattern Before and After Migration

Money Expenditure: The results showed that the decisions related to money expenditure on day-to-day activities before migration, were mainly taken by the husbands alone (53.75 percent) followed by 30 percent households, where decisions were taken jointly by husbands and wives. After migration, in majority of households, the decisions were taken by wives alone (78.75 percent), while in 21.25 percent cases the decisions were taken by others only in most of the cases. In case of decisions related to education of children and emergency situations

mainly husbands and wives together took the decisions. Bajwa (1984), Yadav and Gandhi (1988) showed that rural women had no say in financial matters which is in congruence with the present findings.

Savings: In majority of cases (68.12 percent), the decisions were taken by husbands alone before migration, whereas, in just 21.74 percent households, husbands and wives jointly took the decisions related to amount as well as mode of saving. After migration, majority (47.50 percent) of the decisions were taken by both husband and wives. The least percentage that is 1.25 percent of the decisions were taken by others only.

Education of Children: Before migration, out of 80 households, children were studying in 30 households only. Out of these 30 households, in 63.30 percent cases, decisions were taken by husbands and wives jointly. After migration, children were studying in 74 households. Out of these 74 households the highest number (51.35 percent) of households were having wives as decision makers (Table 2).

H₀: There is No Significant Difference in the Decision Making Pattern Before and After Migration

Chi-square test applied showed significant difference in the decision making pattern in all the aspects viz. money expenditure, saving, education of children and other activities before and after migration (Chi-square value=455.25, significant at 1 percent level). Hence, null hypothesis was rejected (Table 3). It can be concluded from above that before migration role of husbands in decision making in all aspects was dominant. But after migration responsibilities of managing the households chores fell on the wives. Now the wives were taking decisions required for the management of households.

Table 2: Decision making pattern of the sampled households before and after migration

Decision maker	Decision Aspects					
	Money Expenditure		Savings		Education of children	
	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
Children alone	-	-	-	-	5(16.67)	14(18.92)
Wife alone	1(1.25)	63(78.75)	-	-	-	38(51.35)
Husband alone	43(53.75)	-	47(68.12)	29(36.25)	5(16.67)	-
Husband & Wife	24(30.00)	-	15(21.74)	38(47.50)	19(63.30)	9(12.16)
Husband, wife & children	-	-	-	-	-	1(1.35)
Others	10(12.50)	17(21.25)	7(10.14)	1(1.25)	1(3.33)	2(2.70)

Time Allocation Pattern of Respondents Before and After Migration

The analysis of data showed that the mean time spent per day on household activities was maximum among all other activities with 6.05 hours followed by livestock activities on which the mean time spent per day was 1.86 hours. After migration there occurred a change in the time spent per day on various household, agriculture and livestock activities with the mean time spent per day equal to 6.61, 0.82, 2.23 hours respectively. The total time spent per day on all the activities on an average was found to be 7.77 hours before migration as against 8.72 hours after migration. The t- calculated for household (t-value=3.2299; significant at 1 percent level) and livestock (t-value=1.9975; significant at 1 percent level) activities was found to be statistically significant while for agricultural activities it was non-significant and the total time spent on all work activities (t-value=4.1327, significant at 1 percent level of probability) (Table 4).

Ho₂: There is no Significant Difference Between the Total Family Income, Husband's Income and Total Money Expenditure, Amount Of Savings Before and After Migration

Paired t-test was applied to test the significant difference between the total family income,

husband's income, total money expenditure, amount of savings in the household and total time spent on all work activities before and after migration. This suggested change in the total family income (t-value=5.2050, significant at 1 percent level), husbands income (t-value=4.7397, significant at 1 percent level), total money expenditure (t-value=10.6354, significant at 1 percent level) amount of savings of the household (t-value=3.8034, significant at 1 percent level) (Table 5). Therefore, the formulated null hypothesis was rejected. Gulati (1987) observed that women mostly decided what amount to spend on current consumption and what amount to save from the remittances received for household expenses from the migrants.

CONCLUSION

Decisions related to money expenditure on day-to-day consumption and savings, were taken by majority of the husbands alone before migration followed by cases where husbands and wives jointly took the decisions. But after migration of husbands, it was wife who took decision in most of the cases for aspects related to money expenditure while decision related to saving were jointly taken by husbands and wives.

Table 3: Chi-square test showing significant difference in the decision making pattern in various aspects (money expenditure, savings and education) before and after migration

Decision making pattern in all the aspects	Decision makers Children alone	Wife alone	Husband alone	Husband and wife	Husband, wife and children/others	Others
Before migration	5	13	157	259	21	41
After migration	15	264	73	75	6	66
Total	20	277	230	334	27	107

Table 4: Time allocation pattern of the respondents before and after migration

Activities	Mean time spent per day on activities(hours)		
	Before migration	After migration	t- calculated value
Household activities	6.05(0.96)	6.61(1.17)	3.2299**
Agricultural activities	0.63(0.22)	0.82(0.17)	1.9975
Livestock activities	1.86(0.63)	2.23(0.77)	3.2465**
Total mean time spent	7.77(1.48)	8.72(2.27)	4.1327**

Table 5: Paired t-test values showing significant difference in the income expenditure and saving before and after migration

Variables	Mean	difference	t-calculated value
Family income (yearly)	73022.1875	(14029.1538)	5.2050**
Husband's income (yearly)	65952.5000	(13914.8010)	4.7397**
Money expenditure (yearly)	16160.1125	(1519.4644)	10.6354**
Saving (yearly)	40868.7000	(10745.1956)	3.8030**

- The significant difference in the total time spent on the work activities (household, agricultural and livestock) by the respondents was found before and after migration (t-value=4.1327; significant at 1 percent level of probability).

RECOMMENDATION

The government should start adequate and viable development programmes in the villages, such as small scale industries so that the people do not have to go out of the villages in search of employment. If the government of India and Himachal Pradesh provide avenues of employment in rural areas, the extent of migration could be reduced. Moreover, the villages will undergo rapid change of development.

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