



Socio - Economic Conditions Of Migrants - A Study In Migrants In Drought Prone Area

*Dr.K.Somasekhar,
Associate Professor,
Department of Rural Development,
Acharya Nagarjuna University,
Guntur – 522510 A.P.

Abstract

India is predominantly an agricultural economy. Although agriculture accounts for more than 65% of employment, it has been growing only at 3.3% compared to industry's 7.5% per year. Drought conditions have led to crop failure, mounting debts chronic unemployment ultimately compelled to distress migration Anantapur district in Andhra Pradesh is one such district where drought conditions are prevailing consistently over many years. The present paper analyses the adverse impact of drought conditions leading to migration and facing problems in search of employment in urban areas and its effect on their living conditions.

Introduction:

Migration means to change one's residence which means the settlement or shifting of an individual or group of individuals from one cultural area or place of habitation to another, more or less permanently. Migration from one place to another has been a key feature of human society in search of improved livelihood. Migration is normally viewed as an economic phenomenon. Since earlier period people started to migrate for various reasons; some time in search of food, at other times to escape from natural calamities, threats, enemies. Whenever human beings do not find at place one resides migration takes place. Migration is defined as move from one area to another, usually crossing administrative boundaries made during a given migration internal and involving a change of residence (UN 1993).

Migrants leave their area of origin from rural areas to urban areas primarily because of lack of employment opportunities and find out better economic opportunities. Further, rural areas are predominantly relying on agricultural for income and employment. As there is complete uncertainty in agriculture due to failure or inadequate of rains causing drought conditions forced rural people to migrate to urban areas in search of employment. Migration of workers could be viewed as socially and economically beneficial process because the workers get shifted from low productivity labour surplus areas to higher productivity and labour shortage areas. However, these positive implications of migration has been challenged recently, due to the excessive and surplus nature of population migration as practiced in largest cities leading to high rate of population growth puts excessive pressure up on existing facilities of housing, education, medical, water supply, sanitary service and also creating the problem of environment pollution. And also, the rural - urban migration appears to be accelerating the level of urban unemployment and growing number of urban surplus workers. Consequently the migration of labour force from drought affected areas to urban areas adversely affects the welfare of sources at the native and burden on the social facilities available at the destinations, particularly in urban areas.

Drought and Migration:

Drought has been a recurring phenomenon in many parts of India due to failures of monsoon. Hardly a year passes in which some part or other of the country does not in some degree suffer from the calamity of drought. Drought usually refers to lack of precipitation over an extended period of time leading to moisture stress of land. Although, drought may happen virtually in all climatic zones. Yet, its characteristics differ considerably from one area to another. Rainfall, ground water availability reservoir levels and crop conditions determine the nature and extent of drought in a specified geographical area. The most disastrous droughts come at irregular intervals. The core areas of drought comprise about 16 per cent of the total geographical area of the country and 11 percent of its population of the total affected area “chronically drought – prone” areas constituted 33 per cent, which received less than 750 mm of rainfall, and the remaining classified as ‘drought prone’ received rainfall of 750-1,125 mm.

Drought can be classified as meteorological which is related to the deficiency of rainfall, hydrological drought is associated with the effects of periods of precipitation shortfalls on surface.

Agricultural drought is related with the supply and demand of economic goods such as water food grains, hydroelectric power etc. The recurrent Phenomenon of droughts perpetrate poverty and under development of the particular region. Due to prevailing of drought poor people may adopt seasonal migration in order to cope up with the situation. Seasonal migration of rural labour by definition is a movement for employment for short period, not exceeding one year. Seasonal migration is only a temporary change of place for the purpose of work without permanent movement away from the place of birth but only 'change of place of residence'. The period of migration in between 15 days to one year based on the nature of work and necessity of income. Usually migrants to move to urban areas because where they can get ample of employment opportunities as construction workers, masons, and so on.

Drought, obviously means scarcity of water, food and fodder. However, the impact of chronic drought accelerates depletion of natural resources, decrease in agricultural production as well as live stock production. The resultant adverse affect on agricultural production and living condition of the live stock and human beings reflected in a loss of output and decrease in farm incomes and employment.

Objectives of the study:

- To examine the socio-economic conditions of respondents in the selected district
- To understand occupation and wages of migrants and available employment opportunities
- To find out the causes for migration.
- To assess the problems being faced by the migrants.
- To offer coping strategies and the efficacy of the relief measures for checking migration to be adopted for minimizing effect of drought situation.

Methodology:

The study is based primarily on sample survey conducted among migrants in Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh. Anantapur district has been specifically chosen because as there exist continuous drought situation in the district and this district stood first in the state of AP in migration to urban areas. In the next stage, Dharmavaram mandal was chosen based on the severity of drought conditions among the mandals in the district in terms of failure of crops, depletion of ground water, large number of people migration to

urban areas in search of employment. Again, a study has been carried out in Pothukunta village of Dharmavaram mandal on the basis of severity of drought among the villages in the mandal. Later, 60 families of migrants were identified on random basis for the present study and administered schedule to collect necessary data among the respondents.

Caste Composition:

Table 1 presents the distribution of respondents by the caste which they belong. It may be noted that an overwhelming majority (82%) of the respondents belongs to marginalized sections i.e. Scheduled Caste, Backward class and Minorities. It can be concluded that weaker sections as they do not have sufficient assets they may not be in a position to cope with drought situation. Therefore in order to meet domestic expenditure they are migrated to urban areas in search of employment.

Table – 1

Distribution of Sample Respondents by Caste

S.NO.	Caste	No. of Respondents
1.	Backward castes	32 (53.33)
2.	Minorities	3 (5.00)
3.	Other category	11 (18.34)
5.	Scheduled Castes	14 (23.33)

Note: Figures in the Parentheses indicate percentages to the total.

Characteristics of Migrants:

The distribution of respondents into sex different age groups and their literacy level is presented in table 2. It may be seen all most all (95%) of the respondents are males. It also may be seen more than half of the respondents (57%) are in the age group of 15-35 years. Further, around two-thirds of respondents are literates however maximum number of respondents have studied up to primary level. It shows not youth below 35 years and with minimum literacy background only are keen on migration because of as they are confident of facing challenges in the migrated area.

Table – 2

Characteristics of Migrants

S.NO.	Characteristics	No. of Respondents
I	<u>Sex</u>	
1	Male	57 (95.00)
2	Female	3 (5.00)
II	<u>Age</u>	
1	15 – 25 years	8 (13.33)
2	25 – 35 years	27 (45.00)
3	35 – 45 years	12 (20.00)
4	45 – 55 years	9 (15.00)
5	55 and above	04 (6.67)
III	<u>Education</u>	
1	Illiterate	19 (31.66)
2	Primary	28 (46.66)
3	Secondary	11 (18.33)
4	Degree and others	02 (3.35)

Note: Figures in the Parentheses indicate percentages to the total.

Occupation (Pre-migration)

Table 3 shows the distribution of respondents by occupation prior to migration. It may be noted from table 3 that agriculture was the occupation for 69 per cent of the respondents and 23 percent of the respondents occupation was agriculture labour. Thus, more than three-fourths (82%) of the respondents are peasants i.e. either their occupation is agriculture or agriculture labour. It may be stated the Peasants due to the compact of drought conditions as they could not able to get employment opportunities they are forced for migration.

Table 3

Distribution of Respondents by occupation wise

(Pre-Migration)

S.NO.	Occupation	No. of Respondents
1.	Agriculture	41 (68.33)
2.	Agriculture – labour	14 (23.33)
3.	Business	02 (3.34)
4.	Carpentar/other works	03 (3.00)

Note: Figures in the Parentheses indicate percentages to the total.

Occupation (Post-migration)

Table 4 shows the occupation of respondents after migration. It may be noted from this table that nearly half of the respondent (49%) were engage as construction worker, one fourth of respondents (26%) were working in clean the drains and stress. Few percentage of respondents were engaged as security guard (10%), Masons (10%) and Maid servant(5%). Thus after migration respondents have choosen the construction workers and masons as occupation because in urban areas large scale construction works are going on there by they will get immediate employment opportunities followed by cleaning of streets and drainage. Usually in urban areas there is dearth of man power for such type of works, there by migrants can immediately get the opportunity to work. It may be stated that peasants who have contributed in agricultural production now due to drought conditions. During the migration period, they are becoming construction workers, sweepers, maid servants, and security guards.

Table 4

Distribution of Respondents by occupation wise

(Post-Migration)

S.NO.	Occupation	No. of Respondents
1.	Construction worker	29 (48.33)
2.	Drainage/ Cleaning/ Streets cleaning	16 (26.66)
3.	Security guard	6 (10.00)
4.	Mason	6 (10.00)
5.	Maid servant	3 (8.00)

Note: Figures in the Parentheses indicate percentages to the total.

Place of Migration and duration:

Table 5 shows the distribution of respondents by migration and duration. It may be noted from this table that around three-fourths (76%) of respondents are migrated to Bangalore city and rest of them to Cochin and Chennai cities. Migrants have chosen Bangalore city because it is nearer to their native place when compared to other cities. Further, most of the respondents (70%) will reside in the migration places below 4 months. Particularly during the period when they could not able to get any employment opportunities in their places.

Table 5

Distribution of Respondents by Place and duration of Migration

S.NO.	Place	No. of Respondents
1.	Bangalore	46 (76.66)
2.	Cochin	8 (13.34)
3.	Chennai	6 (10.00)
	<u>Duration</u>	
1	Below 2 months	05 (8.33)
2	2 – 4 months	37 (61.66)
3	4 – 6 months	17 (28.33)
4	More than 6 months	01 (1.68)

Note: Figures in the Parentheses indicate percentages to the total.

Reasons for Migration:

Table 6 shows the distribution of respondents by reason. It may be seen from the table that drought conditions are the major reason for migration. An over whelming majority of the respondents (79%) are stated that due to droght conditions they migrated to urban areas. It may be said that consecutive drought conditions in the study areas as a result failure of crops, depletion of ground water, and unable to get any type of work compelled them for migration in search of employment and support for domestic expenditure.

Table 6

Distribution of Respondents by Reasons for Migration

S.NO.	Reasons	No. of Respondents
1.	Due to Drought conditions	47 (78.34)
2.	In search of employment	05 (8.33)
3.	To get higher wages	05 (8.33)
4.	To clear debts	03 (5.00)

Note: Figures in the Parentheses indicate percentages to the total.

Wages:

Table 7 shows distribution of respondents by getting wages per day. Around Two-Thirds of responds (64%) has been getting Rs.300/- 5 per cent and 10 percent of the migrants are getting Rs.200 and Rs.250 wages respectively. Only 4 per cent of the migrants have been getting Rs.400 per day. It shows that an average migrants are getting Rs.320 wages per day that too that is not for all the week days. They are getting work 3 to 5 days per week. It indicates that migrants are not getting adequate wages.

Table 7

Distribution of Respondents in terms of getting employment and wages

S.NO.	Employment	No. of Respondents
1.	3 Days	08 (13.33)
2.	4 Days	49 (78.33)
3.	5 Days	3 (5.00)
4.	6 Days	2 (3.34)

Note: Figures in the Parentheses indicate percentages to the total.

Shelter:

Table 8 shows distribution of respondents by shelter. It shows that more than half of the respondents (55%) of the respondents are taking shelter in congested house for rent where as remaining respondents taking shelter either at Railway Station/ foot path or other public places such as Temples, Churches parks. It may be noted that from table that migrants are facing lot of hardship for shelter which is basic need for any human being who have stayed in convenient houses while in their native places.

Table 8

Distribution of Respondents by Shelter

S.NO.	Nature	No. of Respondents
1.	Railway station/ Foot path	16 (26.66)
2.	Staying in congested house for rent	33 (55.00)
3.	Other public places	16 (18.34)

Note: Figures in the Parentheses indicate percentages to the total.

Savings and Remittance:

Table 9 shows distribution of respondents by savings and Remittances. It shows that more than Two-Thirds of responds (57%) could save Rs.1000-1200 per month. 30% of respondents could save Rs. 800-1000 per month and remaining 14% respondents could save Rs.1200-1500 per month. It also shows from the Table that (64%) respondents on which remittances were spent towards domestic expenditure and 15% of respondents for agriculture investments. Other respondents on which remittances were spent was repayment of debts, for social functions and to meet health costs. It indicates that as the migrants earnings are less and they could able meet only domestic expenditure which reflects that no positive impact due to migration on their earnings.

Table 9

Distribution of Respondents by Savings and Remittance

S.NO.	Savings (per month)	No. of Respondents
1.	Rs. 1200 – 1500	8 (13.33)
2.	Rs.1000 – 1200	34 (56.67)
3.	Rs.800 – 1000	18 (30.00)
	Remittance	
1.	Agricultural Investments	09 (15.00)
2.	Domestic Expenditure	38 (63.33)
3.	Repayment of Debts	08 (13.33)

4.	To meet health costs	2 (3.34)
5.	Towards social functions	03 (5.00)

Note: Figures in the Parentheses indicate percentages to the total.

Challenges:

Table 10 shows distribution of respondents being faced challenges during migration period. It shows that an over whelming majority of the respondents (90%) reported that they are facing challenge in getting employment day to day and equal number (8%) of respondents stated that they are facing language problem. Around Three-Fourths of respondents (74%) reported that they are under physical and psychological harassment. Further, two-thirds of respondents (62%) reported health problem due to poor quality food long working houses and nature of their work. Further, three-fourths of respondents (75%) stated that migration disrupts on children's education and impact on elderly dependents. It shows that all the respondents are facing challenges in many aspects since they left their rural areas and to far away urban areas. It clearly indicates that they are facing physical, psychological, economical, social and cultural problems. They are in push and pull factor on one hand due to through peasants have lost employment opportunities and income which pushed them to migrate where in they are facing challenges from many dimensions.

Table 10

Distribution of Respondents by facing the challenges

S.NO.	Nature of Problems/ Challenge	No. of Respondents
1.	Health Problem	37 (61.66)
2.	Language Problem	52 (86.67)
3.	Physical/ Psychological	44 (73.33)
4.	Searching for employment day to day	54 (90.00)
5.	Disruption of children's education and impact an elderly dependents	45 (75.00)

Note: Respondents reported more than one challenge. Figures in the parentheses indicate percentage to the total

Conclusion and Suggestions:

The impact of drought conditions has made peasants of Anantapur district which is known as chronically drought prone area to migrate to urban areas in search of employment has been clearly established. For over three decades people have been resorted to seasonal migration to cope with drought situation. This is the district not only in the state of Andhra Pradesh but also in the country which has been recurrently facing under the grip of drought conditions due to failure of rains, depletion of ground water, limited forest coverage, low agricultural production, problem of food and fodder for human beings and live stock. This district has been experiencing very pathetic conditions by selling live stock to slaughter houses as farmers fail to provide to supply animal fodder. Depending upon the intensity of drought peasants moved to urban areas in search of employment and duration of stay four months for maximum migrants.

The micro level empirical findings highlights the problems are being faced at migratory urban places. These are, social, economic, and psychological problems. The finding source that migrants facing lot of hard ship due to the emerging challenges such as available employment, type of work, health problems, language problem and inadequate basic facilities.

Hence, keeping in the view of the challenges being confronted by the migrants the need to look at migration by finding out the alternative strategies to check the migration to urban areas and to cope with drought situation.

The following are the suggestions to combat drought conditions a providing employment opportunities, emphasis on increasing extension of forestry, change of cropping pattern and to establish irrigation projects.

- There is need to take up irrigation Projects in a big way wherever possible and execute at an earliest in the drought prone areas if necessary by linking up rivers.
- Providing 100 days guaranteed employment to the household who have registered under MGNREGS should be enhanced upto 200 days in the drought affected areas.
- Need to educate farmers to diversify cropping pattern so as to take up short gestation crops with less water.
- There is also need to encourage farmers for joint farming activities which would certainly save water.
- Cottage and rural industries are to be established.

- Necessary agricultural inputs such as seeds and fertilizers are to be supplied to the farmers in the drought prone areas at free of cost.
- Rice and other essential commodities to be supplied through public distribution system in required quantity without any ceiling.
- All the employment generation programmes should be implemented effectively with a view to provide wage employment to every family so as to cope up drought conditions and check migration.
- All the agricultural families and all the crops should be brought under crop Insurance Scheme.
- Recurrent drought prone districts should be given special status in order to establish large scale industries and to attract investments and also to provide agricultural credit liberally by the banks.
- Special emphasis should be laid on afforestation programmes with the peoples participation viz, joint forest management, social forestry, farm forestry and community forestry for increasing extension of forestry ultimately aims to increase rain fall and also generation employment opportunities in the drought prone areas.

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