

Migration in mountains: problems of women

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ABSTRACT

Migration of the husbands alone to some other places for economic benefits, have a considerable impact on the families left behind consisting of wives and children putting in an altogether new situation. Migration causes a lot of problems to the families particularly wives of the migrants. These can be personal, psychological, managerial, social and children discipline related. The study has been conducted in Kangra District of Himachal Pradesh, which has mountainous terrain and rugged topography to investigate the problems of women due to the migration.

Multistage random sampling technique was used to select a sample of 80 households and data were gathered on pre tested interview schedule by personal interview method from the women. The numbers of problems faced by the women due to migration of their husbands were categorized in high, medium and low intensity problems on mean score basis and were further computed by Chi-square and Zero order correlation matrix for rank order and classification. The result highlighted feelings of anxiety because of gap in communication with husband; problems in upbringing of children, overload of work and less time available as high intensity problems followed by medium and low intensity problems out of total 24 major problems identified. The correlation between the independent variables such as age, education, income etc. with different categories of problems faced showed that significant negative correlation existed between the educational level (r value = -0.37618 sig. 0.1 level) and family income (r = -0.30346 sig. At 0.1) with problems faced by women implying that better education of women and higher family income lessens the problems faced. On the other hand correlation matrix showed that there exists significant negative correlation between age and social problems (r value = 0.436448 sig. 0.01 level) that younger wives faced manifold social problems than older ones such as mobility, loneliness, difficulty in maintaining social relations etc.

Though, migration has resulted in the increase of income of the households but along with there are social costs of migration as wives and children face number of problems as its outcome.

INTRODUCTION

Migration Defined

Migration of people from one place to another has been going on since the dawn of human history has been used as survival strategy. Evidence from Census data and National Sample Survey indicate that more males than females migrate leaving their wives and families behind.

Migration and its determinants

In Himachal Pradesh, India, due to hilly terrain and inclement weather, the job opportunities are comparatively low as compared to plains. Land holdings are small and the scope of establishment of business is also less. This forces the males from the rural areas of Himachal Pradesh to migrate to neighbouring states to seek employment.

Migration: Impediments and consequences

The conditions resulting from such migration pattern have sociological consequences resulting in personal and family disorganization at both ends.

Male migration has resulted in households managed by women, but not necessarily headed by them. In the absence of males, the workload for women and children is increased, as they have to take over many male specific activities (Jetley, 1987). The female-headed households documented in Census data are those of widows, divorces or deserted women. They are seldom those of married women whose spouses have migrated, indicating that as long as men are alive no matter where they live they are considered as the head of the family though their households are managed by females in their absence, sometimes forever. According to Rahat (1990) the role of mother had become dominant and there had been a shift of decision-making power from men to women. Migration of male members may have long term consequences on the family members left behind. Therefore, it becomes imperative to find out the causes and pattern

of migration, since this data base will lead to proper intervention and policy formulations at government level.

Migration of the husbands alone from the villages put the wives in problem filled situations while managing the households singly handedly. These problems can be categorized as personal, psychological, managerial social and children related. Though, there are economic benefits of migration but they are accompanied by the difficulties by those who are left behind.

It is therefore, imperative to find out determinants of migration and problems encountered by wife and family members due to migration of husband. It has implication not towards family system as a unit of society but at national and international level also.

OBJECTIVES

1. To ascertain the determinants of migration.
2. To identify the impediments faced by families of the migrants vis-à-vis its impact on socio-economic variables of the respondents.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Locale: The investigation was carried out in Chamba and Kangra Districts of Himachal Pradesh, India.

Research Design and Tool Used: Descriptive type of survey design was used to record data with the help of pre tested interview schedule and focus group discussions.

Variables: Following **Dependent** (Change in Life style) and **Independent** (Age, Education, Family income, Land holding size, Family size, Family type and Caste) variables were selected for the study.

Sample Selection and Data Collection: A multistage random sampling technique was used for selecting 80 families wherein wives of migrants were personally interviewed. Secondary data were also gathered from available (Census Data and Literature).

Data Analysis: Frequencies, Percentages, Mean and Standard Deviation were used for analysis of descriptive data.

Ranking of factors which caused migration

Factors causing migration were ranked. For this, a list of pull and push factors influencing migration was prepared after exhaustive review of literature and discussion with the experts in the field. It consisted of 11 pull factors and 7 push factors. The respondents were asked to rank them in order of preference, which caused their husbands to migrate. For these pull and push factors, the order of merit given by the respondents were converted into scores by using the formula:

$$\text{Per cent position}^* = \frac{100 (R - 0.5)}{N}$$

Where,

R is the rank of the individual factors in the series ranked by an individual.

N is the number of factors ranked by an individual.

The percent position of each rank obtained was converted into scores with the help of the ranking table given by Garrett and Woodworth (1981). The scores of individual factors were added and the total was divided by the total number of respondents who ranked the particular factor. These means scores for the factors were arranged in descending order and the ranks were given and the most influencing factor was identified.

Problems due to migration

The descriptive rating scale was prepared consisting of the statements of the problems faced by the wives of the migrants in different aspects which were grounded under various categories viz. personal, psychological, managerial, social, children and related emergencies. The responses to these statements were sought in terms of 'always', 'sometimes' and 'never'. For the analysis of the data, the statements were scored as given in the table.

Score value for the problems faced by the respondents

Response	Score value
Always	3
Sometimes	2
Never	1

The problems faced by the respondents were categorized into high medium and low intensity problems. For this, mean score(x) and standard error (S.E.) were calculated and the categorization was done in the following manner:

- (i) $\bar{X} + S.E.$ and Above ----- High
- (ii) $\bar{X} \pm S.E.$ and above ----- Medium
- (iii) $\bar{X} - S.E.$ and above ----- Low

Data Analysis

Correlation coefficient was computed to find out the relationship between the problems faced by the respondents due to migration of their husbands.

- a) The correlation coefficient was computed to find out the relationship between the total problems on the whole and the independent variables. In case of family type, being qualitative variable, the values to dummy variables were given as 1 to nuclear and 2 to joint family system.
- b) The zero order correlation matrix was computed to find out the relationship of independent variables with each category of problems

The characteristics studied under each component have been explained in the tables.

- Personal and psychological
- Managerial
- Social
- Child related

The significance of the value of correlation coefficient was tested by using the following test statistics at selected level of probability.

$$|t| = \frac{|r \sqrt{n-2}|}{\sqrt{1-r^2}}$$

Where, r = correlation coefficient
 n = number of respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Personal and family characteristics

Majority of respondents (81.25%) as well as their husbands (92.50%) belonged to the age group of 21 – 40 years prior to and after migration. Almost similar number of respondents had completed matric (28.75%) and up to primary (26.25%) level education. Least number of respondents had education level above matric i.e. 7.50 per cent. Majority of the households (68.75%) had income in the range of Rs. 15000 and below prior to migration whereas, after migration majority had income in the range of Rs. 45,001 – 60,000. Sampled households were mainly from nuclear families (75.00 %) and family size upto 4 members Table 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d.

Table 1a: Age-wise distribution of respondents and their husbands

Age (in complete years)	Respondents		Husbands	
	Before migration	After migration	Before migration	After migration
Below 21	14 (17.50)	-	-	-
21 – 40	65 (81.25)	72 (90.00)	74 (92.50)	57 (71.25)
41 – 60	1 (01.25)	08 (10.00)	06 (7.50)	23 (28.75)
Total	80 (100)	80 (100)	80 (100)	80 (100)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage of total sample in each category.

Table 1b. Distribution of respondents and their husbands according to their educational level

Educational level	Respondents	Husbands
Illiterate	15 (18.75)	2 (2.50)
Literate		
Primary	21 (26.25)	15 (18.75)
Middle	15 (18.75)	12 (15.00)
Matric	23 (28.75)	37 (46.25)
Above matric	6 (7.50)	12 (15.00)
Technical Qualification	-	2 (2.50)
Total	80 (100)	80 (100)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage of total sample in each category.

Table 1c. Family characteristics of sampled households

S. No.	Particulars	Households
1.	Caste	
	Upper castes (Rajput, Brahmin)	25 (31.25)
	Intermediate castes (Choudhary, Chimery, Kumhar)	42 (52.50)
	Lower castes (Julaha, Harijan)	9 (11.25)
	Scheduled Tribes (Gaddi)	4 (5.00)
	Total	80 (100)
2.	Family type	
	Nuclear	60 (75.00)
	Joint	20 (25.00)
	Total	80 (100)
3.	Family size	
	Upto 4	44 (55.00)
	Above 4	36 (45.00)
	Total	80 (100)
4.	Landholding size (Kanals)	
	Below 7	50 (62.50)
	7 and above	30 (37.50)
	Total	80 (100)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage of total sample.

Table 1d. Total yearly income before and after migration of the sampled households

Income range Rs.	Before migration	After migration
15,000 and below	55 (68.75)	-
15,001 - 30,000	18(22.50)	14 (17.50)
30,001 -45,000	3 (3.75)	16 (20.00)
45,001- 60,000	1 (1.25)	18 (22.50)
60,001 -75,000	-	12 (15.00)
75,001 - 90,000	1 (1.25)	6 (7.50)
90,001 and above	2 (2.50)	14 (17.50)
Total	80 (100)	80 (100)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage of total sample in each category.

B. Factors causing migration

The study carved out number of push and pull factors responsible for the migration of the husbands. The hope of getting better employment at the place of migration was found to be the most important pull factor causing migration of the husbands.

Table 2: Factors causing migration of the husbands

Factors	Number of individuals Who ranked the particular factor (A)	sum of scores for the particular factor (B)	Mean Score C= B/A	Order of merit (D)
A. Pull factors				
1. Better employment	64	4488	70.13	I
2. Better income	63	3601	57.16	II
3. Better work opportunities	23	981	42.65	III
4. Better living conditions	72	2894	40.19	IV
5. Better job security	53	1896	35.77	V
6. Higher economic gains	13	430	33.08	VI
B. Push factors				
1. Unemployment	57	3974	69.72	I
2. Less income	74	3901	52.72	II
3. Poverty	56	2373	42.38	III
4. Lack of job opportunities	49	1985	40.51	IV
5. Small land holding	17	677	39.82	V

Both push and pull factors causing migration of the husbands were ranked. It was observed that among pull factors the top ranked factor was better employment at the place of migration (mean score = 70.13). The next ranked factor was better income (mean score = 57.16). In case of push factors the major factor influencing migration was observed to be unemployment (mean score = 69.72) followed by less income (mean score = 52.72), poverty (mean score = 42.38), lack of job opportunities (mean score = 40.51). Santhapparaj (1998) also found unemployment as the prime push factor compelling people to migrate. Tiwari (1991) observed low income to be the major push factor motivating people to migrate (Table 2).

C. Problems faced by the wives of the migrants

The number of problems faced by the respondents were due to the migration of their husbands. The various problems faced by the respondents were categorized into high, medium and low intensity groups.

Table 3: Problems faced by the respondents due to migration of their husbands

Problem faced	Assigned scores in decreasing order	Group
1. Feeling worried due to untimely communication or gap in communication	238	High
2. Difficulty in upbringing of children alone	223	
3. Inability to visit parent's house or relatives due to lack of time	188	
4. Insufficient time for recreational activities	179	Medium
5. Not able to teach the children	177	
6. Insufficient time to rest	174	
7. Feeling loneliness	173	
8. Do not like to participate alone in social functions	154	
9. Lack of peace of mind	153	
10. Difficulty in disciplining the children	130	
11. Feeling depressed in absence of husband	125	
12. Less time to devote to children's study and welfare	124	
13. Difficulty in dealing with financial responsibilities	124	
14. Difficulty in managing resources demands at the time of emergency	124	Low
15. Difficulty in taking right decisions at the time of emergency	119	
16. Thinking that husband should not have taken such a job	114	
17. Not able to maintain social relations due to the absence of husband	108	
18. Suffering from health problems (hypertension, acidity, etc.) Due to absence of husband	100	
19. Feeling insecure due to absence of husbands	93	
20. Other family members are not co-operative	90	
21. Feeling stress due to husband's migration	88	
22. Absence of husband has resulted in feeling insecurity in children	87	
23. Available money is insufficient to run household affairs	82	Low
24. Have difficulty in receiving or obtaining money from husband	80	

Mean x = 135.3; standard error = 44.61, Possible score range = 80 to 240, Actual score range = 80 to 238

The first three problems viz. feeling worried due to gap in communication with the husband, problems in upbringing of children, inability to visit parents or relatives due to lack of time were assigned high scores placing them in high intensity group of problems. The next problems ranging from serial number 4 to 19 were placed in the group of medium intensity problems. These included difficulty in dealing with financial responsibilities, disciplining the children, insufficient time for recreational activities, feeling loneliness and lack of peace of mind. Gulati (1983) suggests higher the income lesser were the problems faced by the respondents. The possession of monetary resources relaxes the stress by increasing the purchasing power of respondents

Table 4: Correlation coefficient between the selected variables and the problems faced by the respondents

Variables	Problems faced by the respondents
Age	-0.14398
Education	-0.37618**
Family type	-0.21112
Family size	-0.03412
Family income	-0.30346**

** Significant at 1 per cent level of probability

The Correlation coefficients computed between the problems faced by the respondents and the selected independent variables showed negative correlation between the problems faced by the respondents and their educational level ('r' value = -0.37618; significant at 1 % level of probability). The significant negative correlation was also observed between the family income and the problems faced by the respondents ('r' value = -0.30346; significant at 1 % level of probability)

Table 5: Zero – order correlation matrix between selected variables and different categories of problems faced by the respondents

Variables	Variables							
	Personal	Managerial	Social	Child related	Family income	Age	Education	Family type
Managerial	0.36135**							
Social	0.15140	0.19348						
Child related	-0.06769	0.25972*	-0.00576					
Family income	-0.02093	-0.40013**	-0.09661	-0.07466				
Age	0.03320	-0.15845	-0.43645**	0.917162	0.42662**			
Education	0.33684**	-0.28746*	0.16538	-0.33474**	0.29804**	-0.25082*		
Family type	-0.02413	-0.09364	-0.01982	-0.39816**	-0.03605	-0.45588**	0.38483**	
Family size	-0.06154	0.13219	-0.06944	-0.18275	0.06031	-0.08853	0.1392	0.38178**

** Significant at 1 per cent level of probability

* Significant at 5 per cent level of probability

Zero order correlation matrix was computed in order to find out relationship between different categories of problems faced by the respondents and the selected independent variables such as age, education, family type, family size and family income (table 5).

The study of matrix revealed that there was significant negative correlation between the personal problems faced by the respondents and their educational level ('r' value = -0.33684; significant at 1 % level of probability). The significant negative correlation was found to exist between the family income and the managerial problems faced by the respondents ('r' value = -0.40013; significant at 1 % level of probability) as possession of money relaxes many constraints. Significant negative correlation was found between the child related problems faced by the respondents and their educational level ('r' value = -0.33474; significant at 1 % level of probability) and the type of family to which they belonged ('r' value = -0.39816; significant at 1 % level of probability).

CONCLUSIONS

Determinants and Process

- Interstate migration near industry centers and Middle East countries are common destinations.
- Economic factors are most responsible for out migration and unemployment of most important push factor

- Shift in Decision making pattern was observed in money matters; education of children; social aspect; Agricultural, livestock and industry type work time and patterns.
- Changes in Lifestyle occurred due to higher income, expenditure and investments, new pucca houses and more possessions.
- Higher satisfaction level perceived for resource use; freedom in decisions and gain in material possessions

Problems encountered were categorized into High, Medium and Low intensity value such as communication gaps, upbringing of children, deterioration in health, insufficient time for self, difficulty in financial management, lack of peace of mind, emotional stress and insecurity and non-cooperation etc.

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