

Effect of Migration on Children from Low Socio-Economic Background: A Study of Greater Noida

Chhaya Singh, Dr. Rama Srivastava

Master of Social Work

Department of Social Work of Amity Institute of Social Sciences (Amity University, Noida)

Date of Submission: 05-04-2024

Date of Acceptance: 14-04-2024

ABSTRACT

This study delves into the complex association between migration and the educational experiences of children, focusing particularly on families located in Bishrakh, Greater Noida. The primary objective is to examine the obstacles encountered by migrant families and the resulting impact on the academic performance of their children. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the research integrates quantitative analysis of survey data from 40 migrant families with qualitative insights obtained through open-ended inquiries. The results emphasize the significant impact of socio-economic elements on migration choices and educational results. Economic opportunities are identified as a key motivating factor for migration, as families seek improved economic prospects in urban areas. Nevertheless, this quest for economic advancement often hinders children's education, leading to high dropout rates and limited educational access. The results indicate significant challenges for migrant children in accessing education, such as limited school access, language barriers, financial limitations, and issues related to documentation. The study brings attention to the high incidence of school dropout rates among migrant children and identifies crucial determinants of this trend, including economic necessity, insufficient educational provisions, and instances of discrimination within educational institutions.

Keywords; Migration, Educational experiences, Migrant families, Academic performance, Socio-economic elements, School dropout.

I. INTRODUCTION

The World Development Report (2023) estimated that 184 million out of the world's 8 billion people are migrants, signifying a significant and increasing trend in global migration. This

information published in the World Development Report gives a picture that the numbers involved in migration are large and growing.

Studies and field evidence suggest that children accompanying their parents in the 0-14 age group may constitute one-third of the total migrant population. Migration of people from low socio-economic background is often linked to debt cycles and the need for money to repay debts, through which the people are exploited and rendered into forced labour conditions and have to migrate to different states for wage employment with a contractual process at hand. Many industrial and industrial sectors like brick making, stone crushing units, construction etc run mostly on migrant labour and require the contribution of family labour. The children who work with their families are either engaged as non-paid child labourers or lowly paid workers. Thus, the children of migrant households get into the unorganized labour market from an early age and get excluded from education, child protection, nutrition, child development and participation opportunities. Exclusion from essential services and goods such as adequate food, health care and schooling affect children's ability to participate in their communities and societies in both the present and the future. But there are also other rights violations – particularly child protection abuses and neglect of children living outside the family environment – that restrict children's freedom and movement, limiting the representation or identification as a child who holds special rights.

Despite the significant scale of labour migration in India, there is a lack of official data, making it challenging to address the needs of migrant populations effectively. The absence of integration policies further exacerbates rights violations and social exclusion among migrants.

Therefore, there is a pressing need for inclusive policies that uphold the rights of all individuals, regardless of migration status, including the right to non-discriminatory citizenship for migrant families and their children.

Background of the Study

The Right to Education Act incorporates migrant children by stipulating that children from marginalized or underprivileged backgrounds shall not face discrimination or barriers to school attendance in any form (Section 9). Furthermore, local authorities are mandated to facilitate the enrolment of children from migrant households (Section 9(k)), and children have the entitlement to request a transfer to an alternate school (excluding private unaided and specialized schools) and promptly receive a transfer certificate from the school's principal or designated authority figure (Section 5). (TOI, Opinion, 2023).

In developing nations, a significant number of children experience the effects of temporary or long-term labour migration within their families. It's common for these children to grow up without parental care and basic human rights. Whether left behind or migrating with their parents, these children encounter various challenges related to education and healthcare, along with psychological and social difficulties, and the risk of exploitation (Bakker et al., 2009). Access to education becomes particularly critical for these children, given the limited opportunities available to them (Smita, 2008). Therefore, addressing the needs of migrant children could significantly impact the goals of universal primary education and the reduction of child labour. Despite its importance, research on this issue is scarce, especially concerning internal migration due to extreme poverty and landlessness.

Precisely quantifying the number of children affected by migration globally is challenging due to their mobile nature. However, empirical evidence indicates a substantial impact. For instance, a significant percentage of children in countries like Bangladesh, Tanzania, and Mali reside in migrant households (Whitehead & Hashim, 2005). Additionally, hundreds of thousands of children are left behind by migrant parents in countries such as Indonesia, Thailand, and India (Bryant, 2005). In rural areas of eastern India, it's common for wives and children to be left behind in the majority of out-migrant households (Pattanaik, 2009; Roy, 2011).

A considerable number of children accompany their parents as labour migrants. Against this backdrop, this research aims to explore

how the labour migration of parents affects the school attendance and dropout rates of children especially aged 6-14 in India. The study will analyse how migration is impacting children's overall development and especially in terms of education.

Data and Policy Gaps

The lack of policy discussion concerning the distinct situation faced by migrant workers, who belong neither to their villages nor to destination areas. These labourers forgo governmental welfare benefits in their villages and face challenges in accessing such support at their migration sites. Due to their inability to engage in elections and be included in census data collection, migrant labourers experience significant disenfranchisement. Furthermore, this labour force remains predominantly 'invisible' as migration sites are typically situated in remote areas, far removed from populated areas and public scrutiny. The existing data gaps create corresponding policy deficiencies. Without a robust database detailing the scope and magnitude of distress seasonal migration and a comprehensive comprehension of its repercussions on families and communities, the issue is unlikely to feature prominently in policy dialogues or national and state planning frameworks.

Migration and Children

Distress migration serves as a covert catalyst for the involvement of minors in the workforce. A considerable prevalence of child labour is highlighted across various industries. Impoverished families residing in rural areas without additional assistance often find themselves with no alternative but to bring their offspring when relocating for employment opportunities. Children are inevitably coerced into labour activities at workplaces by the employers, subcontractors, and even their own parents, as remuneration is predominantly linked to productivity rather than hours worked. The susceptibility of minors is further exacerbated due to the absence of necessary support systems that are typically available to non-migrant children. Even in cases where migrant children have the opportunity to attend school, the quality of education provided by government schools in regions prone to migration is disheartening.

Objectives of The Study:

a. To prepare the demographic profile of migrant families.

- b. To explore the effects of migration on the educational attainment of children.
- c. To understand the factors contributing to school dropout among children from migrant backgrounds
- d. To Provide recommendations and suggestions for addressing the identified challenges.

Research Questions

What are the primary challenges faced by migrant families in accessing education for their children in Greater Noida, and how do these challenges contribute to disparities in educational outcomes?

What are the key factors influencing school dropout rates among migrant children in Greater Noida?

What are the perceptions of migrant families regarding the impact of migration on the educational attainment and overall development of their children?

Rationale of The Study

The rationale behind this dissertation is rooted in the pressing necessity to tackle the educational inequalities and obstacles experienced by migrant children from families of daily wage workers in India. Despite their considerable numbers and valuable contributions, these children frequently face various hindrances in obtaining high-quality education, such as financial insecurity, insufficient infrastructure, and societal exclusion. Through an investigation into the educational journeys and results of migrant children from families of daily wage construction workers, this study aims to illuminate their distinct circumstances and advocate for tailored interventions to meet their requirements.

An important objective of this dissertation is to emphasize the adverse effects of migration on the educational journey of children within the specific setting of Greater Noida. Despite being a swiftly evolving urban hub, Greater Noida contends with systemic challenges like insufficient educational facilities, language obstacles, and bias, disproportionately impacting migrant children. Through a detailed examination of these hurdles, the study aims to heighten consciousness regarding the educational discrepancies experienced by migrant children and advocate for tailored interventions to tackle these issues effectively.

Statement of The Problem

The problem statement at hand pertains to the challenges faced by migrant children from families of daily wage workers in India when it comes to accessing and excelling in education.

These challenges have a significant impact on their overall well-being and future prospects. Despite the notable contributions made by families of daily wage workers to the economy, their children often confront various structural, socio-economic, and institutional obstacles that impede their educational progress.

In terms of Educational Access, children of migrant daily wage workers frequently encounter obstacles in accessing quality education due to factors like insufficient educational facilities, the absence of schools in migrant settlements, and discrimination within mainstream educational institutions.

Regarding School Dropout Rates, the high incidence of students dropping out of school among migrant children from daily wage worker families stands out as a significant concern. Economic pressures, the necessity for additional income, and the transient nature of migration all contribute to these dropout rates, thus denying children their right to education and perpetuating cycles of poverty.

Effectively addressing these challenges necessitates a thorough understanding of the multifaceted factors that influence the educational journeys of migrant children from families of daily wage workers in India. By identifying the underlying obstacles and hurdles, policymakers, educators, and stakeholders can formulate targeted interventions and support systems to ensure that all children, irrespective of their migration status or socio-economic circumstances, have access to quality education and avenues for comprehensive development.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Many studies have been conducted around the world on how parental migration affects children's health. Katipoğlu et al. (2018) and Zhou et al. (2014) reported several cases of this problem and its impact on children's mental development, health and education. Zhou et al. (2014) Research shows that parents working outside the home in rural China have a negative impact on children's education, resulting in lower educational attainment and increased tuition fees. Katipoğlu et al. (2018) described the negative impact on the psychological and academic health of Turkish children whose parents do not live with them and are absent. These findings highlight the importance of considering family and socioeconomic background in understanding the impact of parental migration on children's lives.

Raturi and Cebotari (2020) conducted an in-depth study on the mental health of children

affected by immigrant parents in Ghana and highlighted the need for mental health services for these individuals. Similarly, Xu et al. (2018) research examines the relationship between population mobility and child health in the contemporary Chinese context, where it questions the assumption that population movements only lead to negative outcomes when it comes to their impact on child health. Effects.

Ashish Upadhyay et al (2018) examined the longitudinal experience of early infanticide in Andhra Pradesh, India. The study highlights the long-term impact of forced migration on child development outcomes by tracking health experiences in later childhood. Seasonal migration is common in India and other developing countries; People from rural areas regularly move to cities in search of business science. These mobility patterns affect the education of children who follow their parents into the city. Children with immigrant backgrounds often have no hope of education or are forced to abandon their education due to financial constraints and other problems, especially when they are involved in construction work. Many children are unable to attend school or leave school early because their parents regularly go to work, making them vulnerable in terms of childhood and employment. Parental care affects their overall health. Drawing on the case study, researchers investigate the education of immigrant children who stay in rural areas or come to the city to find work for their parents, as reported by Roy et al. (2015).

(Lei et al., 2020) examined the nutritional status of children whose fathers migrated from India to investigate the impact of migration on child health. (Brockhoff, 1994) conducted a study on the effects of rural-urban migration on child survival. This study focuses on the health and demographic effects of migration on urban children. (Roshania et al., 2022) investigated the impact of rural-urban migration on the health and well-being of children working in brick kilns in Bihar, India, and highlighted the negative impact of migration on children's survival and health. The work of (Mi Zhou et al. 2022) provides information on multiple health conditions of children affected by parents working outside the home in China. This study explores the small role of mobile phone addiction in our understanding of the interaction between migration, technology and child health.

Research (Tesfaw and Minaye, 2022) and Lee (2011) examined the educational outcomes of children whose parents work outside the home, especially in rural areas. Lee (2011) found in Wollo, southern Ethiopia, that parents working

outside the home were a problem for children left behind, making it difficult for these children to receive a proper education. As a result, these children receive inadequate education and cannot access education. Panda (2022) Research on the education of seasonal migrant children. This study explores the impact of temporary migration on children's educational opportunities and academic achievement and highlights the challenges immigrant families face in educating their babies. Smita's research highlights the impact of migration on children. education. By examining the specific problems faced by children in the context of seasonal migration, the study highlights the need for support mechanisms that will reduce the negative impact on children's education.

Studies by (Xu et al., 2018) and (Upadhyay et al., 2018) demonstrate efforts to solve the problems caused by immigrant children. In their study (Upadhyay et al., 2018), they examined how government policies and measures in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh can help reduce the negative impact of migration on children's healthy consumption knowledge. They emphasized the importance of social protection programs and social interventions in this regard. Investigating the effects of migration on the health of today's Chinese children, Xu et al. (2018) emphasized the necessity of implementing policies and intervention plans that will support the education and psychological well-being of immigrant children.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on primary data collected from the migrant construction workers by direct personal interview with the help of well-designed questionnaire. Secondary data is collected from published sources. This research is mixed type of research where researcher collected both quantitative and qualitative data. But quantitative data is the base of this research. Given the exploratory nature of the study, a descriptive research design was adopted. Research area of this study is Bishrakh. It is a village located in Greater Noida. It is a congested area without proper infrastructure, sanitation, drainage, and hygiene. Availability of clean drinking water is also a challenge. Universe of migrant construction workers in that area is approximately 500. Data was collected using a combination of interviews, surveys, and observations. Structured interviews were conducted with both children and parents to gather qualitative insights into their experiences and perspectives. Observations were complemented

these methods by providing firsthand observations of the children's educational environments.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The migration phenomenon from rural to urban areas, particularly among low socio-economic populations, presents complex socio-economic challenges that profoundly influence individuals and families. In this chapter, we embark on a comprehensive analysis of data collected from migrant families residing in Greater Noida, for understanding the socio-economic factors influencing migration and its impact on children's education and overall development.

Demographic Profile of Migrants

The data reveals that the majority of migrant families experience a degree of instability in their employment within the construction industry, with 87.5% describing their work as unstable and 12.5% said it's somewhat stable. This suggests a prevalent sense of uncertainty regarding their livelihoods. Moreover, economic constraints emerge as a significant concern, as 70% of respondents indicate that financial instability compels children to forego education in favour of employment opportunities, underscoring the financial pressures faced by migrant households. Notably, nearly half of the respondents (47.5%) report a monthly income falling within the range of ₹ 10,001 to ₹ 15,000, indicative of modest financial resources within this demographic. In terms of housing, the vast majority of respondents (82.5%) reside in temporary accommodation provided by employers, only 12.7% are living in a rented house indicating a lack of ownership and potentially unstable living conditions. Regarding access to food, while a significant portion of respondents (80%) report that they cannot access to an adequate daily meal, because there are instances of food insecurity towards the end of the month for some families. Economic constraints are identified as a primary challenge in accessing education for migrant children, with 90% of respondents citing this as a significant obstacle. This underscores the profound impact of socio-economic status on educational opportunities within migrant communities. Additionally, reasons for children dropping out of school predominantly revolve around economic factors, with 40% attributing dropout to the economic necessity of working.

Negative Effect of Migration on Educational Attainment

The data reveals that a significant portion of migrant families faces challenges in accessing

education in Greater Noida. Economic opportunities emerged as the primary reason (100%) for family migration, indicating that families were compelled to migrate in search of livelihood opportunities. The emphasis on economic reasons suggests that families might prioritize immediate financial needs over their children's long-term educational prospects. Most respondents (77.5%) reported that none of the children in their household were currently enrolled in school, indicating a significant gap in access to education post-migration. The main challenges reported by respondents in accessing education in Greater Noida included economic constraints (90%), limited access to schools (62.5%), documentation issues (75%), and language barriers (62.5%). These challenges align with the negative perception of migration's impact on children's education and suggest that migrant families face multiple barriers in accessing educational opportunities for their children post-migration. This data underscores the adverse effects of migration on the educational attainment of children from migrant backgrounds. A significant proportion (70%) of respondents reported that at least one of their children had dropped out of school since migrating to Greater Noida.

Factors Contributing to School Dropout

A considerable proportion of migrant children experience school dropout since migrating to Greater Noida, with 70% of respondents indicating that some of their children dropped out. Economic necessity to work emerged as the most common reason (50%) for children dropping out of school, highlighting the economic pressures faced by migrant families. Economic instability emerged as a significant factor, with 88.9% of respondents stating that it forces children to work instead of attending school. Inadequate educational resources (31.3%) also played a significant role in dropout rates, indicating the importance of educational infrastructure in retaining children in school. The perception of migration's negative impact on children's education was supported by the high dropout rates reported by respondents.

Effect of Migration on Children's Overall Development

The data highlights the negative impact of migration on the overall development of children, with 72.5% of respondents perceiving migration as negatively affecting their children's development. Factors such as economic instability, limited access to education, and challenges in accessing healthcare and nutrition contribute to the negative

consequences of migration on children's development. Factors contributing to this perception include hindrances in academic performance (64.1%), emotional well-being (70.3%), and social skills development (97.4%). Additionally, 87.5% of respondents believe that migration hinders access to quality education, which is crucial for children's holistic development. Migration was reported to increase stress and anxiety among children (13.5%), indicating a negative impact on their emotional well-being. The unstable living conditions and lack of access to basic necessities further contribute to emotional distress among migrant children. 27.5% of respondents reported a negative impact on their children's emotional well-being due to migration. Migration was associated with an increased risk of health problems (55%) among children, highlighting the adverse effects of living in precarious conditions on physical health. Limited access to healthcare services and nutritious food exacerbates the vulnerability of migrant children to health issues.

V. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Migration in Greater Noida presents multifaceted challenges that necessitate a comprehensive approach to address the needs of migrant families. Prioritizing economic stability emerges as a pivotal recommendation. By fostering sustainable livelihood options in rural areas through investments in agriculture, rural industries, and skill development programs, the government can mitigate the necessity for migration solely for employment purposes. Improving access to education stands out as another critical recommendation. Simplifying admission processes and enhancing the quality of education, including infrastructure and resources in schools, can help reduce dropout rates among migrant children. By ensuring equal educational opportunities, the government can empower migrant youth with the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in an increasingly competitive world.

Furthermore, enhancing social support services is imperative for improving the living conditions of migrant families. Implementing schemes that provide financial assistance, subsidized food grains, and healthcare services can alleviate the financial burden on migrant households. Additionally, ensuring access to affordable housing and basic amenities such as toilets and electricity is essential for enhancing the overall well-being of migrant communities. Lastly, promoting inclusive policies is crucial for fostering

social cohesion and integration. Policies should be formulated with a focus on inclusivity and sensitivity towards the needs of migrant populations, addressing language barriers, discrimination, and cultural assimilation issues in schools and communities. To address the educational challenges faced by migrant children in Greater Noida, a comprehensive approach involving government initiatives, NGO and civil society involvement, and individual action is essential.

VI. CONCLUSION

The data analysis underscores the urgent need for targeted interventions to mitigate the negative impact of migration on children's education and overall development in Greater Noida. Policymakers, researchers, and community leaders should prioritize addressing language barriers, economic constraints, and documentation issues to ensure equitable access to education for migrant children. Additionally, comprehensive support programs addressing the socio-economic needs of migrant families are crucial for enhancing educational outcomes and fostering the holistic development of children in migrant communities.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Always on the move: The troubling landscape of the right to education for migrant children in India April 19, 2021, 7:04 PM IST Pooja Pandey, TOI
- [2]. Bryant, J. (2005). Children of International Migrants in Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines: A Review of Evidence and Policies, (April). (PDF)
- [3]. Child Migration, Child Agency and Inter-generational Relations in Africa and South Asia1 Ann Whitehead, Iman M. Hashim and Vegard Iversen (PDF) (2007)
- [4]. Consequences of forced migration during early childhood on cognitive well-being in later childhood in Andhra Pradesh, India. By Ashish Upadhyay, Swati Srivastava, Chhavi Paul (PDF) (2018)
- [5]. Early life migration and undernutrition among circular migrant children: An observational study in the brick kilns of Bihar, India, Roshania, R. P., Giri, R., Cunningham, S. A., Young, M. F., Webb-Girard, A., Das, A., ... Ramakrishnan, U. (2022). (PDF)
- [6]. Fathers' migration and nutritional status of children in India: Do the effects vary by community context? Lei Lei, Sonalde Desai, Feinian Chen (2020)

- [7]. IMMIGRATION AND CHILDREN, Katipoğlu, B., Şimşek, P., & Gündüz, A. (2018) (PDF)
- [8]. Impact of Parental Migration on Education and Behavioural Outcomes of Children Left Behind in Southern Wollo. Getnet Tesfaw and Abebaw Minaye Gezie (PDF) (2022)
- [9]. Impact of Rural-Urban Labour Migration on Education of Children: A Case Study of Left Behind and Accompanied Migrant Children in India Dr Archana K Roy, Pappu Singh and Prof. UN Roy (2015) (PDF)
- [10]. Internal and international parental migration and the living conditions of children in Ghana Authors: Victor Cebotari University of Luxembourg Bilisuma B. Dito (2020) (PDF)
- [11]. Migration And Children's Welfare in China: The Schooling and Health Of Children Left Behind. Ming Hsuan Lee (2011).
- [12]. Not a zero-sum game: Migration and child well- being in contemporary China.By Duoduo Xu, Xiaogang Wu, Zhuoni Zhang, Jaap Dronkers (2018)
- [13]. Parental Seasonal Migration and Children's Education Attainment Panda, S. S. (2022). 5.pdf
- [14]. Pattanaik, B.K. (2009). Young Migrant Construction Workers in the Unorganised Urban Sector. South Asia Research, 29(1), 19 40.
- [15]. Smita. (2008). Distress Seasonal Migration and its Impact on Children's Education. Creative Pathways to Access, Research Monograph No. 28. NUEPA.
- [16]. The Impact of Migration on Children in the Caribbean UNICEF Office for Barbados and Eastern Caribbean Caroline Bakker, Martina Elings-Pels and Michele Reis (2009)
- [17]. The Impact of Parental Migration on Multidimensional Health of Children in Rural China: The Moderating Effect of Mobile Phone Addiction Zhou, M., Bian, B., Zhu, W., & Huang, L. (2022). (PDF)
- [18]. The impact of rural-urban migration on child survival. Martin Brouckerhoff (1994)
- [19]. World Development Report 2023: Migrants, Refugees and Societies, June 29, 2023 Washington, DC and Online.