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Impact of Off-seasonal Migration of Hilly Tribes in Tiruvannamalai District of Tamilnadu

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Author SV designed the study, performed the statistical analysis, wrote the protocol and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. Author MA managed, guided, read and made corrections in the analyses of the study. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

Aim: The present study was designed to study the impact of off-seasonal migration of hilly tribes in Tirvannamalai district of Tamilnadu.
Study design: Ex-post facto research design.
Place and Duration of the study: Tiruvannamalai district was purposively selected for this study since it is one among the districts where hilly tribes' population is high. This study was confined with seven villages namely Kovilur, Nammiyampattu, Kanamali, Veerappanur, Melsilambai, Palamarathur and Kuttakarai of Jamunamarathur (Jawadhu hills) block during April 2017 to November 2017.
Methodology: The sample size entailed of 240 respondents selected from these villages with proportionate random sampling method. The respondents were interviewed personally by a well-structured and pre-tested interview schedule. The collected data were analysed with percentage analysis statistical method. The findings on the results were interpreted with relevant conclusion.
Results: In this context, the impact of off-seasonal migration of hilly tribes in Tiruvannamalai district were thoroughly analysed and discussed with nine sub-headings. The overall impact of

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migration revealed that majority of the migrant hilly tribes had no changes in agriculture (91.25%), healthcare and sanitation (95.00%), urban contact (91.25%), savings and investment (88.64%), standard of living (66.00%), social status (64.08%), consumption pattern (52.17%) and purchasing power (52.17%). Increased change observed with the employment status (80.20%) of the migrant hilly tribes.

Conclusion: Since, the income obtained from the off-seasonal migration activities, but it is mostly spent on debt borrowed by the hilly tribes for the seasonal activities and further improvement can't be obtained and hence necessary credit facilities have been provided for the migrant hilly tribes.

Keywords: Hilly tribes; Jawadhu hills; Tiruvannamalai; off-seasonal migration; migration impact.

1. INTRODUCTION

Migration flows have shaped some of India's key sectors: labour, foreign relations and education. Large scale internal migrations and labour mobility in particular have an historical association, which has been widely documented. While flows differ in duration, motives, migrant profiles, their impact on households and communities also varies at places of destination and origin. Internal, seasonal migrations act as a 'safety valve' among the poorest communities, more often than not critical to the livelihoods of the most socially and economically vulnerable. Those belong in majority to tribal communities, scheduled castes and other backward class [1].

While migrations have been centuries-old mechanism among tribal communities, often associated with positive outcomes, the challenges faced by women are exacerbated in migrant households. As the migratory phenomenon is likely to increase by 2020, putting more vulnerable people on the move in the tribal areas, it can be expected to add more to the problem of child nutritional deprivation in tribal areas [2].

Human mobility has long been considered an essential strategy for improving individual well-being. While the topic of migration and development has become very prominent over the past decade, no common methodological approach has been developed to study the impact of migration on development [3].

Geographically and socially isolated, tribal groups have traditionally lingered outside the realm of the country's development process. After India's independence, the Government did set up special provisions for their recognition, welfare and development. However, with low political weight within State institutions, infrastructure development in the tribal areas (education, roads, healthcare, communication, sanitation, etc.) remained comparatively low, widening the socio-economic gap between tribes and the rest of the population [2]. Rural India and its significance is growing [4]. For example, in Tamil Nadu, landless agricultural labourers who are trapped in the debt bondage and who belong to low social strata, i.e. scheduled tribes and scheduled castes, migrate to the sugarcane industry centre [5,6].

Exploring the multiple dimensions of the relationship between seasonal migrations and tribal poverty, the impact of migration of hilly tribes during off-season in Tiruvannamalai district was studied with selective indicators which attempt to answer the research questions that,

1. Whether the off-seasonal migration has any impact on the socio-economic conditions of the hilly tribes?
2. What kind of impact perceived by the hilly tribes due to off-seasonal migration?

Based on these questions, the hypotheses framed were,

Null Hypothesis: There is no effect on the socio-economic conditions of the hilly tribes due to off-seasonal migration.

Alternative Hypothesis: There is an effect found on the socio-economic conditions of the hilly tribes due to off-seasonal migration.

2. METHODOLOGY

The research design chosen for this study is Ex post-facto research design. The aim of the study is to enumerate the impact of migration of hilly tribes during the off-season. Tiruvannamalai district in Tamil Nadu was purposively selected because it is one of the districts in Tamil Nadu where the percentage of migrating hilly tribe population is high. Jamunamarathur block was selected because it has maximum number hilly

tribe population in Tiruvannamalai district. Kovilur, Nammiyampattu, Kanamali, Veerappanur, Melsilambai, Palamarathur and Kuttakarai were the villages selected for the study where the percentage of tribal population is high. The lists of tribal residents were obtained from the records of the Village Administrative Officers. Proportionate random sampling procedure was employed in selecting 240 respondents from the selected seven villages. A sample of 65 member form Kovilur, 44 members from Nammiyampattu, each 35 members form Kanamalai and Veerappanur, 23 members from Melsilambai and for remaining 38 members, each 19 members selected from Palamarathur and Kuttakarai. The interview schedule used for this study was subjected to judges' opinion obtained from various research scientists of Tamil Nadu and other states of India. Based on the mean score obtained from the calculation was used to select indicators used to study the socio-economic impact of off-seasonal migration of hilly tribes. Further the interview schedule was pre-tested with the non-sample area of the study. The data were collected using a pre-tested interview schedule were subjected to statistical test to get the meaningful interpretations.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Impact of Off-seasonal Migration of Hilly Tribes

An effort has been taken to explore the impact of off-seasonal migration of hilly tribes, major components have been identified, scrutinized and it is used for this study. The data collected on these major components were analysed and the results are presented in this section with the following headings.

3.2 Overall Impact of Off-seasonal Migration of Hilly Tribes

The overall impact encountered by the hilly tribe respondents as a result of off-seasonal migration was studied and presented in the Table 1 below.

It could be inferred from Table 1 that, majority of the migrant hilly tribes had no changes in agriculture (91.25%), healthcare and sanitation (95.00%), urban contact (91.25%), savings and investment (88.64%), standard of living (66.00%), social status (64.08%), consumption pattern (52.17%) and purchasing power (52.17%). Increased change observed with the employment status (80.20%) of the migrant hilly tribes.

In this research study, from the results presented in the Table 1, the rejection of null hypothesis and acceptance of alternative hypothesis would be accepted i.e. there is an effect found on the socio-economic conditions of the hilly tribes due to migration.

3.3 Impact on Urban Contact

To identify the enhancement in the urban contact among the hilly tribes due to impact of migration, the data were collected, tabulated, analysed and presented in Table 2.

It could be observed from Table 2 that majority of the respondents felt that there was no change seen in the establishment of contact with urban society. It is noted that no changes were seen among contact with urban people (97.50), contact with officials of the development departments (97.50%) and frequency of visits to nearby towns (94.60%). Nearly one-fourth (24.20%) of the respondents said that increased contact with the NGO representative.

Table 1. Overall impact of off-seasonal migration of hilly tribes

S. No.	Particulars	Change indicators (%)		
		Increased	No change	Decreased
1.	Impact on urban contact	8.59	91.25	0.16
2.	Impact on savings and investment	10.89	88.64	0.47
3.	Impact on employment status	80.20	19.60	0.20
4.	Impact on social status	35.67	64.08	0.25
5	Impact on consumption pattern	47.75	52.17	0.08
6.	Impact on healthcare and sanitation	0.53	95.00	4.47
7.	Impact on purchasing power	47.75	52.17	0.08
8.	Impact on standard of living	34.00	66.00	0.00
9.	Impact on agriculture	2.08	97.75	0.17

Table 2. Impact on urban contact

S. No.	Particulars	Change indicators					
		Increased		No change		Decreased	
		No	%	No	%	No	%
	I. Urban contact						
1.	Frequency of visits to nearby town	13	5.40	227	94.60	0	0.00
2.	Contact with urban people	5	2.10	234	97.50	1	0.40
3.	Contact with officials of the development departments	4	1.70	234	97.50	2	0.80
4.	Contact with NGO representatives	58	24.20	181	75.40	1	0.40

Table 3. Impact on savings and investments

S.No.	Particulars	Change indicators					
		Increased		No change		Decreased	
		No	%	No	%	No	%
	II. Savings and investments						
1.	Opened bank account/ postal savings account	2	0.80	237	98.80	1	0.40
2.	Clearance of debts	178	74.20	60	25.00	2	0.80
3.	Availed loans	1	0.40	237	98.80	1	0.40
4.	Repaid loans	1	0.40	238	99.20	1	0.40
5.	Insurance for personal	0	0.00	239	99.60	1	0.40
6.	Insurance for family members	0	0.00	239	99.60	1	0.40
7.	Invested in a new business venture	1	0.40	238	99.20	1	0.40

Table 4. Impact on employment status

S. No.	Particulars	Change indicators					
		Increased		No change		Decreased	
		No	%	No	%	No	%
	III. Employment status						
1.	Number of man days employed	193	80.40	47	19.60	0	0.00
2.	Off-season employment	192	80.00	47	19.60	1	0.40

Table 5. Impact on social status

S. No.	Particulars	Change indicators					
		Increased		No change		Decreased	
		No	%	No	%	No	%
	IV. Social status						
1.	Good leadership qualities	9	3.80	230	95.80	1	0.40
2.	Social recognition	31	12.90	209	87.10	0	0.00
3.	Institutional contact	30	12.50	209	87.10	1	0.40
4.	Co-operation among village people	178	74.20	61	25.40	1	0.40
5.	Involvement in community activities	180	75.00	60	25.00	0	0.00

Even though the respondents tend to migrate, the urban contact cannot be established during the migration. Since, the migration network is mainly agencies who doesn't provide the opportunity to the respondents to get contact with the outside people at the migratory place. The respondents won't get opportunities to meet the officials in the urban region due to the job nature the tribes get engaged at the migratory place.

3.4 Impact on Savings and Investments

To know the improvement in the changes in savings and investments activities among the hilly tribes due to the impact of migration, the data related to this part were collected, tabulated, analysed and presented in Table 3.

Among various indicators selected to identify changes in the savings and investments

behaviour of hilly tribes due to migration, nearly three-fourths (74.20%) of the respondents quoted that debts were cleared with the income from migration activities. In turn, 99.60 per cent of the respondents revealed that no changes were seen among repayment of loans, insurance for personal and family members. Around 99.20 per cent of the respondents stated that no changes has been made to invest in new business venture and 98.80 per cent opined that the respondents do not opened any bank or postal savings account.

In this regard, the money earned through economic activities carried out at the migratory place didn't help the tribal respondents to use for the future savings and invest in other activities. The amount grossed from migration activities used for the clearing of debts which has been borrowed during the seasonal agricultural activities. Hence, poor savings habit was found with the hilly tribe respondents.

The findings are in line with findings of Sujeetha [7].

The findings are contrary with findings of Anamica [8] and Anamica [9].

3.5 Impact on Employment Status

To ensure the employment status of hilly tribes after the migration, the details on employment status of the respondents were collected, analysed and listed in the Table 4.

It could be noted from the Table 4 that majority (80.40%) of the respondents revealed that increased changes in the number of man days employed and 80.00 per cent inferred that increased changes in off-season employment.

It is due to that employment opportunities obtained through migration resulted in the increased number of man days employed and off-season employment activities by the hilly tribes. Though the hilly tribes get employed for maximum number of days but the income generated through the economic activities at the migratory place found not sufficient to meet to out the day-to-day activities and also for savings to the future.

The findings are in line with the findings of Anamica [8], Anamica [9] and Indumathi [10].

3.6 Impact on Social Status

To get analyse about the changes obtained on social status due to migration, the related data were collected, analysed and interpreted in the Table 5.

While analysing the data of impact on social status, about 95.80 per cent of the respondents stated that no changes were observed with development of good leadership skill followed by social recognition (87.10%) and development of institutional contact (87.10%). Exactly three-fourths (75.00%) of the respondents opined that increased involvement in community activities followed by increased co-operation among village people (74.20%).

Migration has been seen with group of people to the particular agricultural or non-agricultural activities and hence, the respondents get to know about other unknown people from the migration destination place. It developed the co-operation at work place and that enabled the respondents to improve the co-operation among the village people which created the interest towards involvement in community activities.

The findings are in line with the results of Sujeetha [7].

3.7 Impact on Consumption Pattern

The changes in the consumption pattern of hilly tribes has been analysed and the results are presented in the Table 6.

Under consumption pattern, no changes were observed among cent (100.00%) per cent of the respondents with fruit consumption followed by milk consumption (99.60%), pulse consumption (99.20%), meat consumption (98.30%) and intake of quality of food (98.30%).

Though wages earned from the work carried out at the migration place but it is used for the other livelihood activities by the respondents. The respondents were aware about all those food items mentioned in the above Table, may not able to get into the daily dietary consumption pattern by the hilly tribes.

The findings are contrary with the results of Indumathi [10].

Table 6. Impact on consumption pattern

S. No.	Particulars	Change indicators					
		Increased		No change		Decreased	
		No	%	No	%	No	%
	V. Consumption pattern						
1.	Fruit consumption	0	0.00	240	100.00	0	0.00
2.	Pulse consumption	2	0.80	238	99.20	0	0.00
3.	Milk consumption	1	0.40	239	99.60	0	0.00
4.	Meat consumption	4	1.70	236	98.30	0	0.00
5.	Intake of quality of food	4	1.70	236	98.30	0	0.00

Table 7. Impact on healthcare and sanitation

S. No.	Particulars	Change indicators					
		Increased		No change		Decreased	
		No	%	No	%	No	%
	VI. Healthcare and sanitation						
1.	Contact with people practicing indigenous medicines	149	62.10	91	37.90	0	0.00
2.	Contact with allopathic doctors	194	80.80	46	19.20	0	0.00
3.	Treatment at Hospitals or Primary Health Centres	227	94.60	13	5.40	0	0.00
4.	House constructed with toilets and bathrooms	3	1.20	237	98.80	0	0.00
5.	Usage of public toilets / community toilets	0	0.00	239	99.60	1	0.40

Table 8. Impact on purchasing power

S. No.	Particulars	Change indicators					
		Increased		No change		Decreased	
		No	%	No	%	No	%
	VII. Purchasing power						
1.	Purchase of new jewels	0	0.00	231	96.20	9	3.80
2.	Purchase of new lands	0	0.00	229	95.40	11	4.60
3.	Purchase of new vehicles	5	2.10	224	93.30	11	4.60
4.	Purchase of farm equipment	0	0.00	228	95.00	12	5.00
5.	Purchase of farm implements	0	0.00	228	95.00	12	5.00
6.	Purchase of new livestock	0	0.00	229	95.40	11	4.60
7.	Purchase of house appliances	2	0.80	228	95.00	10	4.20
8.	Purchase of modern communication gadgets	3	1.20	227	94.60	10	4.20

Table 9. Impact on standard of living

S. No.	Particulars	Change indicators					
		Increased		No change		Decreased	
		No	%	No	%	No	%
	VIII. Standard of living						
1.	Renovated house with more facilities / built new house	1	0.40	239	99.60	0	0.00
2.	Increased buying / wearing new cloths	193	80.40	47	19.60	0	0.00
3.	Usage of foot wears	197	82.10	43	17.90	0	0.00
4.	Provided higher education to children	6	2.50	234	97.50	0	0.00
5.	Spent more for religious and other activities	11	4.60	229	85.40	0	0.00

Table 10. Impact on agriculture

S. No.	Particulars	Change indicators					
		Increased		No change		Decreased	
		No	%	No	%	No	%
	IX. Agriculture						
1.	Land reclamation	3	1.20	236	98.30	1	0.40
2.	Renovated / constructed irrigation structures	1	0.40	238	99.20	1	0.40
3.	Changes in cropping pattern	1	0.40	239	99.60	0	0.00
4.	Usage of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, fungicides, etc.	1	0.40	239	99.60	0	0.00
5.	Usage of organic fertilizers, pesticides, fungicides, etc.	19	7.90	221	92.10	0	0.00

3.8 Impact on Healthcare and Sanitation

To know the development in healthcare and sanitation facilities taken by the hilly tribes due to migration activities, the data related to the statements were collected, analysed and presented in the Table 7.

Among various health care and sanitation facilities taken for the study, more than ninety (94.60%) per cent of the respondents stated that increased changes in taking treatment at hospitals or primary health centres by the hilly tribes. Majority (80.80%) of the respondents opined that increased contact with allopathic doctors. More than half (62.10%) of the respondents said that decreased contact with people practicing indigenous medicines. No changes were observed in usage of public toilets / community toilets (99.60%) and house constructed with toilets and bathrooms (98.80%).

Since, the medication taken at the migratory place and the speedy recovery observed with the allopathic treatments the hilly tribes tend to move for taking treatments in the hospitals. But in use of toilets and bathrooms the respondents lags due to financial requirement for the construction of bathrooms and toilets in the houses.

The findings are in line with the results of Indumathi [10].

3.9 Impact on Purchasing Power

To assess the impact on purchasing power of hilly tribes with reference to migration and the related data were collected, analysed and depicted in Table 8.

It is evident from the Table 8 that predominantly no changes were observed on purchasing power of hilly tribes as a reason of migration activities. Majority of the respondents replied that no changes met with the purchase of new jewels (96.20%), purchase of new lands and new livestock (95.40%), purchase of new farm equipment and implements (95.00%), purchase of house appliances (95.00%), purchase of modern communication gadgets (94.60%) and purchase of vehicles (93.30%).

Since, hilly tribe respondents have to repay their debts and the income arrived from off-seasonal migration activities were spent to it. Even the respondents cannot able to fulfil the consumption requirements and may not able to move for developing the purchasing power. Once, the respondents get the habit of savings and then only the hilly tribes go for purchasing of new things for the improvement of livelihood.

The findings are contrary with findings of Anamica [8] and Anamica [9].

3.10 Impact on Standard of Living

To exhibit the results of impact on standard of living of hilly tribes because of migration, the relevant data were collected, analysed and depicted in Table 9.

While scrutinising the data that impact on standard of living, majority of the hilly tribes said that no changes happened with renovation of house with more facilities / construction of new house (99.60%) followed by provision of higher education to children (97.50%) and spending on religious and other activities (85.40%). Whereas, increased buying / wearing of new cloths (80.40%) and increased usage of foot wears (82.10%) were found among hilly tribes.

After the migration, the respondents get exposed to other society's people dressing pattern and it

impacted to wear new cloths by the hilly tribes. Whereas, the work nature at the migratory place get burden for the respondents and need has been created to purchase and use of foot wears for the comfort at the work place.

3.11 Impact on Agriculture

To study the impact on agriculture as because of migration, the necessary data were collected, analysed and presented in Table 10.

Considering the impact on agriculture, no changes were occurred largely in changes in cropping pattern (99.60%), usage of chemical fertilizer, pesticides, fungicides, etc. (99.60%) followed by renovation / construction of irrigation structures (99.20%), land reclamation (98.30%) and usage of organic fertilizers, pesticides, fungicides, etc. (92.10%).

Although more income have been obtained from off-seasonal migration activities, but it has been spent on other agricultural activities. The main reason behind that was the topography of hilly area was undulated nature and more fragmentation were seen and hence the respondents can't go for greater land reclamation activities. Also noted that some parts of the respondents land were not cultivated during the off-seasonal migration and it is not given much important for the hilly tribes to do agricultural activities.

4. CONCLUSION

Being in the hilly areas the respondents found to have undulated cultivation area and less water storage facilities due to sloppy land shapes. Whereas uneven climate change lead to monsoon failure resulted in the reduction of crop yield. To meet out the daily needs of the tribal families and to repay the debt borrowed to do cultivation practices, the hilly tribes need additional income during the off-season at the study area. There are no off-seasonal economic generation activities found among the hilly tribes in Tiruvannamalai district. Hence, this forced the hilly tribes migrate for the off-season to get additional income for the livelihood stability. It is noted from the results that no changes were predominantly observed with development in urban contact, savings and investments on other activities, consumption pattern, purchasing power and status of agricultural activities. Whereas, somewhat increased changes were observed in employment status that increased employed working days for a month, in social status increased co-operation among the village people and religious activities, in healthcare increased contact with allopathic doctors rather than local treatments and in standard of living the hill tribes mentioned that increased wearing of new cloths and foot wears after the migration. Since, the improvement in agriculture will develop the standard of living and savings and investments pattern of the hilly tribes in Tiruvannamalai district, the Government ultimately to focus on the development of agricultural activities and other off-seasonal economic generation activities by providing support through State Department of Agriculture and State Department of Tribal welfare at the grass root level in particular to the Tiruvannamalai district. Since, the research was confined to the Tiruvannamalai district of Tamil Nadu and hence the findings are likely to be generalised for similar areas only and the focus of this study was on off-seasonal migration of hilly tribes alone and therefore the findings cannot be generalised for other kind of human migration has were the limitations of this study. The suggestions offered for future research from this study that similar study on other hilly areas, comparative analysis on migrant and non-migrant hilly tribes to study the livelihood pattern for the same location may be considered.

CONSENT

As per international standard, respondents' written consent has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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