



Understanding the Causes and Consequences of Seasonal Migration among Seasonal Migrants Pastoral Nomads & Seasonal Labourers: An Overview

¹Mohd Raziq, ²Dr. Shilpa S. Papat

¹Research Scholar, ²Assistant Professor,

^{1,2}School of Education, Central University of Gujarat, Gandhinagar, India

Email - raziqmohammad289@gmail.com

Abstract: *The circumstances that lead to the migration of people are the subject of penetrating discussion, including some emphasizing individual and household conduct while others point to the structural logic of capitalist development. Predominantly, economic condition is considered a cause of migration, besides, numerous studies revealed that social, and cultural, factors are also reasons for migration, with varying consequences for men and women, different groups, and different geographic regions. Migration is common among tribal communities, but the reasons differ for each tribe based on their lifestyle and primary occupations like animal rearing, agriculture, etc., and among seasonal labourers for their better livelihood. Considering the facts, the present study aimed to know about the triggers that force pastoral nomads tribes, and seasonal labourers to migrate and the factors affecting and consequences of seasonal migration. Online databases like Google Scholar, Sage Publications, Routledge, etc. as well as census reports, and online e-books were consulted by the scholar for collection data. It has been revealed that the occupation of pastoral nomads i.e., animal rearing is the main cause of their seasonal migration while seasonal workers move because of earning their livelihoods, therefore, the primary and root causes of both groups for their seasonal migration were found to be different. Having no land, changes in climate, natural calamities, and the need for fresh pasture are triggers for the seasonal migration of pastoral nomads while poverty, unemployment, to meet emergency needs and as well as the indebt to be returned enforce seasonal labourers migrants for their seasonal migration. As revealed from the previous literature, seasonal migration has adverse effects on the individual and social life of seasonal migrants i.e., pastoral nomads and seasonal labourers. Their health, wealth and as well as education suffer due to the seasonal migration.*

Key Words: *seasonal migration, temporary migration, pastoral nomads, seasonal labourer, seasonal workers, regional migration, nomadic migration.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

Migration generally refers to the movement of a person from his permanent place to another transitory. It is the process of staying away from permanent residence to another for a duration. Moving from one place to another is the literal meaning of migration. Migration is a complex phenomenon due to reasons not easily be defined. The reasons for migration to take place change according to needs, purposes, and time. Generally, migration is considered an economic push, but others also like social, political, or natural exists as well (Ingale & Jadahav, 2018). A crucial aspect of human nature is the tendency to move from one place to another in a quest for better economic opportunities as revealed (Kavitha & Valliammai, 2020) it was also added that the search for a job or work was a major reason for migration but may not be the sole purpose. "Migrants move from areas of low opportunity to areas of high opportunity in which the choice of destination is regulated by distance. Migrants from rural areas move first to nearby towns, and then to larger cities" Ravenstein (1885, as cited in Asfaw et al. 2010).

In the past few decades, globalization made significant increase international migration, especially among developed countries. The total migration around the world reached around 272 million, constituting around 3.5% of the world's population in 2019 which was an increase of 51% from 2010. The United States of America (USA) is the topmost in the world which hosted international migrants followed by Germany and Russia whereas India is the second largest country that hosts international migrants preceded by Syria which is lowest in rank (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2019).



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A rise in the numbers was seen when viewing both the ‘World Migration Report 2000 and 2020’ in 2020 total number of Migrants was 150 million while in 2000 it was 272 million, the percentage of female international migrants in 2000 was 47.5% while 47.9 % in 2020, at the same time percentage of international children migrants was decreased in 2020 as it was 13.9% while in 2000 it was 16% (World Economic Forum, 2020)².

Mainly migration is divided into six categories based on its nature and purposes. These are *External Migration*: moving outside of the nation as well as the continent, *Internal Migration*: when migrating within a state or country, *Emigration*: leaving a country and moving to the other, *Immigration*: Moving to a new country, *Return Migration*: moving back to your homeland and lastly *Seasonal Migration*: moving seasonally as per climatic or working conditions (National Geographic Society)³.

The term ‘Seasonal Migration’ is often used for temporary, short-term, cyclic movement. All these moves are circular in character, typically short-lived, repeating, or cyclical, with the common goal of a transient change of domicile (Zelinsky, 1971, as cited in Keshri & Bhagat, 2010). Seasonal migration, also known as temporary migration, is a short-term move performed with the goal of returning to the original location.

Economic crunch affects the life of an individual every person wants to live his life easier, but the circumstances don’t allow him to fulfil it. Everyone wishes for a source of more or less consistent income to raise their level of living. Therefore, if a person doesn’t get a job in his local area, he may choose to leave that area and migrate to another region in pursuit of employment (Sanyal & Maity, 2018) the view was supported by (Kavitha & Valliammai, 2020). The process of leaving one’s own residence in search of labour work in another region is called labour migration and if labour migration is during a particular season due to some facts, then it will be called seasonal labour migration. The present paper will shed light on the reasons that force pastoral nomads and seasonal labour to migrate and the factors affecting as well as consequences of seasonal migration.

Seasonal Migration in India:

Stepping down from international to national i.e., Indian internal migration remained ever low in the history of migration as said by (Davis, 1951 as cited in Keshri & Bhagat, 2010). Till the 1990s it further decreased as per (Kundu and Gupta, 1996 as cited in Keshri & Bhagat) but according to the ‘National Sample Survey,’ there looked an evolution between 1992-2000 (Srivastava and Sasikumar, 2003 as cited in Keshri & Bhagat) in the same duration labour movement increased due to search for work and employment. In India, migration is driven by the rising unemployment rate, around nine million migrations took place between Indian states during 2011-16 and inter-state migration doubled in decade 200-11 in the nation (Rajput, 2018). India is the second highest populated country in the world with diversities in geographic, social, and economic as well. These diversities lead to temporary or internal migration in the nation. Uttar Pradesh with an intensity of 1.71 million temporary migrants is at the top followed by MP with 1.51 million, Maharashtra and AP with 0.91 million, and Bihar with 0.90 million temporary migrants population (Keshri & Bhagat, 2010). Despite the fact, research demonstrates that seasonal movement within India is crucial for the livelihoods of numerous poor people in numerous locations, including south Gujarat, it is commonly misunderstood or ignored in public policy (Breman.1985; 1996; Breman and Das 2000 as cited in Rogaly et al., 2001).

Pastoral Nomads:

Pastoral nomads are people who don’t have permanent residence and move from one place to another. These people primarily do animal-rearing practices and for feeding those animals they need fresh grass, so they move from one place to another. Mostly these people migrate to the hilly and forestry land in search of fresh pasture for their animals. Another main cause of their seasonal migration is geographic and climatic conditions such as they move to the highest ranges of mountains during summer and starting winter forcing them to move to the lower plains. Semi Nomads Gujjars and Bakarwals in Jammu and Kashmir and Van Gujjars in Uttarakhand are examples of Pastoral Nomads in

¹ <https://worldmigrationreport.iom.int/wmr-2020-interactive/>

² <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/01/iom-global-migration-report-international-migrants-2020/>

³ <https://www.nationalgeographic.org/activity/introduction-human-migration/>



India. apart from the Gujjars and Bakarwals in Jammu and Kashmir, the pastoral nomads are located in almost every state of India in less or more concentration.

Pastoral Nomads consider the following key factors before Migration:

Pastors keep a few important factors in mind before making a seasonal move. This assurance helps a lot for smooth displacement. These are listed below headings.

- *Time Period*: approximate time, for instance, how long it might take to a location.
- *Climatic conditions*: consider the climate of the selected place for migration.
- *Stock*: both materialistic and livestock estimation also takes place earlier to start the movement. Materialistic materials mean for eating, wearing, and shelter as well while livestock means how many cattle are there while moving.

Seasonal Labourers:

Seasonal Labourers are also known by other names such as seasonal workers, migrant workers, temporary workers, and so on. These are the workers who migrate from their original residence to a temporary destination for a short duration of time due to one or the reason such as economic issues, climatic conditions, natural disasters like droughts or floods, etc. There are different patterns of migration in each family. Sometimes only the father goes for earning a livelihood for his family, in some cases both the parents move by leaving their children at home while sometimes children also move with their parents but in all cases, the children suffer for their education.

“The term migrant worker refers to all international migrants who are currently employed or are unemployed and seeking employment in their present country of residence” (International Labour Organization, 2015)⁴.

2. OBJECTIVES:

- To understand the circumstances that enforce nomads and seasonal workers to seasonal migration.
- To know the factors affecting and consequences of seasonal migration on seasonal workers and nomads who migrate seasonally.

3. METHODOLOGY:

The main objective of this paper was to analyze the circumstances that lead to migration among tribal nomads and seasonal labourers. The sources of information were secondary only. Online databases such as Google Scholar, Sage Journals, Routledge, Taylor & Francis, as well as analysis of documents from official websites, census reports, etc. are done. There were a total of 12 papers and articles from different databases were selected based on the objectives of the present paper.

4. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE:

The present considered the seasonal migration of pastoral nomads and seasonal workers. The review of related literature is mainly divided into two sections i.e., Literature Review of Pastoral Nomads and Literature Review of Seasonal Labourers.

Literature Review of Pastoral Nomads:

Gatdet et al. (2021) by saying pastoral don't migrate without any aim, described various reasons for seasonal migration among pastorals for instance 'Gambella Region Ethiopia' 26% for farming of crops, 19% for utilization of resources, 28% for avoiding flood, once the Baro River water overflows the inhabited areas, the pastoralists moved to other regions. To reach the water and grazing regions, about 14.3% and 27% of the pastoral households in Pulkod and Wathgachkebele, respectively, have moved between the Baro River and wooded areas. Revealed from the 'Focus group discussion' that the pastoral households switch between the two selected areas to sporadically make use of the water and grazing reserves. **Wafula et al. (2022)** revealed that pastorals with a greater quantity of livestock migrate because lots of herds deplete grass more rapidly in one area. It was also revealed that pastoralists with modest land farms are more likely to migrate and overstay in cities than those with larger farms. One of the primary factors driving pastoralists' migration and extended stays in Nairobi City is a lack of access to pastures and water. Adding (Boles et al. 2019; Koech 2014; Opiyo et al. 2015) point of view that it could be explained by the frequent and prolonged droughts that cause water scarcity, inadequate pasture supplies, and high animal mortality rates from famine, the number of challenges faced such as livestock road accidents, poisoning of livestock by sewages, and rubbish wastes. **Mir & Batool (2022)** revealed that

⁴ http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_436343.pdf



climatic change adversely affects the seasonal migration of Gujjars and Bakarwals in Jammu and Kashmir. As these tribes reside in hilly terrain during summer change in climate affects their occupation and well-being as climate change cause drought and flood which obviously cause the loss of animals and human life as well. **Raziq & Popat (2023)** stated various consequences of the seasonal migration of pastoral nomads Gujjars and Bakarwals in Jammu and Kashmir had an adverse effect on the education of their children because of the seasonal migration children also move with their parents and cannot focus on their education though, the government initiated the mobile seasonal centres scheme for their education but still, their education had been affected due to the seasonal migration in a similar way **Dutta & Meghani (2023)** also stated as during the summer, the Gujjar-Bakarwals and Chopans move to higher elevations in search of pastures with a higher concentration of nutrients for their livestock. Children of shepherds and goatherds go with them, and during those months, their schooling is put on hold.

Review of Related Literature of Seasonal Laborers:

Asfaw et al. (2010) discussed the reasons for the seasonal migration were '*shortage of farmland*' by 79.5% of respondents, "*Indebtedness*" also recorded a main reason for seasonal migration as respondents indicated that they had the risk of going to jail or having their property seized if they don't pay back their fertilizer debt within the allotted time frame, another factor was information flow between already migrants to non-migrants through different means friends 59.5%, 21.6% from relatives, 9.8% from social media as replied by respondents, even children also motivated to migrate, culture was also revealed as a factor responsible for migration as people's attitudes and perceptions on migration are deeply rooted in culture. whereas **Sanyal & Maity (2018)** revealed that labour migration has been primarily motivated by uneven development, in addition, discrepancies in socioeconomic conditions, pay gaps, and disparities in development strategies encourage people to move. Additionally, two elements that are known as "push" and "pull" forces work together or separately to create migratory flow. Migration is referred to as occurring when someone moves to enhance their standard of living by earning a high wage or salary because of a "pull" aspect. On the other side, a "push" element occurs when people move frequently to pay off previous debts in the originating region. It was also revealed that migration had a terrible effect on the standard of migrants' living and their families, and they had not been got access to fundamental services like hygiene, drinking water, and other necessities like health and education. The same (i.e., the push factors and pull factors) were also discussed by **Bala (2017)** added that low income, jobless, climate conditions, and natural hazards like droughts, floods, etc. are push factors while employment, work for appropriate wages, working at the sound destination, education opportunities are pull-factors. **Jaleel & Chattopadhyay (2021)** revealed the causes of seasonal migration and seasonal unemployment as the reason for seasonal migration answered by 76% of respondents. Responses were collected from different households. 20% said they small to pay for work in their villages while 4% replied for 'need a large amount of money to meet emergency expenditure' and 60% of them said they had outstanding debt, it was also revealed seasonal workers had to work for 12 hours daily which is a long duration and poor living conditions at working sites had effects on their health, children's absenteeism from school, the workers said they had not got safe drinking water. Seasonal migration had effects on the education of children as they don't stay at one location throughout the year, while most of these children leave their schooling and start working with their elders. **Bhattacharjee (2021)** studied that in contrast to regular migrants, seasonal migrants are more prone to illness and have the possibility to cause health problems, additionally, the lack of essential amenities has a detrimental effect on seasonal migrants' health. **Manohar (2022)** revealed that several were the reasons for inter-state migration, but employment or work and poverty were more push factors i.e., 64% migrated due to the reasons. Construction, manufacturing, and clothing industries were sources of employment in the target locations. At the working sites, the migrant workers were suffering from extreme 'depression', 'anxiety', and 'stress'. 'Stress had the highest mean score (3.84), followed by depression (3.75), and anxiety (3.62)'. Those who were alone at working sites were found more depressed, with high stress and anxiety than those who were accompanying their families. Inter-state migrant labourers' perceived quality of living was generally very poor. Problems with 'mental' and 'physical health', 'work-life balance', and 'future uncertainty' were the main concerns. Dropout children were more in numbers among the families staying at working sites than those who were staying at their original sites. **Kumari & Tataji (1998)** discussed the seasonal migration of women workers in Andhra Pradesh. It was revealed that these women's migration differs in terms of duration, type of work, age group, etc. the results of their migration were listed as when they move from a region (i.e., out-migration) in a large volume the demands and wages rise in that region whereas they go for work (in-migration) a big influx of people into a town would reduce the need for local labour and, as a result, lower the wages also during their migration the delights and fulfillment of parenting lost if mothers moved alone while leaving their kids behind in their home. The migration of these women affects their children's education, and even caused them to drop out of school and as well as carelessness also causes bad health conditions. Also, these women migrating workers missed their homes and family members. Besides the negative impacts, there are also positive results as they save their money for the future



which helps them to deal with the hardship. Migrant women workers become more responsible than non-migrants but confidence level increases in both the cases of migrants and non-migrants.

5. DISCUSSION:

The present paper mainly focused on seasonal migration among pastoral nomads and seasonal migrant workers with the objectives of causes as well as the consequences of seasonal migration. Thus, mainly two groups were targeted in the paper: *pastoral nomads* and *seasonal workers*. The first group i.e., the Pastoral Nomads are the people who rear animals and do not stay in one place because they keep moving throughout the year from one place to another with their animals in search of fresh and green pasture for the animals while the second group i.e., the seasonal workers or seasonal labourers are people who migrate from their homeland to another workplace for a period of time in search of labour work or any other form of employment like that so that they can earn their livelihood. The seasonal migration between both groups is different based on the nature of their migrations as well as the triggers or the reasons for their migration. The first group migrates due to reasons such as they don't have so much land or even no land so that they can feed their animals throughout the year by staying at the same place, the climatic conditions are also responsible for their migration for example in summer staying at higher altitudes but in winter it is impossible to stay at those higher ranges because of cold climate and snowfall, another reason is the depletion of resources by staying at the same place like pasture for the animals, avoiding from the disasters like flood or droughts also enforces them to leave the place and move to another. While on the other hand, the triggers for the movement or migration of seasonal workers as per the respondents were unemployment in their homeland, the search for higher wages of the work than in their local areas, indebtedness was also found one of the reasons as they had to pay their fertilizers debt back, motivation through the flow of information from already migrants to the non-migrants through different means like social media or phone call and so on, whereas some of the respondents responded that they need a large amount of financial aid to meet their emergency needs such as for the marriage of their daughter, poverty was recorded as the main reason for the migration of workers or labourers, there were stated some push factors responsible for the migration of labourers for instance, climatic conditions, natural disasters like storms, floods, droughts, etc.

When discussing the factors affecting and consequences of seasonal migration of pastoral nomads and seasonal labourers, both groups are being adversely affected in one way or another both individually and socially. The droughts cause the scarcity of water which leads to the deaths of animals, road accidents of animals while migrating, attacks of wild animals on livestock, poisoning of livestock by sewages and rubbish wastes and most importantly the education of their children suffers a lot because movement throughout the year and not staying at the same place. While the seasonal labourers responded that the standard of living at the working sites was very unsatisfactory because of the unhygienic environmental conditions, and not having fundamental services like drinking water which leads to health issues. Mental stress and physical health problems were found more among seasonal workers than those of stayed at home. The dropout rate of migrant seasonal workers' children was found to be high. It was also revealed from the literature that the migration of women workers had greatly affected the health and education of their children.

6. CONCLUSION:

Understanding the seasonal or temporary migration of *pastoral nomads* and *seasonal labourers* was the core objective of the present paper as the Causes and consequences of seasonal migration. By reviewing the previous literature related to the seasonal migration of pastoral nomads and seasonal workers separately, it can be concluded that mainly there were two categories of reasons for their seasonal migration, first as push factors and another as pull factors. Situations and conditions push them to leave their original places and move to another temporary place while needs and desires for a better life are pull factors. It had been reflected in the previous literature that mostly seasonal migration is caused by push factors such as primary occupation, economic issues, climatic conditions, and natural tragedies. Natural disasters such as floods or droughts lead to the loss of humans and animals, wild attacks on animals as well as humans in the way during the migration also cause their death, unhygienic environment causes health issues and education of migrants' children suffers due to the migration.

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