

VULNERABILITIES OF CHILD LABOUR MIGRANTS IN RURAL AREA OF DUNGARPUR DISTRICT, RAJASTHAN

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Abstract: *The intent of this study is to concentrate on the rising rate of migration among tribal children in the Dungarpur District. Migration of children for labour has been an increasing cause of concern. Both primary and secondary data have been used at the level of villages to highlight the problem at hand. Migration, which accounts of 56 percent of the aggregate income in this area, is the main source of income for households. Tribes and non-tribe people migrate from the district in search of employment because it seems impoverished. In this paper looks at the circumstances surrounding the migration of children into the district's rural areas for work. Additionally, the locations of migrants' final destinations, their working environments, and the challenges that these migrants' children encounter with their schooling were highlighted. Results from primary and secondary sources comes out that in search of employment in the BT cotton fields, brick manufacturing, construction, hotels, Dhabas, and tea-stoles. Numerous individuals physically and mentally harass them at their place of employment. At destinations, these children become extremely vulnerable. They experience numerous illnesses as children and lose their childhood without any fun. This issue is so serious that the government wants to implement some measures to stop this kind of migration in the Dungarpur district.*

Key words: Migration, Livelihood, Vulnerable, Mentally, Physically, Destination, Childhood

Introduction

In practically all of India's dry regions, child labour migration is a rapidly expanding phenomenon. Every year, due to the drought and a lack of labour in the villages, entire families must relocate for many months in search of employment in order to survive. [1]. Children move with their parents, which causes a rise in dropout rates. [2]. Migrants comprise the most vulnerable section of society, and especially those that belong to scheduled caste and scheduled tribe [3]. Due to the irregular rhythm of economic activity throughout the year, which alternates between peak and slack periods, and the open-air nature of the production process, which necessitates a work to stop with the arrival of the monsoon, this type of labour mobility is seasonal. [4]. This study focuses on the distress seasonal migration of children. Millions of families are being forced to leave their homes and villages for some months every year in search of livelihoods. This Migration means that families are forced to dropout the schools, something that close the only available opportunity to break the vicious cycle generation after generation. Although there is no official data available on the sates of out migration Labourers, but some NGOs and Gujarat labour Union reports estimates put the number of children involved in these migrations may range between 40 and 60 lacs in India [6]. In the study area child, labour migration is a great problem. The Dakshini Rajasthan Mazdoor Union (DRMU) has prepared a separate report based on primary data on the number of children working on BT cotton farms, which shows that out of 604 labourers 199 or 32.9 percent were children below the age of fourteen years [7]. These children are to be found working in workshop and small factories, in *Dhabas* and restaurants, on the streets as well as domestic servants. However, perhaps the largest sector in which children are to be found working is agriculture. For a living, many youngsters migrate seasonally and annually to work in a variety of industries, including BT cotton farms, brick factories, hotels, and domestic help. These youngsters miss two or three months of school. The primary variable that drives people and their accompanying children out of this area is the precariousness of the district.

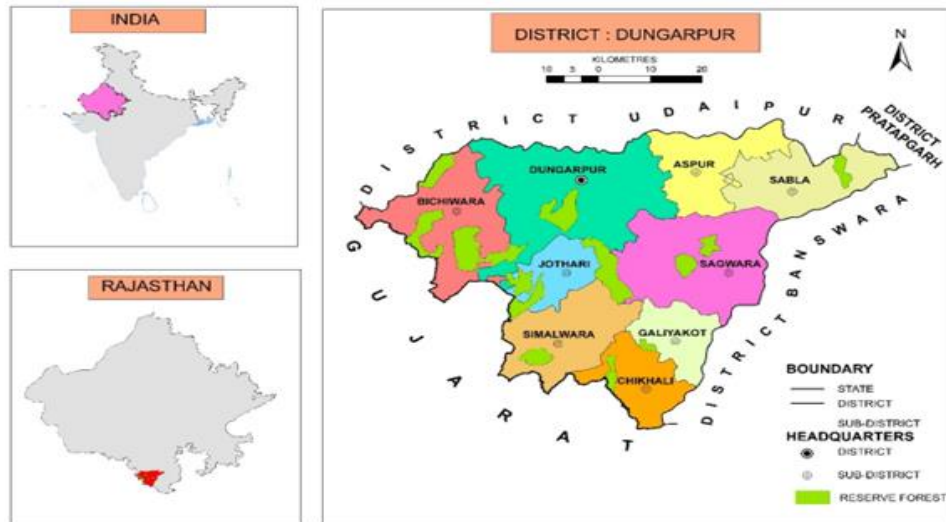
These children appear to deal with a variety of vulnerabilities when they travel. While labour migrants leave their hometowns or native locations, they become vulnerable during the travel phase until they arrive at their destinations, facing the prospect of having to demonstrate their own identity, health awareness, children's education, physical and mental abuse, wage inequality, overtime, living conditions, limited access to entitlements, child and women's exploitation, etc. Children feel helpless, insecure, and restless as a result of all these issues they encounter while travelling. These children appear to deal with a variety of vulnerabilities when they travel. While labour migrants leave their hometowns or native locations. This study attempts to emphasis the vulnerabilities of child labour migrants as well as the various dimensional concerns and factors that make them vulnerable at destinations considering all the obstacles.

Background of the Study Area

Dungarpur district lies in the tribal belt of southern Rajasthan bordering the state of Gujarat. It is a tribal dominant district where 67per cent populations belong from Scheduled tribe [8]. Administratively it divided into four tehsils and five blocks. Dungarpur, Aspur, Sagwara, and Simalwara are four tehsils. There are three main blocks from where migration is prevalent Bichiwada, Simalwara and Sagwara [8]. According to the report by DRMU, the major source of household income in this area comes from migration which, account 56per cent of the total income. Migration is the main source of livelihood in this *Adivasi* belt but estimate varies [7]. One study puts it as responsible for two fifth of the total household income. While drought increase the incidence of migration this is no longer a drought include phenomenon. The Adivasi belt of southern Rajasthan is the traditional catchment area for supply of manual

labourers of Gujarat. Since the demand for manual labour is increasing, the catchment area is expanding. As communication, networks improve and even remote villages become accessible by road and socially migration is becoming a regular feature of rural economy in the district [9]. Migration is almost universal amongst tribal families in view of the total lack of local livelihood opportunities.

Figure 01: Location Map of Study Area



Based on field survey it is cleared that Dungarpur is a backward district from economically development as well as natural resources. Maximum land of the district is undulating and hilly. Per capita agriculture land is low and fellow-land is more. For these reasons the interest of people towards agriculture is not more. By the lack of natural resources, there is no industrial development at local level. All these reasons push people for migration to survive. Both tribal and non-tribal people of the district are migrated. Adivasi migrate due to the distress conditions and non-advansi migrates to improve their livelihood opportunities. In the south part of district, there are Panchmahal, Sabarkantha, and Banaskantha districts of Gujarat state. These districts are mainly producer of high breed BT cotton and groundnuts in (kharif) season. These agriculturally sound areas are to be net receiving state for migrant labour, while the less developed states are the net sending once. Thus, due to the lack of good opportunities at local place like unemployment, meet with low wages according to labour work, lack of natural resources, irregularity of monsoon, low land-holding size, lack of industrial and infrastructure development people of this backward area migrates for livelihood.

Data and Methodology

Primary and secondary data used for this research work. Based on tehsils and population size of villages, there are 20 villages' randomly selected. For child labour migrant's data collection parents interviewed, children Interview, school teachers, mates and Sarpanch interview have been conducted. For secondary data District Census Handbook (2011) and news from local newspaper (Waged Dut, Dainik Bhaskar and Rajasthan Patrika) have been used to focus upon this problem. The Dakshini Rajasthan Mazdoor Union (DRMU) report data has also been used for introductory information.

Cycle of Migration and Destinations

Children migrates from this area in various months of the year. At first, stage the child migration rampant in the month of July to September. Mostly these children go to do work in BT cotton farms of North Gujarat district. In this cycle of migration children are alone go for work sites. Most of them are below the age of fourteen years. These children have too much demand in BT cotton farms because they are short and could easily cross-pollination the flowers without having to bend too much. Their bodies were more flexible and they did not complain as much

as adult, they argued. Labour contractors and Mates (Mediators) provide cash in advances to poor families in villages during the pre-monsoon months for kharif crops production, in return for which family member send their child for work in BT cotton farms. Mates and other contractors take away them. These workforce returns in October, just before Diwali. According to a report prepared by, Vice President of Gujarat Agricultural Labour Union (GALU) and the Campaign against Child Labour, approximately 150,000 children migrate every year from southern Rajasthan districts (Udaipur, Banswara and Dungarpur) to work in BT cotton farms. Most of these farms are concentrated in North Gujarat districts (A Report of children working in cotton farms).

Second phase of migration started from November after Diwali, the worker migrates to work in brick kilns, to work at construction site and textile market also. They go in-group of people. Children sometimes accompany parents and sometimes they are left behind with elders. This work continues until April when workers return home. This seasonal migration cycle overlaps with six to seven months of the school calendar, which means that children who are enrolled can go to school only two or three months of the year after which point, they usually dropout schools. This phase of destination places of people and children are Ahmadabad, Baroda, Surat, Vapi, Navsari and Gandhinagar most of these places are of Gujarat state.

Table: 01 Months of Migration and Destination Places

Months	Type of Work	Destination Places
1. July-August-September	BT. Cotton farms for cross-pollination	North Gujarat district (Sabarkantha, Banaskantha and Panchmahal)
2. November to March, April	Brick Kilns, Construction and Textile Market	Ahmadabad, Surat, Baroda, Himmatnagar, Gandinagar, Navsari, Vapi etc.
3. Year Round (Usually for Four Months)	Hotels, Dhabas, Tea-Stole and as Domestic worker	Mumbai, Pune, Nagpur, Bhopal, Indore, Mandsores and Gujarat cities also.

Source: Field Survey

The third cycle of migration is usually for four months around the year. This type of migration is for work in tea stoles, hotels, *Dhabas*, factories and as well as a domestic servant. Most of children migrate to Mumbai, Pune, Nagpur, Bhopal, Indore, Mandsores and Gujarat state also. However, migrants usually work for 04 months at a stretch and then return for two weeks. They often make back-up arrangements while they take break.

Vulnerabilities of Children at Working Places

By the field observations at working places of children it is found that the conditions of them at migration places was not good. Table 02 expressed the various kind of vulnerabilities that observed in field. It shows that at working site, they were physically and mentally harassed by mates, honors, contractor as well as local people. They were facing many problems about living conditions, food insecurity, fuel etc. At worksite, they were work for longer time or they work extra but they were not pay proper wages of that extra work. They get-up early in the morning and went at BT cotton farms for cross-pollination without any breakfast. These farms all sprayed with pesticides every eight days and the air is full of pesticides. For this reason, they led to sickness and ill health. While the landlords (*Pate*) provided medical facilities, but all the costs of treatment and medicines were cut from the wages of the workers. If a worker died, then the landlords would ask the mates or other worker to take the body back to the village. He himself would not take any responsibility or pay any compensation. The mates did not want to discuss the issue of health hazards or harassment in any detail, as they obviously

did not want to incur the wealth of landlords for whom they were recruiting labour. There are some of sexual harassment cases also but it is very difficult to get much information, as the concerned girls do not tell anyone and if the family knows they do not want to advertise the fact. Landlords (Patel), mates and contractor are especially involved in it. They are sexual harasses very small girls in age group of 11-14 years. Children who work at hotels, *Dhabas* and tea-stole as a domestic worker faces many problems. In hotels, they wash pots, cup-plates, glasses etc. all the day so their hands and feet become numbed. After sometimes these hands wounded up and skin disease started. At night these children not sleep well. They did not give proper palaces for sleep and rest. They have to give very few salaries like 1500-2000 RS. per month. This amount is not sufficient for their survive. Worker who works at construction site are also faces trouble. At the site, they work in very risky situation. If any accident goes away then the contractor, do not help of any type. They live in slums area of cities in-group of twenty to thirty.

Table: 02 Major Challenges Face by Migrants at Destinations

#	Major Vulnerabilities Confronts by Child Migrants	Concerning Problems
1.	Regarding Wage Labour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low Wage • Condition of Unpaid • Timely Not-paid
2.	Psychological and Physical Harassments by Employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual Abasement of female and Children • Assaults and substance abuses • Exploitative employers • Menial labour or slave labour
3.	Regarding Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affecting by incurable diseases (HIV, Cancer, Tuberculosis, Bronchitis, Malaria, Dengu et.) • Limited Access of Health Entitlement
4.	Regarding Living Conditions & Food Insecurity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unavailability of proper Sanitation • Unavailability of Pure Drinking Water • Unavailability of Residential facility • Unavailability of public distributed Facility (Ration)
5.	Regarding 3D Working Condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dirty • Dangerous • Difficult
6.	Socio-Cultural Problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language Barriers • Food Habits • Social exclusion and xenophobia of host area

Source: Field Observation

It is noted that the vulnerabilities highlighted in Table 02 are qualitative in nature and cannot be expressed in percentage terms. In that case, a few issues that are frequently seen at construction sites are illustrated here. Overall, the surroundings at the locations where these kids are migrating are bad. In a relatively short period of time, they encounter numerous problems. These issues rob them of their youth and education. They do not enjoy childhood the same way other kids do. At extremely young ages, several diseases, including lung infections, fever, malaria, and other skin conditions, begin to manifest.

Schooling Issue in Dungarpur

In the Dungarpur district, education is a significant problem, and it appears that one of the causes of child migration to work has led to failing schools. A study conducted by Sharda Jain titled "Children's Work and Migration in the Context of Migration" claims that migration has seriously impacted schooling in the southern districts of Rajasthan. Their attendance is so low because cotton and share cropping are keeping the children away. A third of those who are

enrolled in school leave for the workforce. The issue of children's migration is not taken seriously by the teachers themselves. The teachers do not try to keep the kid in class. Most parents sent their extremely young children to school, according to the school teachers.

The older ones were at work or did not come to school. The youngsters were consuming their midday meal. The teacher claimed that he had little time to focus on instructing the students because he had to spend all his time overseeing them during lunch. The school must be closed if a teacher needs to leave for a meeting. The task of constructing more classrooms now falls within the purview of the school teacher, who is also in charge of acquiring building supplies under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). One thing that stood out was that since these were all single-teacher schools, many of the classrooms were locked up, and all the kids were studying in one room.

In the case study of Vagdari, there was just one teacher and 125 students in the primary school. He claimed that the Rozgar Guarantee has reduced child migration by 10 percent to 20 percent and increased enrollment and retention in schools by 25 percent. [10]. Children's education is impacted when they engage in cross-pollination work. They are re-admitted when they return, but they have forgotten so much by then. They stay for perhaps a month before leaving once more to work in brick kilns. Many of these kids must repeat the same subject at least once, if not twice, and eventually drop out of school entirely since we are required by the government to move them to the next class even though they cannot read or write. While the school infrastructure in the villages was very good, there was a serious shortage of school teachers. Trained teachers were also not willing to go to remote areas and therefore there was unevenness in the distribution of teachers. School near the urban areas had a much higher ratio of teachers to student than the remote tribal areas. This phenomenon is to be seen all over India.

Major Findings

- Migrant child labour is a significant problem, with parents sending kids as young as eight years old to work in Gujarat's BT cotton fields. Many of these kids travel to work in an extremely dangerous setting for 10 to 12 hours a day with family members and friends.
- Since there is no local employment during the lean months of July to September, parents are eager to increase their income through child labour. The scarcity of food is not as acute after October, when the crop is harvested. The area experiences a lean period from March to June; however, there is local casual employment available. Additionally, they attested to NERAGA's success in reducing migration by 20–25 percent. Many migrant workers are between the ages of 15 and 40. But kids between the ages of 10 and 12 are also moving abroad for two to three months to labour in BT cotton fields. Additionally, they claimed that BT Cotton is moving to Rajasthan due to the labour constraints in Gujarat and that there is BT cotton shifting to Rajasthan and there is shift in pattern of cultivation from wheat to BT cotton in the border villages.
- There is a scarcity of school instructors in Rajasthan. A total of 45,000 teachers have been sought but have not yet been hired.
- In most villages, children migrated along with their parents. There was no choice but to go with the parents since there were no residential educational facilities.
- If there were employment prospects in the villages, no one would leave to work; migration is the poor's final resort. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NAREGA), which was just passed and guarantees each household 100 days of

guaranteed employment, has already had a significant impact on the prevalence of child Labour.

Recommendation

- The district administration needs to have a panchayat-level database about every child in the area with a photograph and complete information about the family, including details on whether the child is enrolled in school or not. Every child must be tracked by the panchayat and the district administration to make sure they are attending school. Every month, this information needs to be updated. The district administration can only do that to guarantee that children stay in school and avoid leaving to go to work.
- Trained educators must be hired right away. Teachers who are willing to work in rural locations may need additional incentives because there is virtually no infrastructure there. Many people commute from their city homes. Since they commute from the city where they live to outlying schools where they are posted. They are not even eligible for transit assistance because they are employed by rural schools despite really residing in a town. It is unlikely that teachers will go to work in villages without access to power or clean drinking water. Teachers who labour in far-off schools may need to receive some extra compensation. These rewards may be related to student achievement and retention.
- The only choice for the poor is migration because there are few employment possibilities in the Dungarpur district and the rest of southern Rajasthan's tribal region. Child labour would significantly decrease if an ashram school with residential amenities could be established in this region.
- Like NAREGA, the Government has developed some new schemes for this area so people can receive employment at the local level twice a year.
- At the local level, the Government should create some small plants for employment so that people cannot migrate.

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