

Factors influencing the Return Migration of Rural Youths in South India

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Abstract

Return migration is the voluntary movement of migrants back to their place of origin. It is the logical consequences of the successful achievement of all migration-related goals and targets. It is becoming a common phenomenon in rural India. Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala states were selected for the study. Total 180 respondents were investigated and the factors influencing the return migration were categorized into two groups viz, as push factors and pull factors. Low salary and non availability of better job are the most important push factors that influenced the rural youth to come out from the urban area with an RBQ value 84.69 and 78.26 respectively. To continue in family occupation (78.43) was most significant pull factor of return migration. Free in terms of decision making (71.10), to look after age old parents & join family members (68.56) were also significant pull factors responsible for return migration. The push and pull factors influencing the return migration of the rural youth should be considered while devising suitable extension interventions for programmes like ARYA and other youth programmes in agriculture and rural development.

Keywords: Rural migration, Rural youth, Return migration, Reverse migration, Migration, India.

Introduction

Youth being passionate, vibrant, innovative and dynamic in nature is the most important section of the society. Youth shows strong passion, motivation and will power which also makes them the most valuable human resource for fostering economic, cultural and political

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development of a nation. Nearly 30 crores of nation's youth reside in rural areas (CSO 2017). The rural youth population, both male and female is higher than the urban population. The total rural youth population is 296.2 million (153.2 million males and 143.9 million females) as against 130.9 million (69.5 million males and 61.4 million female) urban youth population (Census, 2011). Young women and men living in rural areas face challenges brought about by limited and unequal access to resources, healthcare, education, training, and employment. They are the major seekers of employment as they traverse their journey of life from adolescent to youth. If they didn't find a suitable opportunity in their locality of residence, then the chances of migration to other places is a common phenomenon in rural areas.

Migration is a major demographic process that has been an integral and salient feature of human history since time immemorial. It is the geographic movement of people across a specified boundary for the purpose of establishing a new permanent or semi-permanent residence. It is a sign of wide disparities in economic and social conditions between the origin and destination places (Rogaly et al. 2001). But in recent days those people who got migrated are coming back to their place of origin can be stated as return migration. It is defined as the "voluntary movement of migrants back to their place of origin". (Rajan, 2013). Return to the home destination is part of migration strategy (Smoliner et al., 2012). It is the logical consequences of the successful achievement of all migration related goals and targets. Return migration is becoming a very common phenomenon in rural areas.

The rural youths' return migration reflects considerable changes in structural and functional system of both urban and rural areas (NSSO, 2010). The factors which influenced youth to go out of the urban areas (Push factors) and the factors which attracted youths to come back to rural areas (Pull factors) are most important. The present study entitled as 'Factors influencing the Return Migration of Rural youths in South India' was conducted to examine the active push and pull factors that influence the exodus of rural youth and provide inputs to extension interventions in order to retain youth in agriculture.

Methodology

The study was conducted in southern India in Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu states. Andhra Pradesh and Telangana states were not selected because these two states have

been reorganized in 2014 and proper data were not availing. The survey has been conducted in two districts from each states purposively which rank 1st and 2nd in return migration trend. (Parameswaranaik J et al., 2020). From each district, 30 respondents were selected through quota sampling technique. Hence, a sum of 180 respondents were interviewed with the help of a semi-structured interview schedule for data collection.

Rank Based Quotient

Rank Based Quotient (RBQ) was calculated on the basis of rank assigned by each respondent against push and pull factors responsible for their return migration in the study area by using following formula-

$$RBQ = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{f_i(n+1-i)}{N \times n} \times 100$$

Where,

f_i = Frequency of farmers for the i th rank of the attribute

N = Total number of respondents

n = Total number of ranks

i = rank of attributes

Results and Discussion

Return migration is consequences of migration (Dustman, 2001) it is caused not only by economic factor but also by many others like social, political, cultural, environmental, health, education etc. Return migration is operationalized as migration that generally takes place from urban areas to rural areas.

Push factors

Table 1 clearly indicates that, low salary and non availability of better jobs are the most important factors that influenced the rural youth to come out from the urban area with an RBQ value 84.69 and 78.26 respectively. It may be due to the fact that majority of youth were offered non-skilled jobs such as watchman, waiter, ice cream suppliers and salesmen etc., in urban areas with low salaries which lead to return migration youth.

Table 1: Distribution of Return Migrated Rural Youth Based on Push Factors (n=180)

Push factors	Frequency of response for respective rank										RBQ Value	Rank
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Low salary	67	24	31	19	7	4	12	5	3	8	84.69	1
NonAvailability of better job	71	13	9	17	28	15	8	11	6	2	78.26	2
Feeling of exploitation by the others	23	57	20	13	19	11	9	13	3	12	57.61	3
Leading life in urban area is too costly	43	36	17	21	13	9	5	8	10	18	53.53	4
Unsafe and uncaring work environment	29	18	7	17	21	32	15	10	14	17	47.34	5
Monotony in work	30	9	11	3	15	23	37	16	21	15	42.66	6
Peer pressure	21	13	19	16	11	9	17	12	34	28	38.58	7
Social discrimination	18	11	3	8	12	23	29	15	24	37	36.14	8
Lack of personal secured life	7	4	9	10	14	17	23	22	31	43	30.90	9
Cultural differences and disputes	3	9	0	5	4	17	12	35	39	56	23.71	10

Feeling of exploitation by the others (57.71) was another significant factor influence the return migration. The rural youth perceives that urban people just extract work by just paying nominal wage/salary, and thinks that they can save more money if they work in urban areas to rural areas. Leading life in urban area is too costly and unsafe. The uncaring work environment factors were also played an important role in return migration with an RBQ value 53.53, and 47.34 respectively.

Monotony in work in petty jobs (42.66) was a push factor for return migration. Peer pressure (38.58) was also another important push factor of return migration because many of the friends who employed with in urban area got migrated back to their village so it made them to go out of the urban area.

Factors like social discrimination (36.14), lack of personal secured life (30.90) cultural differences and disputes (23.71) have also emerged as other push factors which influence the return migration of rural youth.

Pull factors

Pull factors refer to those factors which attract youth to back to the rural areas. Table 2 shows that the urge to continue in family occupation (78.43) was most significant pull factor for return migration. Freedom in terms of decision making (71.10) by youth in their agriprenurship activities in rural areas was an important factor which prompted rural youth to revert to villages.

Table 2: Distribution of Return Migrated Rural Youth Based on Pull Factors (n=180)

Pull factors	Frequency of response for respective rank										RBQ Value	Rank
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
To continue the family occupation	3	36	29	12	15	7	11	9	3	5	78.43	1
Freedom in terms of decision making	65	23	19	14	19	17	3	8	6	6	71.10	2
To look after aged parents and join family members	57	38	21	15	16	11	7	8	5	2	68.56	3
To get employed in Agriculture and allied activities	37	40	27	16	10	19	5	8	10	8	60.05	4
Feeling of gradual elimination from home community	31	28	17	11	16	26	15	9	17	10	56.38	5

Miss the family festivals and ceremonies	26	21	19	11	26	13	24	17	14	9	48.51	6
To get marriage and settle in village	18	13	10	12	6	16	29	15	24	37	39.34	7
Better social linkage	9	3	15	2	5	12	34	53	26	1	30.67	8
Good and pleasant environment of village	5	9	2	19	13	15	32	25	27	3	27.65	9
To get employed in MGNAREGA	0	0	0	5	4	17	12	35	39	8	16.21	10

To look after aged parents and join family members (68.56) and to get employed in agriculture and allied activities (60.05) were also significant pull factors responsible for return migration. Many of the rural youth were migrated back to the rural area to take care of their ill family members or aged parents.

Feeling of gradual elimination from home community and miss the family festivals and ceremonies were also pull factors influenced the return migration with an RBQ value 60.05 and 56.38 respectively. Rural youth perceive that continuous stay in urban areas for about 5 to 10 years may slowly prompt friends and relatives in villages to forget them. The feeling of missing from festivals and ceremonies is pull factor for youth to return to rural areas.

To get marriage and settle in village (39.34) was another factor influences the return migration as maintaining family in urban areas was very costly.

Factors like better social linkage (30.67), good and pleasant environment of village (27.65) and to get employed in MGNAREGA (16.21) have also emerged as other pull factors which influence the return migration rural youths.

Conclusion

On the basis of the findings of the study and afore said discussions as related to the present study, it may be concluded that low salary and non availability of better job are the most important factors that influenced the rural youth to come out from the urban

area. To continue in family occupation was most significant pull factor responsible for return migration. The return migration of rural youth brings the alteration in structural and functional systems in rural areas. Their remittances are sure to have a positive impact on the social development of their place of origin. So the push and pull factors influencing the return migration of the rural youth should be considered while devising suitable extension interventions for programmes like ARYA (Attracting and Retaining Youth in Agriculture) and other youths programme for agriculture and rural development.

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