



A Study on Reasons for Seasonal migration and its impact on the education of the children of the migrating households in Kurnool District

T. Gangadhar

Lecturer in Commerce

Silver Jubilee Government College, Kurnool.

Abstract

This study examines the reasons for seasonal migration and its impact on the education of children from migrating households in Kurnool District. Seasonal migration, driven by economic necessity, often forces families to relocate temporarily for agricultural or labor-intensive work. The research highlights how this disrupts the schooling of children, leading to irregular attendance, dropouts, and compromised learning outcomes. Data was collected through surveys and interviews with migrating families, educators, and local authorities. The findings reveal a significant correlation between migration and educational setbacks, emphasizing the need for policy interventions to ensure continuity in education for children from migrating households.

Keywords: Seasonal migration, education, children, migrating households, Kurnool District, dropouts, economic factors, policy interventions.

1. Introduction

Seasonal migration, driven by economic necessity, has profound social and economic implications, particularly for the education of children from migrating households. This phenomenon disrupts family structures, as some children migrate with their parents while others are left behind. Parent-child separation generates economic benefits but comes with significant social costs. Children who migrate often grow up in environments lacking basic facilities like health, hygiene, and education, while those left behind face emotional and psychological challenges. Education, a fundamental right and a key driver of economic and social development, is severely impacted by seasonal migration. Despite policy initiatives like the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and the Right to Education (RTE) Act, migrant children remain excluded from equitable educational opportunities. This study explores the impact of seasonal migration on children's education and reviews institutional measures to address this issue. The research focuses on Kurnool District, Andhra Pradesh, where seasonal migration is prevalent due to agricultural and industrial labor demands. By examining the reasons for migration and its consequences on children's education, this study aims to provide insights into the challenges faced by migrating households and suggest actionable solutions to mitigate the adverse effects on children's schooling.

2. Impact of Seasonal Migration on Children's Education

Seasonal migration disrupts the academic calendar, forcing children to drop out of school or miss critical months of education. Migrant children face challenges such as language barriers, syllabus constraints, and lack of access to schools at destination sites. Those left behind often suffer from a lack of parental care and guidance, leading to behavioral issues. The cyclical nature of migration exacerbates these problems, resulting in high dropout rates and intergenerational poverty. Despite efforts like bridge schools and mobile schools, the educational needs of migrant children remain largely unmet, highlighting the need for more robust interventions. In Kurnool District, the migration cycle coincides with the academic calendar, leaving children

with limited time to attend school. Many children are forced to work alongside their parents at construction sites, brick kilns, or agricultural fields, depriving them of their right to education. The lack of continuity in schooling leads to repeated grades, low learning outcomes, and eventual dropout. Furthermore, the absence of proper documentation and enrollment processes at destination sites creates additional barriers for migrant children. Addressing these challenges requires a multi-pronged approach that ensures access to education, provides psychosocial support, and creates an enabling environment for learning both at the origin and destination.

3. Policy Interventions and Recommendations

Government and non-government initiatives, such as SSA and RTE, aim to universalize education and address the needs of marginalized children. However, the unique challenges faced by migrant children require targeted policies, including community mobilization, awareness programs, and improved teacher-student ratios. Strengthening bridge schools, providing psychological support, and ensuring continuity in education during migration cycles are essential steps. Addressing these issues can help break the cycle of intergenerational poverty and ensure that migrant children have access to quality education, thereby contributing to inclusive growth and rural development. In Kurnool District, specific measures such as mobile schools, seasonal hostels, and flexible academic calendars can be implemented to accommodate the needs of migrant children. Collaboration between state governments, NGOs, and local communities is crucial to create a supportive ecosystem for these children. Additionally, awareness campaigns should be conducted to educate parents about the importance of education and the available resources. Improving the quality of education, recruiting more teachers, and addressing language barriers are also critical steps. By adopting a holistic approach that combines policy interventions, community engagement, and innovative solutions, it is possible to safeguard the educational rights of migrant children and ensure their holistic development. This, in turn, will contribute to the broader goals of sustainable development and inclusive growth.

4. Exploratory study on reasons for seasonal migration: Western Kurnool district Scenario

The western areas of Kurnool district comprises Pathikonda, Tuggali, Maddikera, Devanakonda, Gonegandla, Veldurthy, Krishnagiri, Kodumur, C. Belagal, Gudur, Yemmiganur, Nandavaram, Mantralayam, Adoni, Peddakadubur, Kosigi, Kowthalam, Alur, Aspari, Holagunda, Halaharvi, Chippagiri Mandals. Though the migration of agricultural labour from these areas has been happening for the past few years, this year has witnessed the trend of farmer migration as well due to severe drought. While the state recorded a 31.7% deficient rainfall, Kurnool district registered 50.2% deficient rainfall. Apart from working in our field we also work as agricultural coolies, but this year we didn't have any work due to drought,” says **B Mahadeva**, a farmer from Kambaladinne in Pedda Kadubur mandal. He boarded train on December 19 from Tuggali along with his three brothers and their families, for Lingamguntla in Pedakurapadu tehsil in Guntur district. Ask him why he is disrupting his kids' studies by taking them with him and he says, “Do you want me to leave them at home alone without us? Let their studies get disturbed. It's a life and death issue for us. We have to survive first. The grown-up boys and girls will help the family by working with us.”



migrant workers waiting for the train to arrive in kurnool.

Tuggali railway station, of the 400 to 500 passengers boarding trains every day, nearly 300 are farmers and coolies migrating for work.

“Lack of water for irrigation is the biggest curse for Kurnool district. Farmers and labourers come from Yemmiganur, Tuggali, Patthikonda, Devanakonda, Aspari and Pedda Kaduburu to take the train. Maddikera railway station too witnesses similar scenes. If more than three to four families of a village migrate to the same destination, they hire a mini lorry. Some of them also migrate to Hubli in Karnataka,” adds **Gattu Mallaiah**, ticket clerk at Tuggali railway station. This year has also seen a trend of double migration, where some went to Telangana during Kharif season and are now going to coastal Andhra for Rabi. Like 23-three-year-old rythu coolie **K Ramu**, who resides in Haligera of Aspari mandal in Kurnool district, who is headed for Prathipadu in Guntur after having returned from Telangana. “I am going there (Guntur) to work in chilli fields. During Kharif, five of us went to Zaheerabad to work in cotton fields and returned a few days ago. We are now going to Guntur as there is no work here. Though usually every year we only go once, either during Kharif or Rabi season, this year we are going for the second time,” he says. Farmers are complaining that they have lost everything as they invested about Rs 15,000 to Rs 20,000 per acre in groundnut, cotton, Bengal gram crops but got no help from the government. Farm labourers too are unsatisfied as they feel their wages are not enough to meet their expenses. One such farmer is **Golla Nagappa**, a 20-year-old resident of Singapuram in Devankonda mandal of Kurnool who is migrating to Guntur because his cotton crop failed.

“Our family of eight is dependent on the two acres that we own. But as our cotton crop dried up we didn't get even one quintal per acre. Usually, if the rains are good, the yield is six to seven quintals,” says Nagappa, who is well aware of the hazards of working in Guntur where ginning mill dust pollution is a big issue but has no option as he has a debt of Rs 1 lakh on his hands.

“The groundwater depth has gone to 300 ft. As there was no fodder for the animals, we sold them and are now migrating. I am going to work in a cotton ginning mill in Guntur,” says **B Urukundu** of Kapati village in Adoni mandal.

Apart from Kurnool, Anantapur, Kadapa and Chittoor of Rayalaseema, the two coastal districts of Nellore and Prakasam have also been hit by drought. Though the government claims extra ‘man days’ have been created under NREGS, farmers and farm labourers say they get only a nominal Rs 80 to Rs 100 per day. Newly married 20-year-old **B Shankar** of H Muravani, one of those boarding the drought train, says: “We get only Rs 70 under NREGA. I am going to Amaravati, the Andhra capital region, where I will be paid Rs 300 to 400 per day and my wife will get Rs 200.”

But despite the claims of the Kurnool district administration that it has set up 68 seasonal hostels to lodge 3000 children of migrant farmers and coolies, kids will lose an academic year as they head to work along with their parents. crop failure has led to increased migration. “The most affected areas are Aluru and Pattikonda mandals. We are providing water for farming and providing drinking water. Fodder is also being given at reasonable rates. The government has given extra man days under NREGs. We have sent proposals for Rs 616 crore input subsidy to farmers for crop damage. Though the loss would be more, this will help them to some.

5. Conclusion

The RTE act stands dysfunctional for the migrant children. The inclusion of the migrant children in the SSA still remains a long-achieved target. Education can be an effective tool for controlling migration and improving the life and livelihood of the village. Migration is positively correlated with the increasing school dropout rate; the children of the migrants had no other way left then to drop out the schools. The discontinued education ramified their socio-economic conditions and trapped them back into the same migratory cycle. Due to the negligence of educational institutions, which has the potential to revive the village economy, the vicious circle of poverty is difficult to be broken and villagers are time and again entrapped by migration. The discontinued education of the migrant children is one such manifested issue. Despite many small efforts to bring those excluded children under the umbrella of SSA, the number of schools drop outs are increasing from the migration prone villages

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