

Migration Patterns and their Socio-Economic Impacts in Birdpur Block of Siddharthnagar District, Uttar Pradesh

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Abstract: Migration has become an important means of livelihood in rural India, especially in border districts where local employment opportunities are extremely limited. Excessive dependence on agriculture, land fragmentation, limited industrial development and lack of basic facilities force rural youth to go out and work. A similar situation is also seen in Birdpur block of Siddharthnagar district of Uttar Pradesh, where migration has become a major part of the survival strategy of rural families. The presented study is based on primary data collected from 150 respondents in about 50 villages of Birdpur block. The main objective of the study is to analyze the type of migration, destination, age structure of migrants and its economic, social, mental, health and political impacts. Through a questionnaire based survey, an attempt was made to understand how migration is affecting the lives of rural families. The results of the study show that temporary migration is most prevalent in Birdpur block and participation of youth in migration is high. This is an indication that the working age group is not getting adequate employment at the local level. There has been an increase in the income of some families through migration, but no significant and lasting improvement has been seen in the economic condition of most families. A large portion of remittances are spent on food, health, education and loan repayments, limiting opportunities for savings and investment. Negative effects of migration have also come to light at the social and mental level. Problems like distance from family, increased workload on women, difficulty in taking care of children and mental stress were found to be common. Additionally, inadequate access to health services and lack of local political participation are also important challenges associated with migration. Therefore, this study underlines that migration is not only an economic solution, but it also gives rise to many social and human problems. Therefore, to reduce the dependence on migration, there is a great need for employment generation, skill development training and effective implementation of social security schemes at the local level, so that rural youth can get opportunities for respectable and secure livelihood in their own areas.

Keywords: Migration, Livelihood, Border Area, Socio-Economic Status, Employment Survive.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Migration has become a major means of livelihood in rural India, especially in border and backward areas where local employment opportunities are limited. Birdpur block of Siddharthnagar district of Uttar Pradesh is also one such area, where due to excessive dependence on agriculture, small land holdings, limited industrial development and inadequate infrastructure facilities, rural families have to go out for livelihood. It is in this background that the present study attempts to understand the migration patterns and its multidimensional impacts in Birdpur Block.

The study is based on primary data collected from 150 respondents selected from approximately 50 villages of Birdpur block. The questionnaire covered aspects such as age, gender, education, social class, type of migration, destination, duration of migration, change in income, use of remittances, children's education, mental stress, availability of health services and panchayat participation. It is clear from the data that migration is mainly of temporary nature and the majority of migrants are in the age group of 18–30 years, which shows employment insecurity among rural youth. From the economic point of view, there has been an increase in the income of some families, but no significant improvement has been found in the income of most of the families. A large portion of remittances are spent on food,

health, education and loan repayments, limiting savings and investment opportunities. At the social level, migration has seen changes in family relationships, mixed effects on children's education and additional burden of domestic and economic responsibilities on women. Additionally, many respondents also reported feelings of loneliness and stress and inadequate access to health services.

Thus, this study presents migration as a broader socio-economic phenomenon rather than merely an economic process, which clearly underlines the need for rural development policy and local employment generation.

➤ *Introduction to the Study Area:*

Birdpur block is a major rural development block located in Naugarh tehsil of Siddharthnagar district of Uttar Pradesh. This block consists of about 70 villages and according to the 2011 census, its total population is about 1,42,698. Birdpur No. 13 is the most populous village of the block. The study area has been selected due to its location near the India-Nepal international border and high tendency of migration. Geographically, Birdpur block is located in the alluvial region of the Ganga plain, where the land is flat and suitable for agriculture. The average altitude of this region is about 90–100 meters above sea level. The soil of the area is mainly of alluvial type, which is considered suitable for paddy, wheat, sugarcane and pulse crops. The drainage system is influenced by the Rapti river system and local drains, due to which the problem of seasonal floods and waterlogging arises in many low-lying areas. This situation affects agricultural production, livelihood and residential structure, which encourages migration. The proximity of Birdpur block to the India-Nepal border has a special impact on social and economic activities. The tendency of short-term, seasonal and cross-border migration is relatively higher in the villages bordering the border. Apart from this, limited employment opportunities, dependence on agriculture and natural disasters are also major factors affecting migration. In terms of transport and communication facilities, some villages are connected by paved roads, while many villages are still dependent on unpaved roads. The distance to markets, health centers and educational institutions also varies among villages, which affects the level of human development and the pattern of migration.

Thus, due to dissimilarity in geographical location, border proximity, agriculture-based economy and infrastructure, Birdpur block presents a suitable area for the study of migration patterns and its socio-economic impacts.

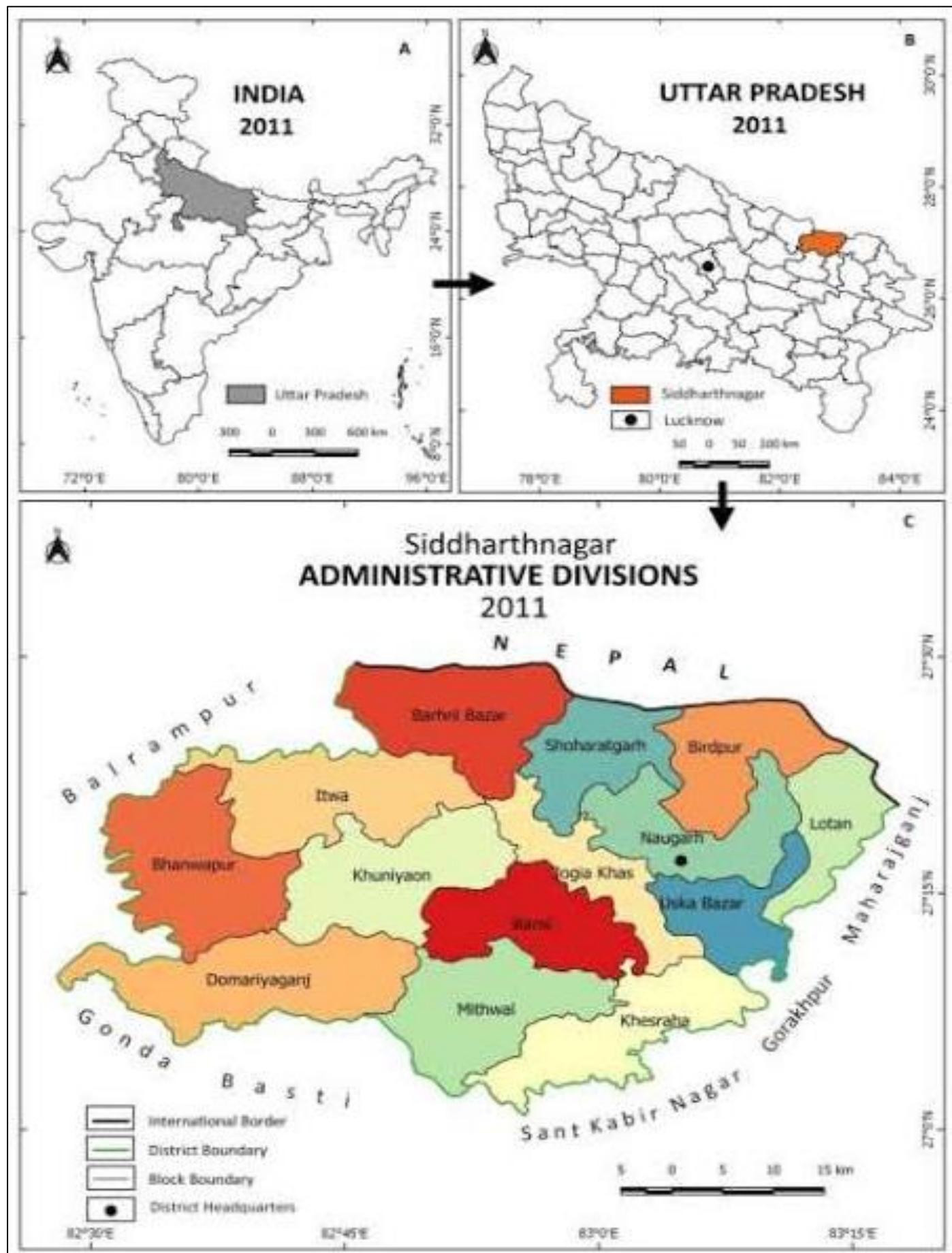


Fig 1 Introduction to the Study Area

➤ *Objectives of the Study*

- To analyze the types and patterns of migration in Birdpur block.
- To identify the age structure and destinations of migrants.
- To evaluate the economic impact of migration.
- To study the social, mental, health and political effects.
- Presenting policy related suggestions.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on primary data, with the objective of analyzing the migration patterns and its multidimensional impacts in Birdpur Block, Siddharthnagar District. Field survey method was adopted for this study and information was collected directly from the respondents. A total of 150 respondents were selected from approximately 70 villages of Birdpur block. The respondents were selected by Purposive Sampling Method so that especially the migrant families could be included in the study. Structured questionnaires were used for data collection, which included questions on demographic details (age, gender, education, social class), type of migration, destination, duration of migration, change in income, use of remittances, children's education, social relations, mental stress, availability of health services and participation in Panchayat and local meetings. Geo-tagged photographs were also taken with the respondents during the survey, to ensure the geographical authenticity of the survey sites and to increase the authenticity of the study. After data collection, all the answers were compiled and organized in digital medium and percentage method and comparative analysis were used for analysis. The answers were compared to understand the differences between different social and economic categories, thereby presenting the effects of migration clearly.

Thus, by combining primary field data, geotagged evidence and statistical analysis, this study reliably presents the actual situation of migration and its impacts in Birdpur Block.



Fig 2 This Study Reliably Presents the Actual Situation

➤ *Migration Pattern*

The survey conducted in Birdpur block has clearly revealed that the nature of migration here is mainly temporary. According to the study, the share of temporary migration was found to be 77.1%, while seasonal migration was 20.4%. In contrast, permanent migration was found to be limited to only 1.1% and cross-border migration to 1.4%. These figures show that most of the people do not leave their village permanently, but go out for some time for the purpose of employment and return to the village again. This type of migration indicates that rural families want to remain connected to their socio-cultural ties and land. Instead of permanent displacement from the village, they adopt temporary labor migration as a strategy to support the family. It also shows that migration is not a voluntary decision but a compulsion due to lack of local employment.

Another reason for the increase in temporary migration is that the jobs available in the unorganized sector are unstable, due to which it is not possible to stay at one place for a long time. People go out when they get work and return to the village when the work is over.

Thus, the migration pattern in Birdpur block clearly reflects the instability of the rural economy and limited availability of local employment, underscoring the need for regional development.

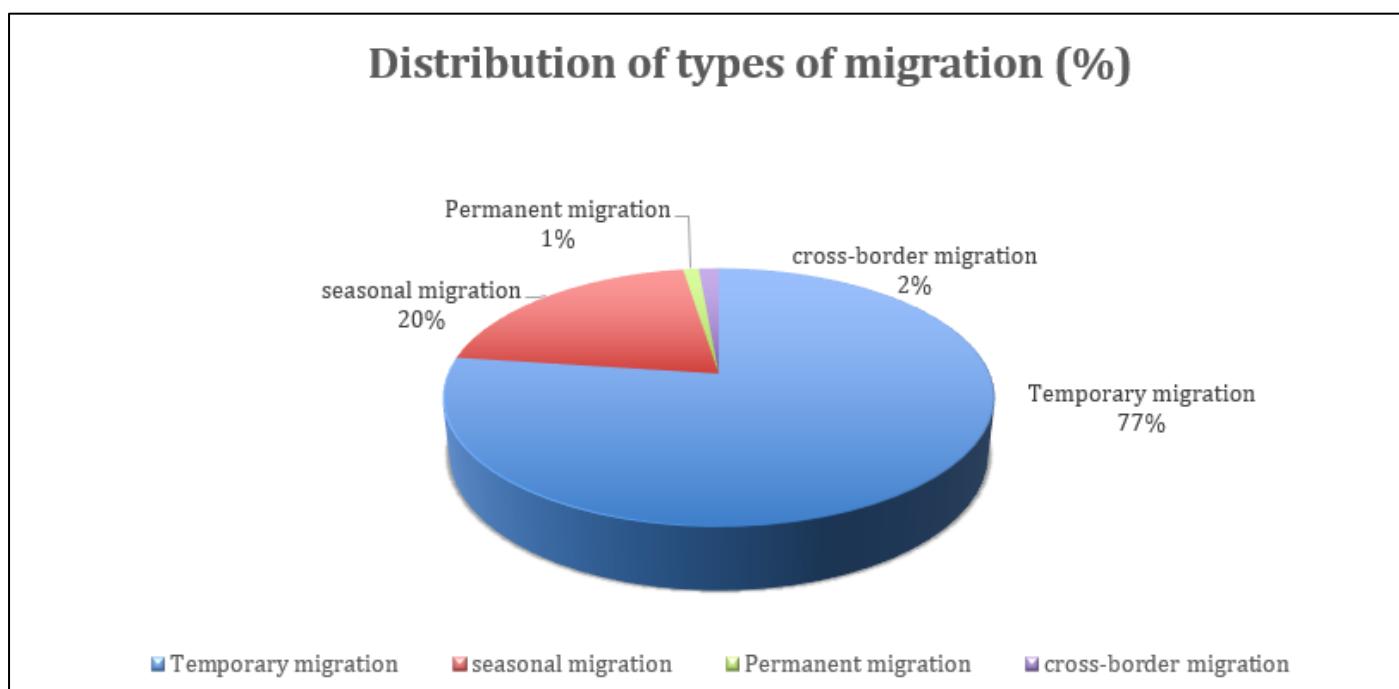


Fig 3 Distribution of Types of Migration (%)

➤ Age Structure

Youth participation in migration was found to be high. Migrants in the 18–30 years age group constitute 75%, the 31–45 years age group 20.8% and the age group above 45

years only 4.2%. This situation shows that rural youth are forced to go out in search of employment, which leads to shortage of manpower in the village and increase in dependency ratio.

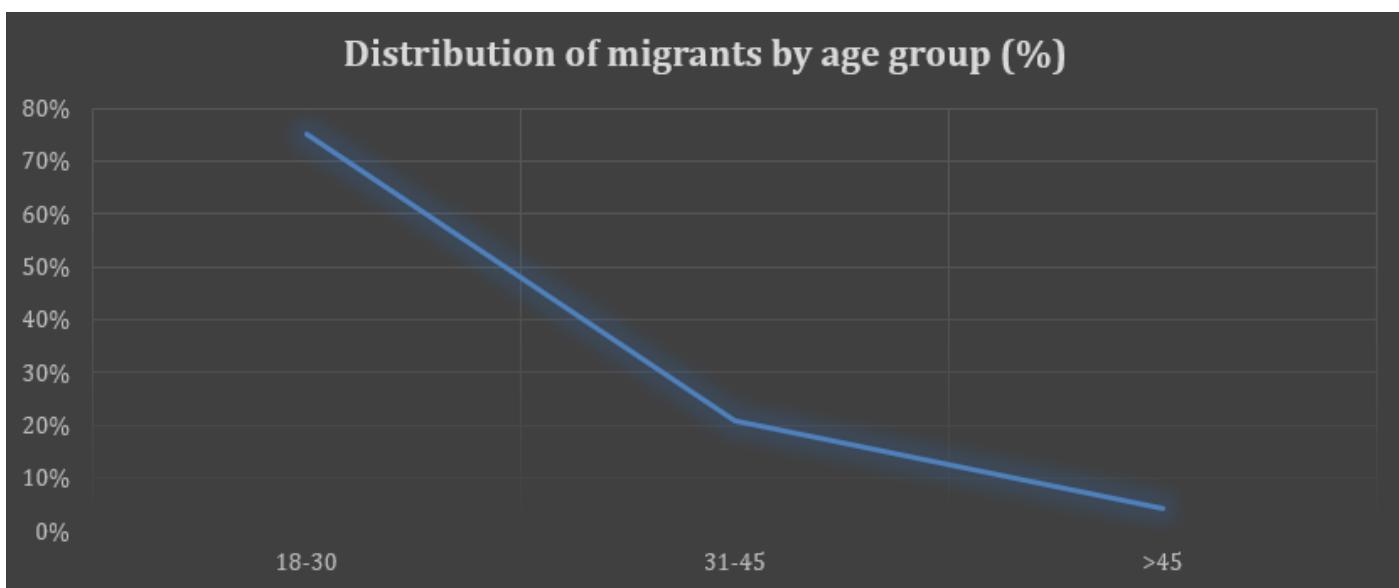


Fig 4 Distribution of Migrants by Age Group (%)

➤ Major Destinations

The major destinations of migrants were found to be Mumbai, Pune, Delhi, Saudi Arabia, Dubai and Nepal. Migration to metros reflects that rural wages are inadequate, while migration to Gulf countries is a result of expectations of higher income and agent-based recruitment systems.

➤ Economic Impact

The survey conducted in Birdpur block has clearly revealed that the economic impact of migration is not equal

on all families. According to the study, the income of 43.7% families increased after migration, while no significant change was found in the income of 54.2% families. A decline in income has also been recorded in 2.1% families. This situation shows that the economic benefits derived from migration are not permanent and assured and depend on many external factors such as continuity of employment, wage rates and nature of work. Although some families are gaining additional income from migration, most of the remittances are spent on necessities such as food, health, children's education

and loan repayment. After meeting the needs of daily life, very little money is left for saving or investing. For this reason, migration limits the potential for long-term economic prosperity or wealth creation.

Additionally, migrants working in the unorganized sector do not get facilities like social security, insurance and pension, which further weakens the financial condition of the

family in case of illness or accident. Thus, migration provides short-term economic relief, but it does not become a means of permanent escape from poverty.

Therefore, it is necessary to develop sustainable and secure employment opportunities at the local level to reduce dependence on migration.

Change in income after migration (%)

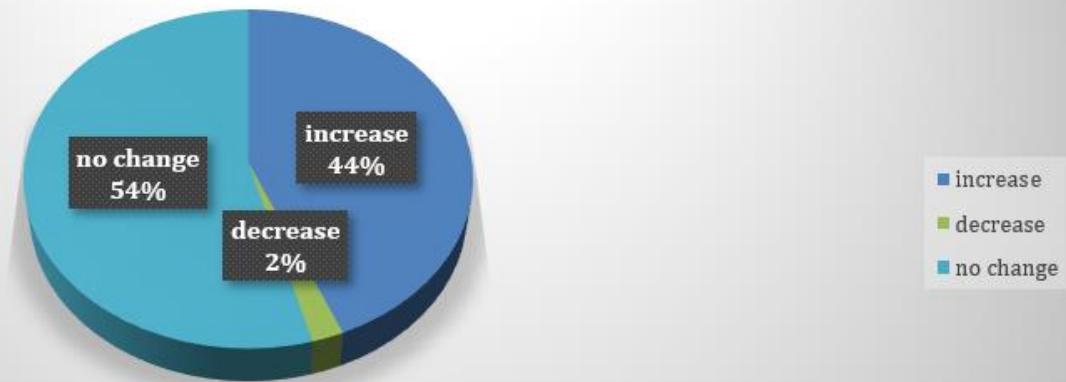


Fig 5 Change in Income after Migration (%)

➤ Social Impact

The study conducted in Birdpur block makes it clear that migration has a multidimensional impact on family and social life. The standard of living has improved in some families due to the economic assistance received from migration. The additional income could better meet basic needs such as food, health and housing, thereby increasing family satisfaction and stability. In such families, migration was seen as a positive livelihood strategy.

However, in most cases migration has also weakened family ties. Prolonged absence of a family member increases emotional distance, reduces mutual communication and affects family unity. It also has a negative impact on the relationship between husband and wife, causing domestic tension and dissatisfaction. There are also difficulties in raising children, especially when both parents are away. The impact of migration on children's education was found to be mixed. In some families, increased income allowed children to be sent to better schools, provided tuition and provided educational materials, which improved their education. On the contrary, in many cases children's education was affected due to the absence of parents. Lack of monitoring, lack of emotional support, and increased household responsibilities negatively impacted children's attendance and academic performance.

At the social level too, participation of migrant families in community activities decreased, which weakened social relations. Thus, while migration has brought economic relief to some families, it has also created challenges that weaken social and family structures, which need to be taken into account in development plans.

➤ Mental and Health Effects

The survey conducted in Birdpur block has clearly revealed that migration has a deep mental and emotional impact on families. Many respondents pointed out that when a family member is away for a long time, it creates feelings of loneliness, anxiety and stress among the members living at home. Especially the situation of emotional insecurity was seen more among the elderly, women and children.

The study also found that women bear additional burden of both domestic and financial responsibilities. When male members are away, women have to take care of children, agricultural work, managing household expenses and social responsibilities simultaneously, which increases physical fatigue as well as mental pressure. This has a negative impact on women's health and social life.

Availability of health services has also emerged as a serious problem. In many villages, treatment of even common diseases becomes difficult due to lack of primary health centres, unavailability of doctors and limited provision of medicines. Due to financial constraints, it is not possible for all families to reach private hospitals.

Thus, migration is not only an economic challenge, but it also has serious impacts on mental health, family balance and rural health systems, which need to be seriously addressed in policy-making..

➤ Political and Decision-Making Influences

The study conducted in Birdpur block makes it clear that the impact of migration is not limited to the economic and social level only, but it also affects the process of political

participation and family decision-making. According to the survey, the decision-making role of women has increased in some families, especially those where male members stay on long periods of stay. In such a situation, women have started taking decisions related to household expenses, children's education, agricultural work and daily needs on their own, due to which partial improvement has been seen in their self-reliance and social role.

However, participation of migrant families in Panchayat meetings and local development related activities was generally found to be low. Due to migration, family members stay out of the village for long periods of time, due to which they are not able to directly connect with gram sabhas, government schemes and development programs. As a result, they are deprived of raising local problems and participating in the solution process.

Additionally, political awareness among migrant families was also found to be relatively low due to frequent movements and temporary residence. This creates a situation that local development plans do not reach the real needy. Thus, on the one hand, migration partially enhances women's decision-making power at the household level, but on the other hand it weakens community and political participation, which is a serious challenge for long-term rural development.

➤ Major Problems

The survey conducted in Birdpur block, Siddharthnagar district has clearly revealed that migrant families are facing various socio-economic and humanitarian problems. Among these, uncertainty of employment, unsafe working conditions, distance from family, lack of health services and difficulty in taking care of children are the main problems. Uncertainty of employment is the biggest problem of migrants. Most migrants work in the unorganized sector, where there is neither permanent employment nor any kind of social security. Availability of work depends on weather, contractors and market demand, making income unstable and family financial planning difficult. Unsafe working conditions are also a serious problem. In jobs like construction work, factory or daily wage labour, there is lack of safety equipment, long working hours and risk of accidents. In case of workplace accidents, medical care and compensation are often not available, placing additional financial burden on families. Distance from family is an important social impact of migration. Being away from home for long periods of time weakens family relationships, children's emotional needs are not met, and women are left with the full responsibility of home and children. This creates mental stress and a feeling of social insecurity. Lack of health services also affects migrant families. Even common diseases become serious due to limited access to health facilities at the destination and inadequate primary health services in the village. Information about or access to health insurance and government schemes was also found to be very low. Difficulty in taking care of children is another serious problem. The absence of parents adversely affects children's education, nutrition and security. In many cases, children are left dependent on grandparents or other relatives, which affects their overall development process.

Thus, the study makes it clear that migration is not just an economic process but also has serious social and human consequences, which need to be taken into account in policy-making.

III. CONCLUSION

It is clear from the present study that migration has become a major livelihood strategy in Birdpur Block, Siddharthnagar District, which is mainly a result of lack of local employment and instability of agriculture based economy. The study found that the nature of migration is mainly temporary and the participation of youth in migration is high, which indicates that the working age group is not available with adequate employment opportunities in their own area. From an economic point of view, the impact of migration was found to be uneven. Although the income of some families has increased, no significant and lasting improvement has been seen in the economic condition of most families. Most of the remittances are spent on food, health, education and loan repayments, limiting opportunities for savings and investment. At the social and family level, migration has led to distance in relationships, mixed effects on children's education and additional burden of domestic and economic responsibilities on women. Mental and health issues, such as stress, loneliness and inadequate access to health services, further complicate the situation of migrant families. Additionally, lack of participation in panchayat and local development processes shows that migration also weakens community and political cohesion.

Therefore, this study concludes that migration is a short-term livelihood solution, but it cannot become an alternative to long-term rural development. For a permanent solution, there is an urgent need for local employment generation, skill development, expansion of health facilities and effective implementation of social security schemes.

IV. SUGGESTION

The high rate of migration in Birdpur block, Siddharthnagar district indicates that employment opportunities are inadequate at the local level. Therefore, multi-pronged policy interventions are needed to reduce migration and strengthen rural livelihoods. First of all, small and cottage industries should be promoted at the local level. Agro-based industries, such as food processing, dairy products, handicrafts, tailoring and bamboo/wood based industries can provide employment to rural youth and women. For this, easy loans, market linkage arrangements and technical assistance should be made available.

- Important step is the establishment of skill development training centres. Currently, most migrants work in the unorganized sector without any formal training, causing them to face low wages and unsafe working conditions. If training related to construction, electrician, plumbing, machine operation, computer and service sector is made available at the local level, then the youth can get better employment opportunities and they will be able to get safe and respectable work.

- There is a need for effective implementation of rural employment guarantee schemes, especially MNREGA. Forced migration can be reduced by ensuring timely work availability and wage payment. Along with this, economic participation of women should be promoted by strengthening self-help groups and rural entrepreneurship programs.
- It is necessary to implement targeted schemes related to health insurance, nutrition assistance and children's education for migrant families. It would also be useful to establish migrant assistance centers at the Panchayat level and connect them with government schemes, legal rights and employment information.

Ultimately, forced migration can be reduced only by prioritizing local development. An integrated framework of employment, skills and social protection can play an important role towards sustainable development in areas like Birdpur block.

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