



The Process of Emigration and Return Migration in India: A Study of Gulf Returnees in Murshidabad District, West Bengal.

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INTRODUCTION

RESULTS

CONT.....

- Gulf countries have some of the most substantial numbers of temporary labor migrants in the world. Driven by oil wealth, Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries have undergone remarkable economic development over the last few decades, drawing both skilled and semi-skilled workers to various sectors, including construction, manufacturing, retail, and domestic service (Nair, 1999).
- The migration of workers to the Middle East countries takes place under provisions of Emigration Acts, which lay down conditions of recruitment, terms, and conditions of work abroad.
- In the migration cycle, the first stage of one is the job search. The second stage is recruitment. The migration to the Gulf countries is a purely temporary phenomenon, the return of migrant to his home country is an inevitable phase in the process.
- Indian workers in the Gulf region return when their contract expires, or they choose to return or when reasons for ill health compelled them. With the return of the migrant, the process of migration is completed.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

- Indian labor migration to the Middle East and return migration from these countries has an important dimensions since the 1970s.
- Murshidabad district is regarded as one of the backward districts of West Bengal (HDI-0.41), having high concentration of Muslim population (67 percent) reflecting high rural population (80 percent), lower agricultural output, skewed distribution of land, these situations are considered as the leading factors of heavy out-migration from the district.
- Some districts of West Bengal like, Malda, Nadia, North 24 Parganas have a trend of Gulf migration and return migration, but the scenario is very prominent in the Murshidabad district (Ali, 2018).
- The importance of return migration on rural life has not been studied in detail.
- Hence there is a need to study the process of emigration to the Gulf countries and return to villages of Murshidabad district. Information can be collected from the returnees about their three periods of migration (before emigration, while abroad, and after return).

A. Pre-Emigration Phase

Table-1: Socio-Economic and Demographic Characteristics of Migrants on the Eve of Last Emigration

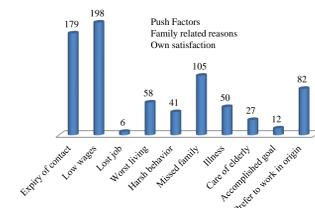
Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Number of the household members		
2	12	3.6
3	29	8.8
4	136	41.2
5	100	30.3
6	47	14.2
7	6	1.8
Age of the respondents on the eve of emigration		
15-20	62	18.8
21-25	81	24.6
26-30	56	17.0
31-35	57	17.3
36-40	40	12.1
41-45	23	7.0
Above 45	11	3.3
Religion		
Hindu	24	7.3
Muslim	306	92.7
Social category		
General	16	4.9
Scheduled Caste	8	2.4
Other Backward Class	306	92.7
Marital status at the time of last emigration		
Unmarried	80	24.2
Married	250	75.8
Widow	0	0.0
Divorced	0	0.0
Separated	0	0.0
Education		
Illiterate	85	25.8
Primary not completed	48	14.6
Primary	115	34.9
Secondary	68	20.6
Higher secondary	12	3.6
Graduation	2	0.6
Occupation on the eve of last migration		
Employed in private sector	2	0.6
Agriculture	186	56.4
Construction	21	6.4
Driver	2	0.6
Self employed	7	2.1
Daily wage	23	7.0
Job seekers including students	89	27.0
Monthly income status on the eve of last migration		
No income	89	27.0
3000-6000	121	36.7
6000-9000	85	25.8
9000-12000	33	10.0
12000-15000	2	0.6
Status in household on the eve of emigration		
Earning member	244	73.9
Dependent	84	26.1
Year of last emigration		
Before 2000	4	1.2
2001-2005	7	2.1
2006-2010	46	13.9
2011-2015	247	74.9
After 2016	26	7.9

C. Return Phase

Table-2: Socio-Demographic and Economic Characteristics of Return Migrants

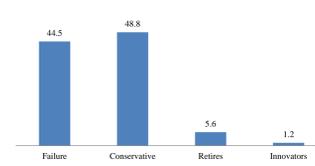
Background Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Current age of return migrants		
20-30	135	40.91
31-41	107	32.42
42-52	70	21.21
Above 53	18	5.45
Family structure		
Nuclear	221	67.0
Joint	109	33.0
Marital status at the time of last emigration		
Unmarried	54	16.4
Married	273	82.7
Widow	1	0.3
Divorced	1	0.3
Separated	1	0.3
Desired to emigrate again		
Yes	185	56.1
No	145	43.9
Numbers of move to abroad		
1 time	288	87.3
2 times	40	12.1
3 times	2	0.6
Number of migrants per HH in current time		
0	206	62.4
1	95	28.8
2	27	8.2
3	2	0.6
Year of return		
2004-2008	6	1.8
2009-2013	24	7.3
2013-2018	300	90.9
Taken decision on return		
Self	264	80
Family	3	0.9
Jointly	63	19.1

Reasons for Return



"I was employed as a house driver in Saudi Arabia for 8 years. Every month, I used to earn 1600. I was very satisfied with my job and salary. Remittances helped me to build a new house and to start a business. I returned to village in 2015, and joined a training course where I learned the process of the purification of water. I started a small business to deliver purified mineral water. Now my business has expanded a little bit. I own a shop and purchased a water purifier machine so that I can operate my business smoothly". (CS- 43 years old return migrants, Baharampore Block).

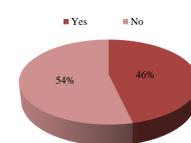
Typology of Return Migrants



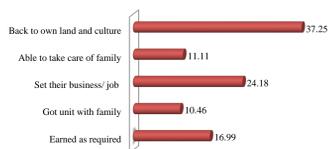
Failure Return Migrants- Respondents who returned to villages involuntarily or due to some worst situation and after return also they involved low paid job. To calculate the percentage of failure returnees, we considered the reason for return migration as the police caught and sent to jail, low wage, lost the job, worst living and working condition, harsh behaviour of employers, illness and considered agricultural activities, construction work, daily wage labour, not getting suitable work, not working for illness as an occupational activity after the return.
Conservative Return Migrants- Respondents who returned voluntarily or due to expiry of contract and also after return they were able to maintain a good standard of life and follow traditional rules and conduct. To compute the percentage of conservative returnees, we took the reason for return as expiry of job contract, to take care of family/elderly, prefer to work at origin and self-employees, manufacturers, transport driver as their occupation after the return.
Retired Return Migrants- Respondents who had reached retirement age where, they found difficulties to adopt the host countries atmosphere and decide to return to villages. To calculate the percentage of retire returnees, we considered missed family as causes for return from abroad, and considered too old to work after return in origin as their occupation status after the return.
Innovators Return Migrants- Respondents, who upgraded their skills, acquired new attitudes with regard to the employment and modernisation from abroad and returned with the intention of using their qualifications to find better place for themselves and developed their place of origin are considered as innovators return migrants. While calculating the percentage of innovators returnees, we considered accomplished migration goal as the reason for return and considered those who engaged as any type of skilled work, big entrepreneur in origin after their return.

"I was upset, felt very low, and went through a stage of depression after returning to my village. I did not feel like speaking to my children also. I was facing a double burden, as I was having health issues as well as not getting suitable work in the village. It was a big loss for me as I returned home like an unsuccessful returnee. I would suggest that no one should go with Kapil visa". (37 years old return migrants)

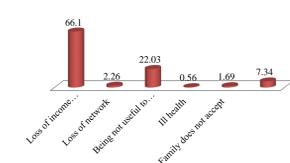
Satisfied with Return Decision



Reasons for Satisfaction after Return

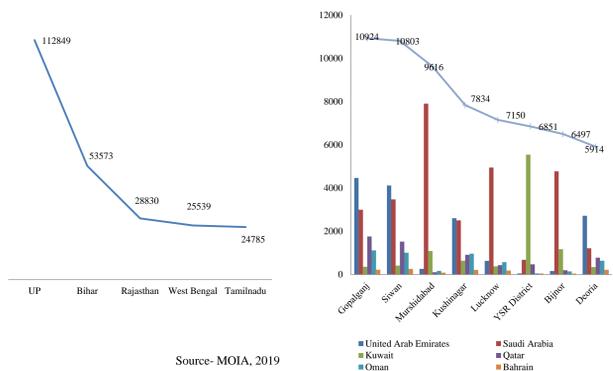


Faced Challenged after Return



"After successfully returned from Saudi Arabia, I became an agent in my village. Those who wanted to migrate to the Gulf countries, I helped them in doing all the paper works. Villagers give me respect as I never cheated on them. Few months ago, I joined in politics also. I am delighted with my migration journey, and now I'm planning to send my son to the Gulf for any skilled job". (CS-Successful Gulf returnee)

Gulf Country Wise Emigration Clearance Obtained by Indian States and Districts, 2019



Source- MOIA, 2019

OBJECTIVE

- To understand the factors and the process of emigration to the Gulf countries and return migration to villages.

DATA SOURCE AND METHODOLOGY

Study Area

The study was based on Primary survey in Murshidabad district. Seven villages were identified from three blocks to carry out the present study. These three blocks have a long history of Gulf emigration.

C D Blocks	Total Population	No of Census Town	No of Villages	Name of the Study Villages	Total Population	Sample Selected
Beldanga-I	319355	1	55	Malaha Daha Sahajadpur	11793 4267 7299	75
Berhampore	446887	9	124	Bahadurpur Majaha Gokana	635 3989 16198	130
Kandi	220145	0	84	Utar Lakshminarayapur Parmanapur Nobagram	898 4511 6905	125
Sample Size						330

Source- district Census Handbook

Inclusion Criteria

The respondents who had worked in any Middle East countries for at least two years and returned to their villages at least one year before the survey were considered.

Sample Size and Survey Instrument

With the help of snowball technique total 330 Gulf return migrants were personally interviewed with structured interview scheduled and also 10 Case Studies and 12 Key Informant Interviews were conducted with the help of semi-structured interview scheduled.

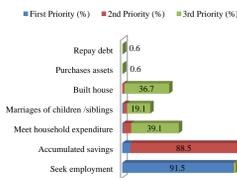
Methodology

The present chapter has been divided in three parts. In the first part, the process and factors of emigration to the Gulf countries is explored. In the second part, information related to destination country is analyzed while in the third part, the process and factors of returns to the villages of Murshidabad district is examined.

- Descriptive statistics and Chi square test has been used for the further analysis

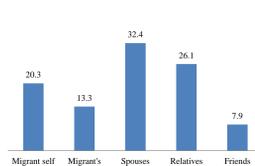
Process of Emigration

Reasons for Emigration

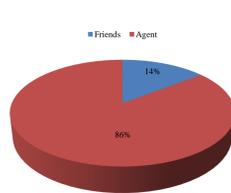


"My father used to work in agricultural field. After completing high school, I learned to drive and also I had driving license. At that time many of my friends had already migrated to the Gulf country for seeking jobs and lastly, I decided to emigrate to the Gulf country. My father supported me a lot. He borrowed some money from the moneylender and also mortgaged some land to arrange money for my emigration". (Case Study-28 years old Gulf return migrants- Sahajadpur village)

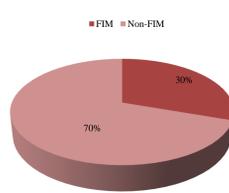
Source of Motivation



Source of Information

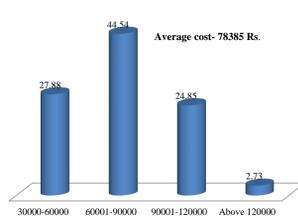


Family Influenced Migration

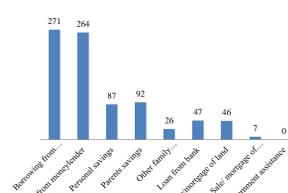


Family-influenced migrants within the sample were defined as those where the decision to emigrate (FIM dep) or return (FIM return) was influenced or determined by family members, and those who maintained a regular contact with their families while in abroad (FIM abroad). On the other hand, those movements that were not influenced by their family were stated as 'non-FIM'.

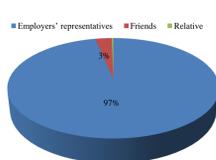
Emigration Cost



Mobilization of Emigration Funds



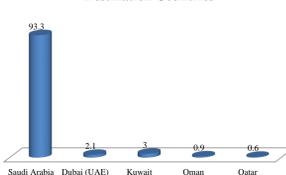
Main Support on Arrival



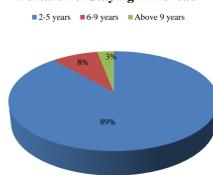
"When I landed in Dubai, my Kapil (employer) awaited for me. Generally any company man or company's supervisor used to stand at airport to receive their employees from airport. At that time itself they used to take emigrant's signature in the contract paper while they mentioned about jobs and salary. I got my job as a driver". (Case Study- A Gulf returned migrants, stayed 5 years in Dubai)

B. Stay in Abroad

Destination Countries



Duration of Staying in Abroad



FINDINGS

- Majority of returnees hailed from poor socio economic group and were married male. Emigrants not only had low level of educational attainments but were also unskilled or semiskilled.
- The main reasons behind emigration were to get better jobs and salary that would help them to meet all the household expenses and uplift their standard of living. Most of the return migrants in Murshidabad district were young.
- Emigrants got motivation to migrate from their spouses, parents, friends, and their relatives. Most of the migrants had to borrow money for arranging expenses of migration from their relatives or moneylender.
- Sub-agents played a vital role in guiding the potential migrants in terms of providing information related to job opportunities, visa arrangement, and all. Sometimes emigrants were also cheated by sub-agents during the emigration process.
- The most preferable destination among migrants was Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Kuwait.
- Majority of the return migrants stated that expiry of job contract, job loss and the worst living and working conditions in abroad were the main reason for return to their home country. Despite facing lots of living and working problems at destination, majority of the migrants desired to re-emigrate to the Gulf countries.
- Majority of returnees were identified as failure and conservative return migrants while very few among them are classified as innovators.

CONCLUSION

- This study mainly focused on the emigration and return process of the migrants from the Gulf countries to the villages. The chapter mainly portrayed the three phases of migration journey of the emigrants.
- Some specific policy related to their rehabilitation and reintegration upon return such as pre-departure training, awareness programs, capacity building should imposed and paid deep attention to these issues. Availability of vocational training in the country of origin can also play a vital role in the reintegration process. The Government should also grant return migrants soft loans to start their economic activities. However, particular importance should be given on establishment of small scale industries with full benefits.