

"Odia Tribal Female Migration"

A Case study of New Delhi

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Migration, as an age-old phenomenon, is in operation since time immemorial. It is simply the movement of an individual or a group from an area of known to an area of unknown. Presently, it plays an important role in the process of modernization, industrialization and globalization which has brought a great concern to the demographers, administrators, policy makers, social scientists and others. The explanation of rural-urban migration go back to the closing decade of 19th century when Ravenstein (1884) first proposed his law of migration and observed that people move from the areas of low opportunities to the areas of high opportunities which has been witnessed in this of migration of tribal women and girls working as domestic servants in New Delhi.

Thousands of men and women migrate every year from their natives to urban centres in search of employment or for a better urban living. The identified push factors for this migration include poverty, unemployment, indebtedness, low income potential, limited opportunity for work etc. whereas the pull factors are desire to earn more, desire for urban life style, instigation by migration agents etc. Of course, initially the migrants find themselves difficulties to get adjusted as they are totally new and may feel ill to the urban life style and social environment with a changed situation. Moreover, they are exploited physically, financially and sexually by the migration agents and owners of the work place. It is said that migrants carry with them their own value orientations, goals, language, food habits, dress, pattern of behaviour etc. to their new settlements. The simulation of native culture may not only provide them necessary sense of security but also a high degree of internal integration to their community. In a new social environment there may be adjustment and even conflict in some others less adjustment and even conflict in some others. The migrants, on the basis of their identity, form identity group or cultural institutions and show group solidarity or

we feeling. Of course, in the city life they have to have cordial contacts with the local inhabitants although they differ in their culture.

Now-a-days, the issue of migration is linked with trafficking especially illegal migration of women and children from an area of low opportunity to an area of high opportunity with high expectation. Of course, this type of trafficking is now taken as a modern version of slavery and a brutal abuse of basic rights by the international community (Li:2003). As per the NCRB (National Crime Records Bureau) reports every year 20 million cases of human trafficking are noticed. Transporting, holding and forcing people into servitude is considered modern type of slavery violating human rights like the right to equality, right to liberty, right to health and people's security.

The concept of female migration has always been under the shadow and a part of the system itself that takes up numerous functions but their status is always considered secondary and dependent. But Neetha (2004) has highlighted the primary role of women in migration and survival of family. Women working as domestic servants are found assuming vital functions and roles in the process of migration. Women are also found mobilizing social network which not only direct the course of migration but also the survival of migrant's family in the urban social milieu. Domestic service, pre-dominantly a female occupation, is emerging as one of the major segment in Indian urban informal sector. Over the last few years, there has been an increase of female migrant domestic workers which forms a significant part of informal economy in unorganized sector.

According to the UNDP report also every year some 20 million people (mainly women and girls) migrate for domestic works to Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bangalore and other big cities from Jharkhand, Bihar, Odisha, Assam, West Bengal, Mizoram either individually or in group. And people who are socially and economically deprived particularly women are forced to enter to this unorganized sector (Kundu : 2005) He also revealed that young married women coming from

distant places with their children with low and uncertain income, prefer part-time domestic jobs just to supplement their family income. Moreover, they are deprived of over-time pay, public holidays, and timely payment. Sometimes the migrants fail to get any employment and remain as victims of sexual abuse and those who get some job forced to work in inhuman condition and remain constant victims of sexual abuse and working without any grievance redressal mechanism. Human trafficking is an illegal trade of people for commercial sexual exploitation or forced labour as the case may be. and as such a crime against humanity. In India, human trafficking especially women and girls is a matter of great concern.

Objectives :

- The aim or objectives of this study are :
- to analyse the socio-economic background of the migrants and their families.
- to study the educational attainments of the migrants.
- to find out various pull and push factors responsible for their migration.
- to examine the socio-cultural and linguistic adaptations of tribal female migrant workers with the local people; and
- to find out various means and measures to solve this social problem.

The Universe :

The present enquiry is directed to assess the degree of adjustment of 122 Odia tribal female migrants of Subdega, Birmitrapur and Jaraikela, Bhalulata areas of Odisha state and Odia speaking people of Simdega & Manoharpur areas of the neighbouring state of Jharkhand. The areas of my investigation in New Delhi includes Kailash Colony, Greater Kailash Phase- I and II, Hari Ngar, Tilak Nagar, Maya Puri and Janakpuri. The Odia Tribal migrated communities are Munda, Khadia, Santal, Oram, Ho etc. New Delhi as the national capital and an old trade centre attracted people from far and near to come over here to fulfill their various needs. In the process of our study we have also tried to examine what elements

of local culture they have internalized and what have they retained from their pre-migrant cultural fabrics.

For the purpose data were collected, through sampling, interview schedule, case study and participant observation method. Both primary and secondary data were taken into consideration.

Socio-Cultural life

The migrated tribal women have preserved and protected their value system (social, religious, cultural etc.) even after migration at their new place of settlement. Every month they celebrate their traditional tribal festivals or ceremonies and perform tribal cultural programmes at different places. Even they could not remain isolated themselves from non-tribal in the city.

As the migrated tribal women and girls originally belong to different regions they had different pattern of life style. So migrants had to shift from their traditional life style to present local city life. But the migrated women and girls use their mother-tongue (tribal language) for intra-family and intra-community communication even after their migration. It is also observed that all tribal migrated women are able to speak Hindi. So far as the educational attainment of the migrants is concerned, out of 122 respondent 20% women and 08% girls are illiterate. Further it is also revealed that 48% women and 50% girls have education upto 8th Standard. And about 32% migrated tribal women and 42% girls have either matriculation or higher secondary qualifications.

It is also noticed that the immigrants face a number of problems like difficulties in communication in Punjabi and Hariyani languages (Popular in New Delhi), education of children, accommodation, local contacts, adjustment with city life and environment etc. The prime causes of financial, physical and sexual exploitation of immigrants in the city are poverty, lack of awareness, lack of education, lack of good employment opportunities, unorganised nature of labour

force, misunderstanding of local people about free sex in tribal and lack of community support to the victims of sexual exploitation. In order to control this situation Govt. should implement laws properly so that the working condition of this hidden working group can be improved. Of course the Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Women and Child Development, Govt. of India have taken some steps to prevent human trafficking

Findings and Suggestions :

- a. Our findings show that more than 90% respondents have come from impoverished peasant families or who have lost access to natural resources. Further, the study reveals that women workers in unorganised sector have very little or no access to social security, no pension, no health insurance, no fixed place of work, no fixed working hours, lesser wages and no job security.
- b. Verbal abuse, excessive working hours, insufficient food, sleep deprivation etc are their common problems despite the Unorganised Sector Workers Social Security Act 2008 is in operation.
- c. The state sees migrants as a low priority because migrant workers are vulnerable with little support from civil society.
- d. Laws and regulations concerning working conditions of migrants are largely ineffective. Legislation fails because regulatory authorities are over-stretched.
- e. People migrate either to extract surplus or to have a survival. Those who migrate in search of a living adjust sooner than others. The finding of the study shows that 72% of girl migrants adjust sooner than women migrants.

- f. Those who have migrated since long are expected to have more adjustability with the local socio-cultural life than recent migrants (68%).
- g. The tribal migrant women are living with acute poverty because they themselves or other earning members in their families are either unemployed or underemployed. So in order to solve this problem, it is necessary to provide basic educational facilities alongwith hectic efforts of vocational guidance and training for development of their skills with a view to improve development to improve their potential for livelihood in public and private sector organizations.
- h. Immigrants of younger generation are better adjusted than those of the older generation.
- i. The degree of satisfaction of immigrants in he host society is found better as it is directly related to the level of adjustment.
- j. And lastly mutual cooperation and adjustment of immigrants with the local population has helped to raise their socio-economic status.

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