



C. P, Resmi¹

K. B, Vineetha²

Kuriyakose, Sheeja³

A. Rajalakshmi⁴

Jhon, Shereena⁵

MIGRATION AND WORKLIFE: QUALITY OF WORKLIFE OF MIGRANT LABOUR IN PLYWOOD INDUSTRY IN INDIA

Abstract:

Migration plays a pivotal role in the work culture of many lives. In most cases it creates a positive effect on the quality of work life of labourers especially in industrial sector. This positive vibe leads to an effective growth towards manufacturing sectors especially in plywood industries. In this paper the researcher tries to analyses the quality of work life of migrant workers in plywood industries and was surveyed migrant workers in Kerala, India.

A pre-tested semi-structured questionnaire was used for the responds collection and a total of 250 migrant workers have been interviewed. From the study it was concluded that the migration process brought out significant changes to their quality of life.

Keywords:

Migration; Migrant Labour; Plywood Industry; Quality Of Work Life; Employment

Author's data:

¹Dr. Resmi C.P- Assistant Professor & Head- Department of Economics, Jain (Deemed-to-be-University), India. Email id: c.resmi@jainuniversity.ac.in Ph: 9400177044

²Vineetha K B- Assistant Professor- Department of Economics- Mar Thoma College Chungathara, Malappuram, Kerala, India

³ Dr. Sheeja Kuriyakose, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Political Science Baselius College Kottayam, Kerala Mob: 9446370159. E-mail: sheejakuriyakose@gmail.com

⁴Rajalakshmi A- Assistant Professor, Department of Economics- Government College Kottayam- Kerala, India

⁵Shereena Jhon- Assistant professor, Department of Commerce- St. Xavier's for Women - Aluva- Kerala India

Introduction

Migration is the movement of people away from their customary residence, whether across an international border or inside a country. People can either choose to migrate (voluntary migration) or are compelled to migrate (involuntary migration). Internal migration can occur when people move within a state, country or continent and the external migration occurs when a person or group of people immigrate to a country from another country. The study of movement of people helps in understanding the different aspects of the society in a better way [5]. It helps in understanding the various changes in social group, social interaction, culture and many other challenges.

According to Weinberg (1977), "Human migration is the changing of the place of abode permanently or, temporarily, for an appreciable duration as e.g in the case of seasonal workers. It is used symbolically in the transition from one surrounding to another in the course of human life" [1]. Lee (1966) defines migration, "As a permanent or semi- permanent change of residence. No restriction is put upon the voluntary and the involuntary nature of the act, and no distinction is made between external and internal migration" [2]. Usually, migration extends to a place where industry and opportunities for employment increase in size and in different way, it is the exodus of people over distances to a place to settle permanently or temporarily [7]. One of the unique characteristics of labour market in India is

its migratory character and assumes great contribution in Indian's GDP contribution [10].

Migration in India emerged from the consequence of unequal development where in people from 'backward' regions move to fast growing developed regions. These developed regions may either be metropolitan cities or the expanding urban areas where the people from the regions will get better employment and income opportunities flock [12]. The state has been witnessing large inflow of migrant laborers not only from the Neighboring States of Tamilnadu and Karnataka but also from States in East India. (West Bengal, Orissa), North India (Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Uttarakhand), Northeast (Assam, Manipur) [6],[11] The inter-state migrant workers coming to Kerala were pushed out of their native places because of several reasons such as low wages and unemployment or underemployment in agriculture and another sector. Rapid growth of Kerala economy and the increase in activities particularly in infrastructure and construction sectors, the in-migration is expected to grow faster in the coming year [3]. A study by Surabhi K.S and N. Ajithkumar (2007) on 'Labour Migration to Kerala; A Study of Tamil Migrant Labors to Kochi'. According to them the migrant laborers get much higher monetary wages than in their native places. But they work for longer hours and their real wages may be lower as they have to incur higher cost of living in Kochi on shelter, food and transport. They live in shanty houses/rooms in slum like localities often on a sharing basis. Most of the migrants have limited access to better sanitation facilities and quality healthcare environment. Their nature of job, living

atmosphere and life routine make them suffer from a number of diseases. But their access to basic Public Services like better health and basic education is limited and also, they enjoyed very limited protection from labor laws. They also face several challenges of social integration in Kerala. Recent studies reported that large number of human rights violations with the possibility of much larger influx in view of the largescale expansion of economic activities in the state, the migrants can put heavy pressure on urban infrastructure, environment and public services. They may also face many challenges in governance particularly of urban areas. Our study highlights the strong case for a much larger multidisciplinary study on this emerging phenomenon in the state.

Daniel Richard Vernazza in his study 'Essays on the Causes of Migration' (2012) gives a clear framework of the determinants of migration. The study mainly consists of 3 chapters. The first chapter explains the importance of relative income in migration choice. In the second chapter, the author examines that return migration is optimal, and to create an incentive for return migration, the model assumes 3 key variables: initial wealth, income differential between the origin and destination, compensating differentials such as place attachment, unemployment, and price level between the source and destination. According to the study, those people with more wealth are more likely to return than those with low wealth. The final chapter identifies some key obstacles of migration such as emotional bonds towards the place, attachment to the motherland, etc.

The Kerala migration survey 2007 observes that the unemployment rate in Kerala has declined to 12.29% in 2007. From the history we can noticed that labour out migration did not create any major problems in labour market in Kerala in the early phase, but in the last two decades Kerala's labour Market has faced some problems [4]. The continuous large scale out migration of labour has created scarcity of semi-skilled and unskilled workers in almost all sectors in the state. At the same time, the foreign remittances have created real estate and construction sector boom in Kerala, leading to huge demand for certain categories of workers, such as carpenters, welders, plumbers, drivers, electrician, motor mechanics, and other craftsmen. The shortage of workforce in Kerala resulted in-migration to Kerala after a break about 60 years since the 1960's [13]. In the light of the present migration scenario, there is an urgent need to address the quality of work life of migrant labour in Kerala. The present study aims to analyse the work life of migrant workers in plywood industry in Ernakulam. The course of the study following questions are to be addressed.

1. What is the opinion of migrant labour towards the working conditions of plywood industry?
2. What is the attitude of migrant labour towards the infrastructure conditions available in the plywood industry?

Objectives of the Study

Based on the research questions pointed out above, the present study, "Quality of Work life of

Migrant Labour in Plywood Industry” has the following objectives.

1. To identify the migrant labour opinion on the working conditions of plywood industry.
2. To assess the attitude of migrant labour towards the infrastructure conditions available in the plywood industry.

Methodology of the Study

This is an empirical study using descriptive statistics. The data for the research were collected from both secondary and primary sources. The project is based on the primary data collected from the Migrant workers in Ernakulum district of Kerala, India. The selection of district is based on the concentration of In-migrant workers especially in plywood industrial areas of Ernakulam district. The study conducted with the help of the local people to find out the areas where the migrant workers have been working and the places where they have been living. Data has been collected by visiting both the places i.e., either working sites or residence whichever found convenient. In case of conducting interviews in working places we discussed with the employer/contractor under whom the workers have been working to identify the workers who would like to give their interview and schedule the most convenient date and time for interview so that their work would not be affected by the process of interview. A total of 250 Migrants workers have been interviewed by using a pre-tested semi-structured questionnaire [14]. Data from secondary sources also used for the study. Secondary data were collected from

International Migration Reports, journals, books and publications related to Kerala Migration Report etc.

The study deals with the socio-economic conditions of migrant labour in the plywood industry and also identifies the push and pull factors of migrant labour to the plywood industry. It also proves the impact of push and pull factors of migration on the quality of work life of migrant labour in the plywood industry. In this context the migrant labour opinion about the working and infrastructure conditions and also employer’s view on the impact of migrant labour in the development of plywood industry are studied. For the current study, Perumbavoor has been selected because 1) Perumbavoor is the plywood centre of Kerala, 2) the people are more enterprising in the non-farm activities than farm activities, 3) studies are not available on the impact of the migrant workers of plywood industry in Perumbavoor.

Results and Discussion

Profile of the Study:

Education level of workers is very poor. 28% of people have no formal schooling and 68 % of people have primary schooling and only 4% of people have secondary school education. It shows that their society or family didn’t encourage education. This family wasn’t able to find sufficient money for them to study, so they went for work and finally found job in Kerala. Majority of the respondents reveals that the reason for their migration is they are getting high wages and job opportunities in Kerala. Regarding the response towards the living condition, 6% of peoples living

in one room and 54% of people room shared with others and 40% of people house shared with others, this is because of the reason that the contractor arrange their housing facility.

Migrant labour View on the Working and Infrastructure Conditions

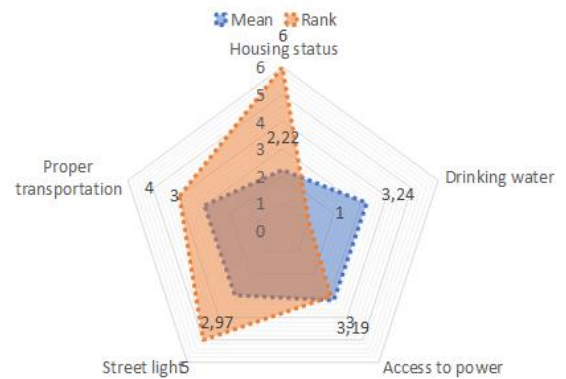
Indicators of Accommodation	Mean	Rank
Housing status	2.22	6
Drinking water	3.24	1
Access to power	3.19	3
Street light	2.97	5
Proper transportation	3.00	4
Access to essential commodity shop	3.21	2
Ration shop	2.01	7

Source: Computed from Primary Data

Table 1 - Mean Score Regarding the Migrant Labour View on the Accommodation and Infrastructure

Table 1 shows that migrant labour view on the accommodation. It is found that migrant labour agree with the drinking water facility (3.24), access to essential commodity shop (3.22), electricity (3.09) and proper road access (3.00) provided by the plywood industry. At the same time, it is found that the migrant labour are not satisfied with housing facilities (2.22), street light (2.97) and the facility of buying things from ration shop (3.00).

MIGRANT LABOUR VIEW ON THE ACCOMMODATION INFRASTRUCTURE



Source: Computed from Primary Dana

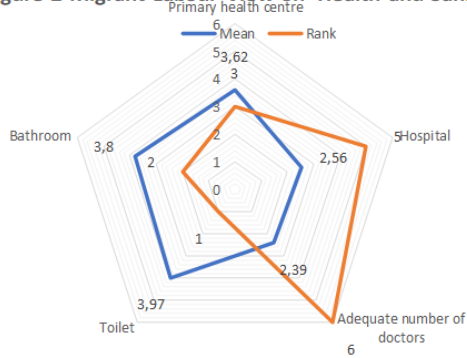
In the figure 1 it was concluded that the migrant labour are highly satisfied with the clean drinking water facility and least satisfied with the facility of buying things from ration shop.

Indicators of Health and Sanitation	Mean	Rank
Primary health center	3.62	3
Hospital	2.56	5
Adequate number of doctors	2.39	6
Toilet	3.97	1
Bathroom	3.80	2
Medical shop	3.22	4

Source: Computed from Primary Dana

Table 2 indicates the migrant labour view on health and sanitation. It is found that migrant labour agree with the toilet facility (3.97), bathroom facility (3.80), primary health center facility (3.62) and nearby medical shops (3.22) provided by the plywood industry. At the same time, it is found that they are not satisfied with hospital facility (2.56) and the availability of adequate number of doctors in case of urgency (2.39).

Figure 2-Migrant Labour View on Health and Sanitation



Source: Computed from Primary Dana

Figure 2 concluded that the migrant labourers are highly satisfied with the toilet facility and least satisfied with the adequate number of doctors in case of urgency.

Indicators of Communication	Mean	Rank
Telephone	3.34	1
Post office	3.07	3
Newspaper	2.05	6
Bank	2.47	4
Bus and vehicles	3.16	2
Police station	2.24	5

Source: Computed from Primary Data

Table 3-Mean Score Regarding the Migrant Labour View on the Communication

Table 3 shows that the migrant labour view on the communication facilities. It is found that migrant labour agrees with the telephone facility (3.34), and post office (3.07) provided by the plywood industry. At the same time, it is found that they are not satisfied with police station facility (2.24), bank facility (2.47) and the newspaper availability in their local language (2.05). Hence it is concluded that the migrant labourers are highly satisfied

with the telephone facility and least satisfied with the newspaper availability in their local language.

Indicators of Education	Mean	Rank
Primary school	1.34	1
Secondary & Higher secondary school	1.07	2
College	1.05	3
Library	1.00	4

Source: Computed from Primary Dana

Table 4: Mean Score Regarding the Migrant Labour View on the Education

Table 4 indicates that migrant labour view on the education. It is found that migrant labour are not at all satisfied with the education facilities provided by the plywood industry to their children. The opinion indicators for primary school facilities is 1.34 for secondary & higher secondary school 1.07 for college 1.05 and for the library 1.00.

Indicators of Entertainment	Mean	Rank
Cinema Theater	3.64	2
Television/ Cable Connection	3.07	3
Hotel	4.05	1

Source: Computed from Primary Data

Table 5: Mean Score Regarding the Migrant Labour View on the Entertainment

Table 5 indicates the migrant labour view on the different types of entertainment. It is found that they are highly satisfied with the entertainment indicators nearby the plywood industry such as hotel (4.05), Cinema Theater (3.64) and the television/ cable connection (3.07).

Findings and suggestions:

It is found that migrant labourers are satisfied with the clean drinking water facility (3.34), vegetables, fruits and grocery shop (3.22), electricity (3.09) and proper road access (3.00) provided by the plywood industry. At the same time, it is found that they are not satisfied with a concrete housing (2.12), street lighting (2.01) and the facility of buying things from ration shops (2.97). It is identified that migrant labour are satisfied with the toilet facility (3.97), bathroom facility (3.80), primary health Centre facility (3.62) and medical facilities (3.22) provided by the plywood industry. At the same time, it is found that they are not satisfied with hospital facility (2.56) and the availability of adequate number of doctors in case of emergency (2.39).

It is clear that migrant labour are satisfied with the telephone facility (3.34), bus and vehicle facility (3.80) and post office (3.07) provided by the plywood industry. At the same time, it is found that they are not satisfied with the police station facility (2.24), bank facility (2.47) and the newspaper availability in their local language (2.05).

It is found that migrant labourers are not at all satisfied with the education indicators provided by the plywood industry such as primary school (1.34), secondary and higher secondary school (1.07), college (1.05) and library (1.00). The study shows that migrant labour are highly satisfied with the entertainment indicators nearby the plywood industry such as hotels (4.05), Cinema theaters (3.64) and television/ cable connection (3.07).

It is recommended that the migrant labour of the study area should be given top priority in the National Insurance Scheme launched by the Central Government in the 2015-16 Budget. This scheme aims to bring under its purview nearly 10 crore families as its beneficiaries. It is recommended that on a priority basis the State Government and Local bodies should bring these persons and their families under this scheme. Further, the State government should make necessary amendment in the rules to provide the migrant labour with ration cards. This would enable them to get the essentials at subsidized rates which also improve their quality of life.

It is further recommended that a national platform for registering such workers has to be developed. Aadhar should be provided to all these workers, so that they can access the welfare schemes of Central and State Governments. The district panchayat, the local bodies and related institutions should be entrusted with this responsibility in the rural areas and urban local bodies in the urban areas. Such a platform would also help the authorities to get a clear idea about the migrant labour and give them due recognition. It is concluded that the migration process brought out significant changes to their quality of life. So there must be a continuous institutional support for migrant labour from the central and state governments, industry associations and various NGO's. Through an effective supporting system, migrant labour can create tremendous positive spread effects in the Kerala economy.

References

- [1] Quigley, J. M. & Weinberg, D. H. (1977). Intra-urban residential mobility: a review and synthesis. *International Regional Science Review*, 2(1), 41-66. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02F016001767700200104>
- [2] Lee, E. S. (1966). A theory of migration. *Demography*, 3(1), 47-57. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2060063>
- [3] Narayana, D. & Venkiteswaran, C. S. (2013). Domestic Migrant Labour in Kerala. Labour and Rehabilitation Department and Gulati Institute of Finance and Taxation, Government of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram. <http://www.lc.kerala.gov.in/images/Current/ismstudy.pdf>
- [4] Meena, M. (2013). Rural labour outmigration in Theni district determinants and economic impact among migrant workers in Cardamom estates. Retrived from <http://www.shodganga.inflibnet.ac.in/hdl.handle.net/10603/6674>
- [5] Kaur, A. (2008). International migration and governance in Malaysia: Policy and performance. *UNEAC Asia Papers*, 22, 4-18. Retrived from <http://www.inflibnet.shodganga.in>
- [6] Report of National Sample Survey Organisation of India, 2011. <https://catalog.ihsn.org/catalog/3281>
- [7] Tiwari, I. P. (2008). Urban migration and urbanization in Nepal. *Asia-Pacific Population Journal*, 23(1), retrived from <http://www.shodganga.inflibnet/hdl/handle.net/10603/6674>
- [8] Rao, N. (2010). Migration, education and socio-economic mobility. Retrived from <http://www.shodganga.inflibnet/hdl/handle.net/10603/6674>
- [9] Hussain, M. (2005). Measuring migrant remittances: from the perspective of the European Commission. *World Bank Int. Tech. Meet. Meas. Migr. Remit.*, Jan, 24-25, retrived from <http://www.instats.un.org>
- [10] Deshingkar, P. (2006). Internal migration, poverty and development in Asia. ODI Briefing Paper, 11., retrived from <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12134-012-0241-9>
- [11] Mishra, R. R., & Reddy, A. R. (2005). Factors Affecting Migration from Rural Bihar. *Economic Affairs (Calcutta)*, 50(2), 98.
- [12] De Haan, A. (1999). Livelihoods and poverty: The role of migration-a critical review of the migration literature. *The journal of development studies*, 36(2), 1-47. Retrieved from url <http://mpa.ub.uni-muenchen.de/35943>
- [13] Benoy Peter. & Vishnu Narendran. (2016). Migration Profile of Kerala, retrieved from <http://www.cmid.org.in>
- [14] Krejcie, R. V. & Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and psychological measurement*, 30(3), 607-610