

# Migration of Tribal Women: Human Rights Deprivation

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**Abstract – Migration is a complex issue which cannot be stopped. The migrants who work out of their locations face lot of oppression and rights violation in regards to work allocation, economic, socio and political aspects. If the migrants are women their problems are inexpressible and sometimes beyond to address. The indigenous women who are left in the dark, forced to endure extreme poverty. They live in politically unstable and geographically remote regions where there is a lack of adequate education, infrastructure, and healthcare. Migration from one area to another in search of improved livelihoods is a key feature of human history. Migration tends to be seen as problematic, when it comes to women it is very hard to accept and cope-up. The study had conducted in Bastar Block in Chhattisgarh to find out the status of the migrants.**

**Keywords: Tribal Migration, Women, Human Rights, Deprivation**

## I. INTRODUCTION

Women, like men, migrate for a variety of different reasons and follow a wide range of migratory trajectories. However, the obstacles and dangers to migration may be different for women, with additional sources of insecurities related to gendered inequalities in their economic, social and political situation [1]. Migration from one area to another in search of improved livelihoods is a key feature of human history. Migration tends to be seen as problematic, when it comes to women it is very hard to accept and cope-up.

The indigenous women who are left in the dark, forced to endure extreme poverty. They live in politically unstable and geographically remote regions where there is a lack of adequate education, infrastructure, and healthcare. Migration is influenced both by the pattern of development [2] and the social structure. Because of these reasons, they are forced to migrate for better livelihoods and for other social services.

The women basically thinks about their children and work for them. Chopra and Gulati found a significant positive relationship between land degradation and out-migration [3].

Many young indigenous women find themselves in a “no man’s land” between the urban societies that do not fully accept them and their indigenous communities that often fail to offer them the opportunities they need and desire. “The forced displacement of many indigenous communities by development projects is resulting in extreme impoverishment and contributing to urban drift. In the cities, indigenous peoples suffer major disparities in all measurable areas such as lower wages, lack of employment, skills and education; poor health, housing and criminal convictions. They live in poor human settlements outside the support of traditional community and culture.” [4] Earlier studies have shown that poor households participate extensively in migration [5]. The governments cannot control the migration and it is not predicted. Some of the Push and Pull factors motivates the people to migrate from their locations. For migrant people, providing access to health and education facilities seems crucial as recognition of the contribution and rights of migrants [6].

Most migrant labourers are also employed in the unorganized sector, where the lack of regulation compounds their vulnerability. The nature of migrant women’ work, which is individual and contract-based, makes it difficult for them to demand fair and legal wages. Migrant workers predominate in the lower income labour market with higher risks of exposure to unsafe working conditions [7]. Moreover the Employers prefer to employ migrant labour with lower wages and they are steadily replacing local labourers [8]. Women’s income from migration tends to be worse than men’s [9]. Labour migration is complex. Streams differ in duration, origin, destination and migrant characteristics.

Economic and social impacts on migrants and their families are variable. Migration often involves longer working hours, poor living and working conditions, social isolation and poor access to basic amenities. These conditions evince a sense of insecurity among the tribal migrants. The employer plays vital role in providing employment for migrant people. The tribal women face violation of rights in social, ethical, economical and culture. Migrant tribal women have to leave their culture and adopt new culture where they have been employed and women and teenage girls living in these circumstances ran a high risk of sexual abuse [10].

The migration of unorganized sector faces numerous problems which they cannot evince. Most of the women migrants face moral and economic problems, housemaids and construction workers making up most of the victims [11]. Similarly, protection of human rights among the unorganized sector especially women is very hard. The physical, emotional and psychological wellbeing of migrants is put under serious jeopardy due to health concerns. This refers to those suffering from forced labour, sexual exploitation and those separated from family members. The World Health Organization has discussed the issue of human displacement at length, referring to it as a top global public health priority. Similarly, Human Rights Watch has exposed the overcrowded and unhygienic living arrangements of migrants, correlating it with the spread of disease [12].

Deprivation against women takes multiple forms, and occurs in a wide variety of different contexts: including within the family, in the workplace, in state institutions. Similarly, there are a wide variety of agents of deprivation, including both persons related to or known to a woman and strangers. Deprivation can include physical assault, rape or sexual violence, harassment, emotional and psychological violence. Women who migrate as dependents of their husbands under family reunification are particularly vulnerable to physical and psychological violence and are often dissuaded from making formal complaints because of linguistic barriers, family pressure, isolation, cultural traditions or discrimination practiced by police officers in charge [13].

## II. STUDY SETTING

For the purpose of the study, three Adivasi villages were selected from Lohindiguda Block, Bastar Region in Chhattisgarh state. The respondents migrate from November to June from their respective villages and return in the month of July for agriculture works. The respondents stay up to

November till Harvest season and sell their crops. 100 women were purposively selected those who went for migration and preparing to migrate from Kumhali, Belar, Takraguda and Chindgoan, from each village 25 sample were selected.

## III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

A study was carried out in Bastar Block in Chhattisgarh to realize the following objectives:

1. To assess the socio, economic and political situation of the tribal women;
2. To study the factors involved for migration of tribal women from the tribal areas to various towns and cities in search of employment;
3. To study the type of Socio-economic opportunities the migrant women are engaged in the areas where they migrate;
4. To investigate into the type and level of violation of human rights in relation to moral, physical and economic aspects;
5. To suggest various ways and means for improving the socio-economic condition of tribal women and empower them.

## IV. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The present study evidently proved that a majority of the respondents (31.59%) were migrated for Hyderabad and 21.52% of the respondents migrated for Visakhapatnam. Rest of the respondents migrated for Vijayawada (14.73%), Raipur (13.91%) and Khammam (11.41%) in that order.

TABLE I PLACES TO MIGRATE

Location	Per cent (n=100)
Bilaspur	6.84
Hyderabad	31.59
Visakhapatnam	21.52
Vijayawada	14.73
Raipur	13.91
Khammam (Bhadrachalam, Manuguru and Nearby villages)	11.41

The data accentuated that 33.41 % of the respondents were in 21-25 age group and more than one fifths of the respondents (21.59%) were in 26-30 age group. A significant number (19.32%) were in 15-20 age group. 15.59 % were in 31-40

and 11.09 % were in those age groups. The study evidently brought out that the productive age group is migrating. As regards the education a majority of the respondents (56.19%) were could complete primary education and more than one fourth of the respondents were illiterates and a significant number of respondents (14.43%) completed high school education. More than half of the respondents (53.76%) respondents were unmarried and 27.96 % of the respondents were married. An overwhelming fact is that 13.94 % of the respondents were separated.

TABLE II SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

Variable	Per cent (n=100)
Age	
15-20	19.32
21-25	33.41
26-30	21.59
31-40	15.59
40>	11.09
Educational	
Illiterate	27.59
1 <sup>st</sup> – 5 <sup>th</sup> Class	56.19
6 <sup>th</sup> – 10 <sup>th</sup> class	14.43
10 <sup>th</sup> >	1.79
Marital Status	
Married	27.96
Unmarried	53.76
Widow	1.13
Divorced	3.21
Separated	13.94

The above table depicts the occupations of the respondents’ of pre and post migration. A majority of the respondents (63.75%) were engaged in Agriculture and Daily labour in their respective villages in pre migration period, whereas 48.71% of the respondents were engaged as daily labourers. A significant number of the respondents were working for constructed field (30.62), Sweepers (9.54%) and servant maids (6.43%) in that order. A heart burning fact revealed that 1.14 % of the respondents were forced to adopt sex work due to various reasons. Pre migration 18.34 % of the respondents was engaged in agriculture work.

The data revealed that a majority of the respondents (35.55%) was earned below Rs. 10000/- and 23.29 % of the respondents were earning between Rs.10001/- to 15000/- prior to migration. Whereas, 58.78 % of the respondents

income has been increased from Rs.10001 to 25000/-. One fourths of the respondents expressed that they were earning between Rs. 25001/- to 45000/-.

TABLE III TYPE OF OCCUPATION

Pre Migration	Percent (n=100)	Post Migration	Per cent (n=100)
Agriculture	18.34	Construction Workers	30.62
Agriculture and Daily Labour	63.75	Daily Labour (Hamali / Porters / Imber Depot etc)	48.71
Petty Business	2.3	Sweepers (Private offices, Hospitals, Lodges etc.)	9.54
Collection of Forest Products	7.09	Servant Maids	6.43
Rearing of Livestock	8.52	Sales	3.56
-	-	Forced sex workers	1.14

TABLE IV ANNUAL INCOME

Income in Rs (Per Annum)	% (n=100)	
	Before Migration	After Migration
10,000 and below	35.55	5.65
10,001 to 15,000	23.29	28.37
15,001 to 25,000	15.95	30.41
25,001 to 35,000	11.27	15.78
35,001 to 45,000	8.86	11.23
45,001 above	5.08	8.56

The data revealed that a majority of the respondents (37.61%) were migrated for better income and 24.11% of the respondents expressed they migrated for better employment. The data also accentuated that migrating for Good services (12.54%) and Good living conditions (8.33%). Whereas, 11.51%, 5.9% of the respondents migrating due to communal riots and problems with the neighbors.

TABLE V FACTORS PROMOTING MIGRATION

Factors	% (n=100)
Better Income	37.61
Better Employment	24.11
Good services (Health / Education)	12.54
Communal Riots (Between Tribes / Maoist)	11.51
Good Living Conditions	8.33
Problems with Neighbors	5.9

It can be seen from the above table that a majority of the respondents (88.57%) stated that they were unaware of human rights. Those who have awareness on human rights stated that getting fair wage, Education and health services are the human rights.

The data revealed that 97.0% of the respondents accentuated that violation of rights happening while in the migration. As regards the type of violation, 51.62% of the respondents opined that the migrant workers paid low

TABLE VI AWARENESS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Variable	Per cent (n=100)
Awareness on Human Rights	
Yes	11.43
No	88.57
If Yes, state the Rights (n=11)*	
Right to live dignified life	27.00
Right to get fair wage	93.00
Right to get Education and Health services	83.00
Right to work any where	33.00

wages and significant respondents (19.43%) stated that the employer paid late payments. A majority of the respondents (87.73%) expressed that they have no paid holidays, even suffering with health problems and no maternity leave for the migrant worker. An overwhelming fact that 73.62% of the respondents opined sexual harassment and usage of obscene language (15.97%) faced during migration.

TABLE VII VIOLATION OF RIGHTS

Variable	Per cent (n=100)
Violation of Rights	
Yes	97.00
No	3.00
If Yes, Type of violation	
Work Related (n=97)	
Low wages for Migrants	51.62
Assigns hard work to Migrants	13.51
Long Hours	15.44
Late payments for Migrant workers	19.43
Health Related (n=69)	
No paid Holidays, even suffering with Health problems	87.73
No Maternity leave	12.27
Ethical (n=82)	
Sexual Harassment	73.62
Usage of obscene language	15.97
Lustful Touch	10.41

The above table revealed that a majority of the respondents (29.86%) opined that they faced long working hour's problem and 14.39% of the respondents expressed housing problems. Rest of the respondents stated that Health (11.96%), Transportation (11.59%), Language (11.24%), Freedom (7.35%) were in that order.

Most of the respondents opined that during the migration women are very vulnerable and sexual harassment is prevalent in that phase and moreover no time for recreational activities

and to take rest. A majority of the respondents expressed that human rights are violated during the migration phase. The respondents expressed that the employer gives unfair wages for migrant workers and due to away from kith and kin they feel depressed and loneliness. During the migration there was difficulty in upbringing of children and health is at stake in alien place.

TABLE VIII PROBLEMS FACED

Problems	Per cent (n=100)
Health	11.96
Financial	5.32
Language	11.24
Long Working Hours	29.86
Freedom	7.35
Housing	14.39
Transportation (Long Hours journey to work Place)	11.59
Food Habits	4.50
Traditions and Cultural Problems	3.79

TABLE IX OPINIONS

Statement	% (N=)		
	Agree	Disagree	No Idea
Human Rights are violated	83.79	14.39	1.82
Women are very vulnerable during Migration	95.89	4.11	0
Sexual harassment is prevalent	91.24	8.76	0
Unfair wages for migrant workers	78.36	19.49	2.15
Health is at stake in alien place	67.94	27.89	4.17
Difficulty in upbringing of children	73.39	19.67	6.94
Insufficient time for recreational activities	93.48	3.52	3.00
Feeling loneliness	69.35	15.26	15.39
Feeling depressed in absence of kith and kin	75.83	15.78	8.39
Insufficient time to rest	89.29	10.71	0

### V. DISCUSSION

The study evidently brought out the migrant characters and most of the respondents stated that they go to Andhra Pradesh in searching of work and mostly they prefer Hyderabad for work because multi occupations are available and cost of living is cheaper than other areas.

Most of the respondents were from productive age group and most of them could complete primary education. The majority of the respondents were unmarried and separated due to various reasons. The separated women stated that, for their betterment and life threat they adopted migration. Significantly, the tribal women migrants are facing grater difficulties in getting married because of the migration.

The grooms will give least preference to migrant girls. If at all they get married their family is not smooth sail. Pre migration a majority of the respondents were depended on agriculture and traditional livelihoods directly or indirectly and post migration most of the respondents were settled as labourers in unorganized sectors. Before migration most of the respondents were earning below ten thousand rupees and after migration the respondents could earn little more income i.e. between Rs 10000/- to 25000/-.

A majority of the respondents adopted migration for better income and jobs. Indeed, other conditions like good education and health services are promoting them to go on migration. A factor that promoting migration is Maoism which is playing vital role in some of the respondents. The respondents opined that their inability to stay in the village due to fear from Maos and police too. As regards the human rights awareness a majority of the respondents stated that they were unaware of it. The respondents shared that there were no any person to make aware of the human rights. The respondents expressed that right to get fair wage, education and health are the human rights. The women are expressed that they are in jeopardy getting these rights in and around the vicinity. The women opined that not only basic needs like food, shelter and clothing, dignified life also is more important but this is not possible for poor and those who migrate.

In the name of rights protection many governments formed the governments and stated rights violation of adivasis. The respondents expressed that the government strategies or policies are favourable to them they would not migrate to other locations for livelihoods and other security reasons. "As we go on migration we have to be live bonded labour" a respondent expressed like that. A majority of the respondents stated that during the migration definitely rights will be violated. The employer pays low wages for migrant workers because these workers cannot question for the fair wages. The migrant workers have to wait for the wages for a longer period and work for longer hours. The migrant workers are employer's boon and make money on them. If at all, the migrant workers fall in sick there will be no paid leave if they want money they have to work. In case of maternity the women will suffer one year without money and good food. The women have to leave their work and joins after delivery. The respondents expressed that "in the name of earning we are neglecting our infant kids" this is also one of the child rights violation.

Sexual harassment is one of the most common human rights violations during the migration period. The respondents stated that all of them were faced sexual harassment. Most of the employer's use obscene language and touches the private parts with malicious intentions. The respondents expressed that there were unwed mothers during migration. In the absence of attention from parents and guardians the women migrant labourers used to come in sexual contact of these outsiders leading to illegal pregnancy etc. In many cases the outsiders use these ladies as kept with false promise of marriage and leave them alone while changing place of jobs. In this way the numbers of destitute are increasing in the flock. Illegal sex no doubt lead to STD/HIV/AIDS and the rate of prostitution also expected to go up. The employers engage migrant workers longer time in work due to their inability the respondents did not question them since they are in sensitive stage. Housing is one of the biggest problems in migration period they have to live under the flyovers, railways stations, Bus stands and foot paths. In the rainy and winter seasons their problems were inexpressible.

#### VI. RECOMMENDATION

1. MGNREGA is one of the program we can reduce the migration but still the migration is going on the MGNREGA should increase from 100 to 150 days and wage should be given as per the price index.
2. The Inter State Migrant Workmen (Regulation and Conditions of Service) Act, 1979 should be changed as per the need of the hour.
3. The women should be given maternity benefits by the government for those who migrated. At least six months period they must be given a minimum wage.
4. A registry should be maintained by the local labour department for migrant workers for tracking purpose.
5. A separate Act should be enacted for the Tribal women migrants for their protection and development.

#### VII. CONCLUSION

The field study, literature research and numerous interviews with individuals and civil society organisations highlighted issues related to tribal women migration and problems, and suggested solutions, with regard to women migrant workers from selected villages from Bastar Region in Chhattisgarh. The tribal women migration is compact and

uncontrolled. But the governments should concentrate on the protection of their rights in and outside of their villages. Though abuse and exploitation have been part of women's migration experience, yet, it also contributed to their empowerment as long as the rights are not violated.

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