








# Effects of labor out-migration on socio-economic set-up at the place of origin: Evidence from rural India

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## Abstract

The rural to urban migration of poor labor to cope with poverty is a common household strategy in rural India and is socio-economically and culturally accepted. Migration can bring some economic gain through remittances, but it also becomes a pain for migrants themselves, their family and the local economy at the origin. In this context, the present paper aims to study the effect of labor out-migration on the socio-economic set up at the place of origin. Based on the primary data of 200 households, the study found that, although the economic condition of the family is improved, the absence of father adversely affects the education and behavior of left-behind children. The wives of the migrant mainly faced security problems and increased workload in the household and farm activities. The study also found that migration might reduced labor supply and decreases farm output due to high wage and input cost. However, agricultural productivity can later increase through compensation by the reinvestment of remittances as farm inputs by the migrant.

## Introduction

Mobility is an integral part of human existence (Crawford and Campbell, 2015, Datta, 2004). Due to the uneven distribution of natural resources over the space, migration from one area to another in search of improved livelihoods is a key feature of human history (Gray and Bilsborrow, 2014, Gartaula et al., 2012, Aspects, 2010). Besides other nations, India experienced a long history of migration through the emergence of human civilization in Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro. In India, internal migration of labor is strongly persisting even in the modern period (Mahapatro, 2012). Internal mobility or migration is a critical component of economic growth and development as it enables the relocation of labor from labor surplus to labor demand regions which leads to more productive opportunities across sectors and regions (Kone et al., 2016).

There have been continuous debates on migration and development in a pendulum since the beginning of the nineteenth century (De Haas, 2010). Until 1972 CE, 'Optimistic Views' in migration and development was persisted wherein neo-classical migration theory perceives migration as a form of optimal allocation of production factors to the benefit of both sending and receiving countries. In this perspective of 'balanced growth', the re-allocation of labor from rural agricultural areas to urban has maintained (Haan, 2006, Lee, 1966). Contrary to this, In the late '60s, a new "Pessimistic views" turned the argument of neo-classical and developmentalist approaches that instead of decreasing, migration was now seen as increasing spatial (inter-region and international) disparities in developmental levels (Lucas, 2007, Todaro, 1980, Enflo et al., 2014). In the 1980s and 1990s, the new economics of labor migration (NELM) emerged as a response to both developmentalist theory ("migration optimists") and structuralist theory ("migration pessimists"). NELM offered a more subtle view, in which both positive and negative development responses were possible (Taylor, 1999). The NELM argues that migration of labor is a household strategy rather than individual decision to cope with household poverty and household livelihood (Stark and Bloom, 1985).

The economic development of industrialized countries was in most cases accompanied