

MASS MIGRATION OF YOUTH FROM PUNJAB TO DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

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Abstract

The most prominent and current problem prevailing in youth of Punjab is the race to go abroad and earn more. The movement of highly qualified, skilled, professional or students from their home country to other countries in order to earn more and raise their standard of living is known as “Brain drain”. Every corner of developed countries like USA, Canada, Europe, UK, etc is not deprived of Punjab’s youth who have already settled there permanently or are on the urge of settlement. This brain drain is the result of high rates of unemployment and underemployment, low wages, bureaucracy, corruption, quota system, increased population, lack of awareness of government policies, dreams of luxurious lives, peer pressure, competition, etc. Punjab which once ranked 1st in the aspects of agriculture and business in India, now ranks 20th. Even Bihar is ahead of Punjab ranking 15th and our neighbor state Haryana ranks 3rd. This research paper reveals the causes of current problem of mass migration of youth from Punjab to developed countries. The data used in this research paper is secondary data which is derived from different journals, magazines, government surveys and reports, economic surveys and publications.

Keywords

Mass migration, Foreign countries, Rural Punjab, Labor, Lifestyle.

1. Introduction

Migration of professionals, skilled, non-skilled personnels from Punjab to other developed countries is rising more and more nowadays. Migration of people from Punjab to various developed countries has been identified into following patterns such as: (1) skilled labor (2) unskilled labor (3) contract based labor. The wave of international migration of people of Punjab to certain developed countries like: US, UK Canada, Europe, UAE, etc is giving high tides to

rural population to move to other countries for living. During 1960's, youth of Punjab moved to these western countries for earning more money & greener pastures. Later on, the oil boom in gulf countries was another attraction for the Punjabi youth to migrate to fulfill their dreams by earning more money. It acted both push and pull for the rural laborers to migrate to these gulf countries for a better living (Dhindsa, 1998). Later on in 1980's, the concept of emigration originated among the rich class of farmers, who started sending their sons to developed countries to marry the girls of the families already settled in developed countries just to get immigration. It was further estimated that among 20 million Indian people settling abroad, 10%-15% of people were Punjabis. The emigrants who fled from Punjab to other countries like: US, UK, Europe, Canada mainly constituted people of doaba origin (Kaur, 2006:1). This expanding trend of Punjabis settling abroad gave a boom to the development process. With the money transferred from these developed countries to their families residing in punjab gave a pace of facilities & a technological upgradation. Punjab was on the path of becoming the healthiest state of the country. Many wealthy Punjabis have contributed a lot to the infrastructure of the Punjab by opening charitable schools, hospitals, shelter homes & other social facilities. Furthermore, remittances of these Punjabis were estimated at \$ 2-3 million per year contributing to the enrichment and development of the state (Singh 2001:20, World Bank 2004:2). The data used in this research paper is secondary data which is derived from different journals, magazines, government surveys and reports, economic surveys and publications.

1.1 Objectives of the study

1. To understand the concept of migration from Punjab to various countries.
2. To understand the causes of migration.
3. To know the after affects of migration from Punjab.

2. Review Literature

According to Dhindsa, 1998, the oil boom in gulf countries was another attraction for the Punjabi youth to migrate to fulfill their dreams by earning more money. It acted both push and pull for the rural laborers to migrate to these gulf countries for a better living.

According to Sasikumar & Hussain, 2008, it has been well-recognized that migration of people from Punjab to other countries has been beneficial for the development of both their home country as well as their host country.

As per Singh 2001:20, World Bank 2004:2, remittances of these Punjabis were estimated at \$ 2-3 million per year contributing to the enrichment and development of the state.

According to a report by World Bank, 2011, the top migration destinations are US, followed by Germany and Europe and gulf countries like Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar, Bahrain have also seen a rise in their migrant flow from Indian states especially Punjab (rural Punjab).

3. Research Methodology

This research is purely descriptive in nature. Only secondary data has been used for this research paper. The secondary data has been derived from various journals, research papers, Wikipedia, publications of organizations, World Bank reports available online, etc. We could rely on secondary data as it is already been approved, published and available for public use and cannot be challenged.

3.1 Limitations of the study

1. This study is just confined to only one state i.e Punjab.
2. This paper only reveals the causes and after effects of migration from Punjab to developed countries.
3. Emigration is a much wider concept which could not be studied in detail in a single research paper.

4 Results and Data Interpretation

4.1 Causes of Migration from Punjab

1. Unemployment in Punjab: Unemployment in Punjab is the one of the most serious issue. Thousands of professionals are graduated from various institutions but due to lack of opportunities, they are forced to migrate to various developed countries. Unemployment rate in Punjab is 22/per 1000 as of 2019.

2. State government policies: State government policies are very harsh and pose a great burden on the people especially business class. If you are an entrepreneur or a businessman, then most of the profit is paid to the government in the form of wealth tax. If you are earning rs100, then rs98 of your earning is paid to government in form of tax and you are only left with rs2 as profit. This leftover profit is insufficient for future growth and development which in turn forces entrepreneurs to shift to other countries.

3. Lack of MNC's in Punjab: Thousands of students complete their degree's in business administration every year but due to lack of MNC's & corporate houses in Punjab, they find foreign job opportunities more attractive.

4. Increasing population: Population of Punjab is increasing day by day due to which people are forced to work at low wages in order to atleast earn something. Hence, they are underemployed. Population of Punjab as of 2019 was 30.8 million which is slightly higher than that of 2018 i.e 30.4 million. Due to this population explosion and less job opportunities people prefer to migrate to developed countries and earn a healthy wealthy amount for their survival and the families left behind.

5. Better lifestyle and currency value difference: The lifestyle in foreign countries is much better than the lifestyle of people in Punjab. The technology, outfits, trends, innovations that have been

launched into India presently have already been under use in foreign countries. Moreover, the currency difference is huge and another aspect for migration. Comparison of Indian rupee v/s \$ US dollar is: [1 US dollar = 71.22 Indian Rupees] which means that you get 70 times more than what you are earning here in India. This better lifestyle and currency difference attracts people to migrate to foreign countries and lead a lavish life with wholesome of facilities.

4.2 Effects of migration

1. Loss of talent: With this increased migration of youth from Punjab to various developed countries has resulted in brain drain which means migration of young brains and talent from home country to other countries. This emigration results in loss of talent and has raised the development of other country and making their home country to lack behind.

2. Peer pressure of chasing dream of settling abroad: People of Punjab especially the youth is more concerned about settling abroad and dream of going abroad is making its way out for every young aspirer. As most of the students after their senior secondary education prefer to migrate to other countries for earning more and better lifestyle, peer pressure increases. This dream of chasing better future and lavish lifestyle motivates the young aspirants to go on the path of settling abroad.

3. Loss of domestic culture: As the massive youth migration is increasing day by day, the domestic rich culture of Punjab is losing its roots. Today's youth hardly has any knowledge about their rich culture, martyrs of their religion, religious knowledge, customs, state priorities, etc. As the interest of youth has shifted to western culture, they avoid their culture and some feel ashamed to show casing their culture in front of their foreign friends which is a huge disappointment as we should be proud of our ever rich culture and customs.

5 Conclusion

Migration of youth from Punjab to other developed countries increased dramatically due to globalization & is the market driven activity. The internationalization of higher education at a cheaper rate & more income, modern life style, etc act as motivator for the students to study abroad. The craze to settle abroad permanently among students has grown tremendously. Earlier students used to go abroad for post graduation or even 12th pass outs prefer to study abroad. But now studying abroad is just one step to settle abroad permanently. Moreover, students are attracted towards modern lifestyle which is not present here in Punjab. In some places like rural Punjab migration to foreign countries has become the status symbol. Punjab ranks first in India in remittances from abroad and these rich Punjabis collaborate with the government to transform rural Punjab and develop its infrastructure. The migration of students for studies is a tedious one and students have to clear certain exams to qualify for visa application like: IELTS, TOFEL, GMAT, etc. Countries like Canada, Australia, New Zealand prefer students with IELTS. Youth shows much interest in these countries as they get multiple times more than what they are earning here and can have easy access to PR (permanent resident) except UK. UK is the only one

country where PR is not easily available. IELTS hoarding can be found at every corner of streets of Punjab and even highway advertisements. These hoardings attract more and more young students who dream of settling abroad, earn greener pastures, luxurious life, etc. The increasing rush to these IELTS institutions is enough to showcase the inclination of youth towards migration to foreign countries for settling permanently. Among the total students migrating abroad 88% of them are males and this increased overtime. From 2011-2015, 41% of the students emigrated from Punjab in search of good future and better job opportunities. The main motive of youth migrating to these countries is to settle abroad permanently. The main reason for this brain drain is the result of high rates of unemployment and underemployment, low wages, bureaucracy, corruption, quota system, increased population, lack of awareness of government policies, dreams of luxurious lives, peer pressure, competition, etc.

5.1 Importance of the study

1. It helps to make people aware of causes of emigration.
2. It helps to aware people of what hazards this emigration is causing to the economy.
3. It helps to study the most prominent problem of Punjab i.e massive migration of youth from Punjab to other developed countries.

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