

Asymmetrical Distribution of Labour

Action Research on Migration

Japla, Jharkhand



Supported by the Tata Trusts

1/1/2015

Preface

Migration is a constant phenomenon in India. Sometimes, it is voluntary, and at times it is forced. Patterns of migration vary in terms of socio-economic conditions and characteristics. There are various reasons for migration. In this project, we mainly focus on distress migration of different caste groups who are forced to migrate from Japla, Jharkhand to elsewhere.

Poverty is a vicious circle for rural households; migrants face worse conditions, especially when it comes to marginalized communities. To enhance their living conditions, Sahbhagi Shikshan Kendra in Jharkhand has intervened in two villages-Tikarpur and Lotaniya of Hussainabad block. SSK has identified that the issue of migration in Japla is different from that of Uttar Pradesh. The organization is working towards the welfare of migrants along with citizens leaders forming cadres and enable collectivization.

Japla team members have explored and intervened in issues of migration and at every level, developed different action research strategies—from advocacy, to sensitization of the community and local institutions. This particular piece of action research was conducted by Salman Sharief and Sanjeev Chakraborti at the field level in Japla, along with field animators who administered surveys. The documentation, analysis of data and compilation of data from the field level was completed by Ms. Debangana Baruah.

This report titled *Asymmetrical Distribution of Labour-Action Research on Migration* attempts to highlight the social condition of Musahar migrants in terms of financial and socio-economic aspects of their lives. It also explores the dynamics of government schemes and policies that enable them to lead a better life.

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Abstract

Migrant workers in Palamau face unique economic as well as health problems, and it is important for the Labour Department to sustain their employment, and ensure at least a living wage. In this context, the system will need to address certain key ethical issues.

There is plenty of published literature on international migration and its ethical aspects. However, there is a scarcity of information on occupational health issues relating to internal migration and government policies for their welfare. In developing countries, internal migration is a survival strategy for many labourers in search of a better livelihood and opportunities. It is inevitable that many of them will leave their hometowns and villages in the coming years, and that the future will see an increase in the number of migrant labourers in developing countries such as India. This study report examines these issues in the context of two blocks of the Palamau district in Jharkhand. It addresses the issues of financial status, socio-economic background, expenditure patterns, government policies and schemes, equity, provision of sanitation and health facilities at work place, allocation of scarce resources, and achieving a balance between benefits and risks for migrants.

The recommendation of this study report is that strategic planning of sustainability of economic growth in terms of skill development and soft skills should be undertaken for migrants. Healthcare interventions for internal migrant workers should be implemented in Tikarpar and Lotaniya village, Hussainabad Block of Jharkhand District.

This action research is funded by the Tata Trusts under the Centre for Migration and Labour Solutions. On this basis, a project will be planned out for Jharkhand.

Introduction

This action research draws from fieldwork in two Panchayats, Tikarpar and Lotaniya of Japla in Jharkhand, and a study on the patterns of migration and the condition of Musahar community in Tikarpar. Migration to the kilns or cement factories is seen by them as a threat to the purity of the social and sexual tribal citizen. This moral perspective creates an environment that paradoxically encourages many young people to flee to the brick kilns where they can live freely. There is a caste-based hierarchy that drives the marginalized community to migrate elsewhere, as they are agricultural labourers and have been exploited because of their caste.

In India there have always been certain sections of society who have been historically disadvantaged in terms of material wellbeing. One such prominent group is the Scheduled Caste (SC), also known as dalits. Even in recent times when we talk about inclusive development and *sabka saath, sabka vikas*, the condition of this group has not changed much. The current study focuses upon a sub-caste of the dalit population, known as *Musahars*.

In our intervention area in Japla, Musahar families live in Tikarpar village along with SC population of Mahuari panchayat. This group was nomadic earlier, but is now settled in the village. With the passing of time these families have adopted the “mainstream” way of life. Many male members of families migrate to big cities for their livelihood, and thus there is a great deal of change in their living and cultural habits. Studying this group from demographic and migration point of view would present rich findings.

Action Research under SSK's Migration Project

In Hussainabad block, SSK has initiated activities towards the strengthening of PRIs and the education of girl children under the migration project funded by the Tata Trusts. SSK integrated components of action research into their interventions. Migration from the area is result of poor development and lack of opportunities; yet further migration itself has profound effect on the health status, education status, social security and economic well-being.

Taking these circumstances into account, SSK, has identified 2 GPs (Tikarpar and Lotaniya) for action research collaboration with the Tata Trusts. The current study focuses on the economic issues of migrant families with focus on Musahar families.

For our research, insights from case studies and individual experience of migrants have been collected to obtain a broader picture of socio-economic issues. Special focus is given to entitlements, accessibility of entitlements and health services for migrant families. We analyzed their awareness about various social security schemes, health schemes and the challenges they face in availing those facilities.

The total numbers of respondents for this study is 100:

- *50 migrants were surveyed focusing on economic issues related to monthly income expenditure, working overtime, or work-related health issues and monthly savings.*
- *50 migrants from the Musahar community were interviewed to determine the community's patterns of migration.*

Sahbhagi Shikshan Kendra's Interventions

A decade back, Sahbhagi Shikshan Kendra started its journey as a civil society organization with the aim to support other grass-roots organizations by strengthening and working along with the institutions of local self-governance, and providing capacity building resources for different actors of these organisations. SSK aimed to work for the empowerment of socially and economically backward communities.

Lately, the organization has been working on various issues such as women empowerment, disaster management, the girl child and urban poverty. One of our new focus areas is on urban governance and working with urban local bodies. One of our major interventions has been with migrant workers. SSK determined that that migration is a complex issue in Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand, and is attached to a host of related issues. When people from underprivileged sections migrate to places in search of a livelihood source to sustain themselves and their families, they are forced to live in very difficult conditions. Migrants work long hours in harsh conditions, injuries are common, and there is inadequate medical assistance or compensation. Some of the prolonged issues that the migrants face and which impede their daily life are water-sanitation problems, security, harassment, abuse, theft, forcible eviction, or the demolition of their dwellings by urban authorities or police. In urban areas, the eviction of slum dwellers is a regular phenomenon. In spite of high vulnerability, inter-state migrants remain beyond the purview of relevant policies: they are rarely acknowledged within the societies where they live and responsibility for their welfare is passed over to their various different places of residence, thus diminishing the possibilities of making their voices heard in either their places of origin or destination.

In the Hussainabad block, SSK has initiated activities towards the strengthening of PRIs and girl child education. Under the migration project it has integrated the component of action research into its interventions. Japla witnessed high levels of migration as a result of poor development and lack of opportunities, and migration itself has a profound effect on the education status, social security and economic well-being of the people in the area.

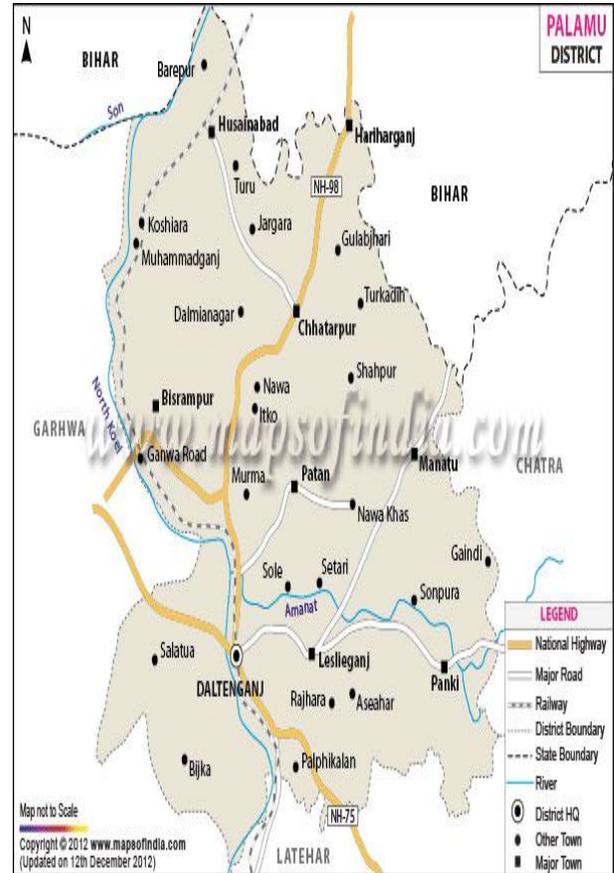
Taking these circumstances into account, SSK, for the initial phase previously had identified two GPs (Mahuari and Lotania) for action research. This time SSK's intervention area will include Tikarpar. The present research study, 'Asymmetrical Distribution of Labour' aims to analyze the socio-economic condition of migrants and their families with special focus on the quality and accessibility of education and the impact of migration on the education of children.



Area Profile of Palamau District

Palamau is one of the 24 districts of Jharkhand. It is located in the northern region of Jharkhand and has been identified as one of the Maoist-affected regions of Jharkhand. It has a total area of 5,044 square km with a population density of 380/sq km (2012 census). It has 12 blocks and three sub-divisions. Hussainabad has one of the biggest Nagarpanch, Japla, which is a sub-division of Hussainabad. Hussainabad had a population of 1,77,013 with a 52% male and 48% female population. The Hussainabad block has 22 panchayats. It had been the land of Rajputs, Yadav, Chauhan, Chadhary, Pasi, Dalits and Muslims. Rajputs and Muslims comprise the largest sections of the population, though they are not uniformly spread in the Block. Japla is not rich in minerals. Livelihood opportunities are limited,

particularly in the lean season (June–October), for which a sizable number of people migrate to urban centers inside and outside the state. The main occupations are agriculture and agriculture allied activities; and animal husbandry is another source of livelihood. In some villages people also supplement their income with labour work in the nearby villages. There is a dearth of employment opportunities in the region as it is a Naxal-affected area, and as a result people periodically migrate to other regions in search of work, some stay back, while others remain unemployed and poor. It is located at 24.53 degree North and 84.02 degree East. It was once the centre of economic activity, given that the Son Valley Port Land Cement Factory was running here from 1914 onwards. Due to labour unrest, it was shut down in 1993. Since then, the town has been in a state of neglect and constant decline. Japla has abysmally low-quality infrastructure in absence of any effort from the government to strengthen this. Jharkhand is one of the worst affected states as far as seasonal migration is concerned. Every year thousands of poor labourers



from the state migrate to different parts of India in search of livelihood. The poor labourers are forced to migrate and work in harsh, inhuman and alien conditions due to acute shortage of sustainable livelihood options in their native places. Illiteracy, exploitative practices at different levels, moneylenders and employers/contractors in these regions further degrade the socio-economic condition of these labourers.

Area (in acres)*		167,274
Population*	Male	91,976
	Female	85,307
	Total	177,013
SC Population*	Male	29,585
	Female	27,681
	Total	56,266
ST Population*	Male	1204
	Female	1186
	Total	2390
Population Below 6 yrs*	Boys	14540
	Girls	13555
	Total	28095
Literate*	Male	40107
	Female	15505
	Total	55612
Total No of HH*		29113
Total No of Gram Panchayat^		22
Total no of Nagar Panchayat		1
Total No of Village		183

Research Methodology

Objectives:

- To understand the migration patterns of Tikarpar and Lotiyana with due focus on the migrant community
- To identify the migration status of both communities and the challenges migrants face at the destination end.
- To understand the dynamics of the Musahar community and their socio-economic conditions.

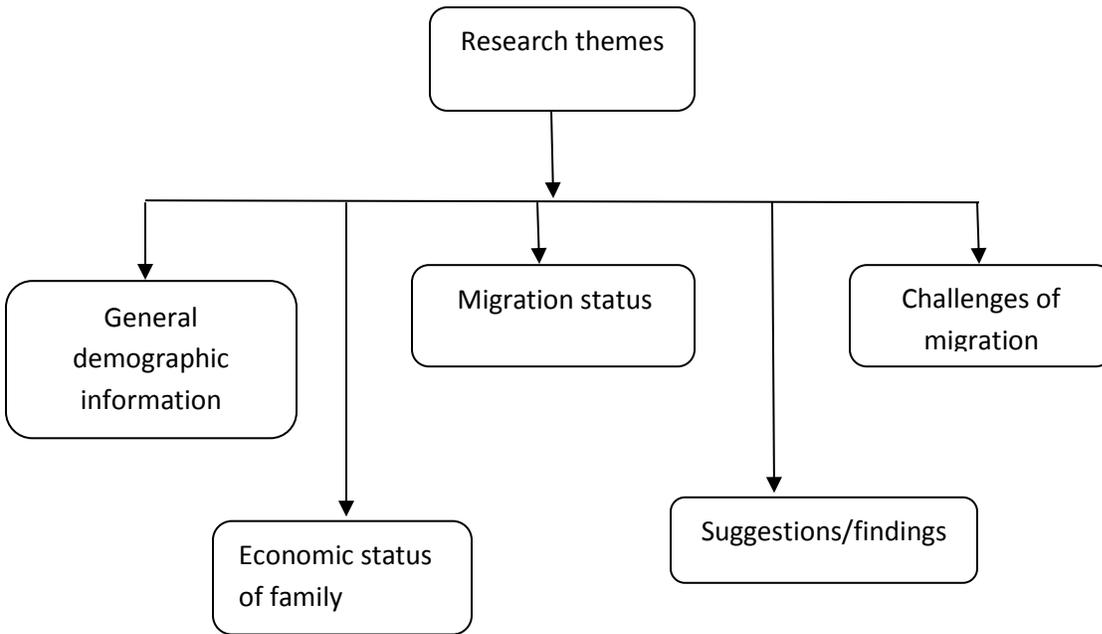
Methodology

The methodology adopted has to be representative of both subjective as well as objective aspects, as we are engaging with a subject which deals with both with data (population, male-female ratio, number of migrants etc.) and subjective descriptions (challenges of migration, debt status, village profile etc.).

Research themes: general demographic information, income status, family information, migration status and suggestions.

Sample: we have selected 100 respondents: 50 Musahars from Tikarpar and 50 Scheduled Caste respondents in Lotaniya village. We could easily reach out to every household of the Musahar community, and so could take one adult member from every household for the survey questionnaire. This makes nearly 50 respondents who answered the questionnaire.

Research tools adopted: to develop a deeper understanding of the topic, focus group discussions were best suited. It helps the group to participate in a lively and natural discussion amongst themselves, and come up with the findings required for the research.



Sampling: Purposive
Sample size: 100 households
Research tools adopted: Survey questionnaire, FGD for village information.

Analysis of data and tabulation: Once the relevant information is gathered, it would be subject to the process of inspecting and transforming, with the goal of discovering useful information suggesting conclusions, and supporting decision making.

Who are Musahars?

The Musahar community is a Hindu caste which lives on the margin of society due to India's harsh caste system. The term 'Musahar' means 'rat-eater'. Widespread poverty amongst Musahars has led them to consume rats as a source of protein.



Although rat-eating is by no means confined to the Musahar community, the social stigma attached to the community due to this practice remains. They mostly reside in rural areas, in makeshift huts or in one-room mud houses on land they do not own. They mostly work as agricultural labourers. However, with recent transitions, they have shifted to daily wage labour or manual scavenging. Despite the Government of India's introduction of programs specifically to benefit backward castes, Musahars continue to lag behind almost all other social groups in India and remain the poorest caste in Bihar, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh. Individuals of the Musahar community have faced exclusion in various forms. Musahar girls and women face frequent and damaging discrimination and are subject to exploitation, violence, and sexual harassment. For generations, the Musahars have been deprived of education, healthcare, and adequate livelihoods. Among women, their literacy rate is 0.9% and among men, it is about 4.6%. They are considered the lowest of the Dalit groups, the untouchables, which are the most segregated communities in India. They are discriminated against for their skin colour, religion, and traditions. According to Hindu mythology, the whole Musahar community was punished by Parmashwar (the Hindu god of creation) when one of the Musahars dug holes into a horse's belly. Parmashwar, who had given the horse to the man as a gift, was terribly offended and therefore punished the whole community by making them rat-catchers. All neighboring villages have electricity with the basic amenities, but the community still lives in inhuman conditions. There are no schools, and the nearest school is 2 km away. The Indian government runs some schemes in order to help the community cope with their condition of extreme poverty. Marginalization and prejudices, however, are still some

of the biggest threats to the betterment of the Musahars' living conditions. Tikarpar is the only village in Jharkhand which is home to a large Musahar population (approximately 20%).





The Status of Adivasi and Backward Caste Migration

Most of natural resources, including minerals, are located in tribal areas. Tribals are being alienated from their

land and forest due to ongoing deforestation, hydro-electric power generation, dam construction, industrial growth and mining activities. Natural resources are being exploited in a way which leads to a process of gradual displacement, and results in the denying of the basic right to livelihood for the Adivasis. Massive investment in construction of dams, power plants, industrialization and mining create wealth for the nation and employment opportunities for non-tribal people. The tribals are not landowners but they reside in the forest. Some have fled to different neighboring states in search of livelihoods due to Naxal insurgency and land acquisition by industrialists and corporations. Ever since Jharkhand has been exploited either environmentally or socio-economically, the status of migrants has become worse than any other states. Tribal migrants are the worst victims of urbanization. Tribal migration is a forced migration.

However, the Scheduled Caste forms the majority of the population. Within SC/STs, Ravidas' are the highest in number (35%). The inflow of migrants is more from the Scheduled Tribes and Dalits. The Rajwar, Bhuhiyan and Musahar are from the lowest strata of the society. They live in certain pockets (mainly Tikarpara) and are socially excluded. Mushahar are semi-tribals who have no means of livelihood, so they migrate elsewhere to escape abject conditions. This research has been carried in two panchayats of Tikarpar and Lotaniya. It recorded in detail various dimensions of economic exploitation vis-à-vis health issues due to over-time, which subsequently impacted family economies and role responsibilities.

Major Findings

The majority of the population in the two panchayats of Hussainabad Block belongs to the Hindu community (97% in Lotaniya and 80% in Tikarpar) and some are Christians and Muslims. However, there is a community where they are considered as Maha Dalit- The Mushahars in Tikarpar Panchayats. Lotania has significant Muslim population considering the population of Tribals. The economic condition of people (which we determined by categorizing households as per ration cards of the migrant families) according to our survey, we discovered that there is a greater number of Above Poverty Line (APL) families in Lotania than Tikarpar i.e. 35% in Tikarpar and 55% in Lotania. The percentage of Below Poverty Line (BPL) families is higher in Tikarpar than in Lotania (48% and 43% respectively). There is a cluster of Antodaya households in Tikarpar (17%) but their number is negligible in Lotania (only 2%). The percentage of families earning less than Rs. 2000/- per month is more in Tikarpar than in Lotania. The range to which most families belong in both panchayats is 4000–8000 (34% in Tikarpar and 51% in Lotania). Lotania is comprised of nearly 1/3rd of households earning more than Rs. 8000/- per month.

Although from the surveys, the data shows that in Lotaniya economic conditions are slightly better, there is a discrepancy while registering for ration cards. The socio-economic condition of both villages is reflected in the severe deprivations visible through the implementation of Public Distribution System (PDS). The government of India presents data that most households are above the poverty line; however these households have no access to entitlements, although they have different types of ration cards.

The occupation of villagers differs from community to community; most of them are either construction workers or factory workers. However the Musahar community does manual scavenging, or works as daily wage labourers. Female members of the household generally do not migrate, they have no specific source of income, and so survive on selling Mohua flowers or extracting the juice of Mohua flowers for the upper caste. Women have greater roles and responsibility, which doubles their activities and work time in the absence of the male members of the family. In Lotaniya, the data shows that 5% of the sampling population is comprised of

daily wage labourers and 8% of respondents are construction workers. Agricultural labourers are high in number, at 25%, and the remaining population are either factory workers or small scale businessmen like vendors, hawkers, etc. Agriculture was the second highest occupation in both the panchayats (20% in Tikarpar and 25% in Lotania). Other categories, including small-scale manufacturers, constitute a very small number. Jharkhand is still dependent on the agrarian economy, as land cultivation is quite rich.

The data clearly indicates that the majority of the of family members are not involved in any kind of economic activity both in Tikarpar as well as Lotania, and this implies that they are dependent on earning through the migration. The economic condition of migrant workers from the Scheduled Caste category is worse than that of the Muslim section or general population. Among SCs, those of Tikarpar are economically weaker than those of Lotania (22% in Tikarpar and 3% in Lotania earn less than Rs. 2000/- per month). There are only 6% SC migrants in Lotaniya who earn more than Rs. 6000/- per month. This clearly indicates the poor condition of the Scheduled Caste in Japla.

The data regarding family members who are left behind shows that the majority of these are women and children (69% in Lotania and 67% in Tikarpar). The number of males is nearly half of the number of females. The age group to which the maximum number of tmembers belongs is 35+ (45% in Lotania and 47% Tikarpar belongs to this group), followed by 25 – 40 (38% in Lotania and 37% in. Tikarpar). The age group of 18 – 25 which is generally the college-going age, constitute 17% of the members in Lotania and 16% in Tikarpar. None of these young adults go to college. There is a severe need for skill development in this area.

The data also shows that nearly half of the sample group in Lotania are literate but still cannot write. 32% in Lotania and 20% in Tikarpar studied upto the 10th standard, which further decreased to 7% and 8% for those who studied up to the 12th standard. Nobody enrolled in college after the 12th standard. Some studied till the 12th standard but did not appear for the entrance.

Migrants mostly work as unskilled labourers. As per the data this number is higher in Lotania than Tikarpar. Skilled labourers constitute a very small percentage in Tikarpar as compared to Lotania. Other type of work done by migrants comprises a low percentage in both the panchayats.

If we see the earnings of migrants, the highest numbers lie in two income bands: Rs. 3000/- to 5000/- per month, and Rs. 5000/- to Rs. 8000/- per month, which are applicable nearly 65% of total migrants. Those earning more than Rs. 10,000/- per month (high earning migrants) are slightly higher in number in Lotania (15%) than Tikarpar.

Data on the literacy rate in Lotaniya shows that 45% are literate and have gone to school up to the 5th standard, however in Tikarpara the data shows that 68% of respondents have not been to school and are illiterate. The status of education in Tikarpara is worse than that of Lotaniya.

The data regarding children ('members below 18 years of age') and those adults who go to schools and colleges, shows that the number of females among them is slightly less than the number of males in both panchayats. Only 2% school/college going members were of more than 18 years of age in Tikarpar, and 22% in Lotania. Among the children (below 18 years) a majority of them were not even enrolled in school (77% in Tikarpar), while 23% in Tikarpar were enrolled in schools and 17% in Lotania were not enrolled. The data gives an indication that the educational status of children as well as adults in Lotania Panchayat is slightly better than that of Tikarpar. A majority of children, according to the data, go to Government schools where they face discrimination. The percentage of private schooling is nearly one fifth in both the panchayats.

Children who have enrolled in schools largely studied up to the fifth standard, followed by a handful of children who are enrolled in classes up to 10th, and 12th. The percentage of college-going students is very low both at the graduate and post-graduate level. The findings give a clear indication that the status of higher education in the area is extremely critical, with a continuous drop in the number of enrollments as they proceed toward higher education, and becoming nearly negligible at the graduate and post-graduate level.

Occupation

Japla is predominantly based on informal employment, which is one of the central features of the labour market in India. There has been an exodus of migrants from Jharkhand recently. While the informal sector contributes around half of the GDP of the county, its dominance in the employment front is such that more than 90% of the total workforce has been engaged in the informal economy. As per the latest estimation of a Sub-committee of the National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector (NCEUS), the contribution of unorganized sector to GDP is about 50% (NCEUS 2008).¹

Geographical mobility of migrant workers to nearby cities is not a new phenomenon. For instance, Mauhari and Lotaniya have more migrants than Tikarpara. This can be explained by occupational caste groups and differential access to a human capital base, skills and education. Rural migration in Tikarpara moved people over great distances. Since Tikarpara is accustomed to its traditional pattern of agricultural labour, in many regions there is a longstanding tradition of rural workers who only specialize in cottage industry. However owing to globalization, these individuals from Tikarpar being employed as bonded labour in urban areas. In the contemporary context, inter-mobility between rural and urban areas is not equally accessible for all migrants and varies from their employment to regulating their remittances. Rural-urban migrants had very little growth in the informal sector. However if we don't consider the informal sector, there would be no service providers in the state. The production of employment and urban space needs to be placed in context of the wider scope of development. Employment growth in the unorganized sector has never been recognized by the state. Data shows that a majority of migrant workers are construction workers. Right after construction workers, daily wage labourers also contribute immense growth to industrial sector, followed by factory/agricultural worker in Japla. Tikarpara has a cluster of construction workers and the reason behind this is that caste is not attached to this occupation.

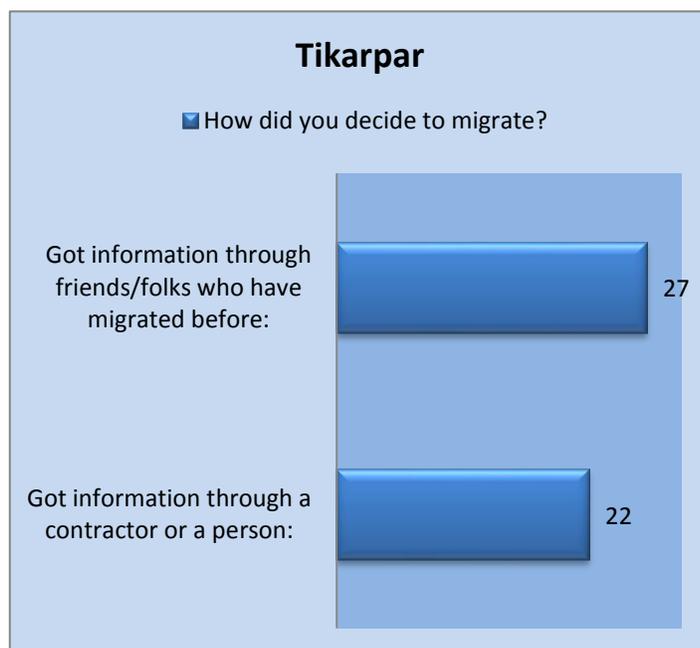
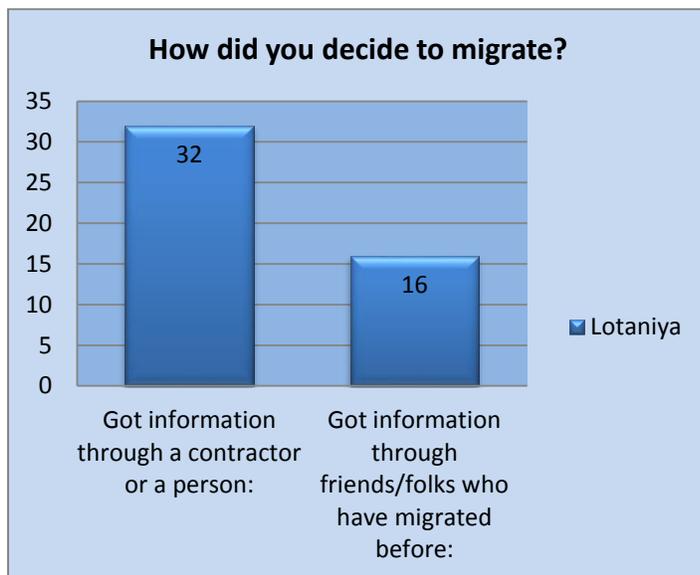
¹ Unorganized Sector in India

Frequency of Migration

Japla also faces the problem of a poor human capital base (in terms of education, skill and training) as well as lower mobilization status of the work force, which further adds to the vulnerability of people and weakens the strength of workers in the informal sector. Thus, in Jharkhand after industrialization, the sector has become a competitive and low cost means of absorbing labour, which cannot be absorbed elsewhere, and can be easily exploited. Any attempt to regulate and bring in more effective legal and institutional frameworks is perceived to be impairing the labour-absorbing capacity of the sector.

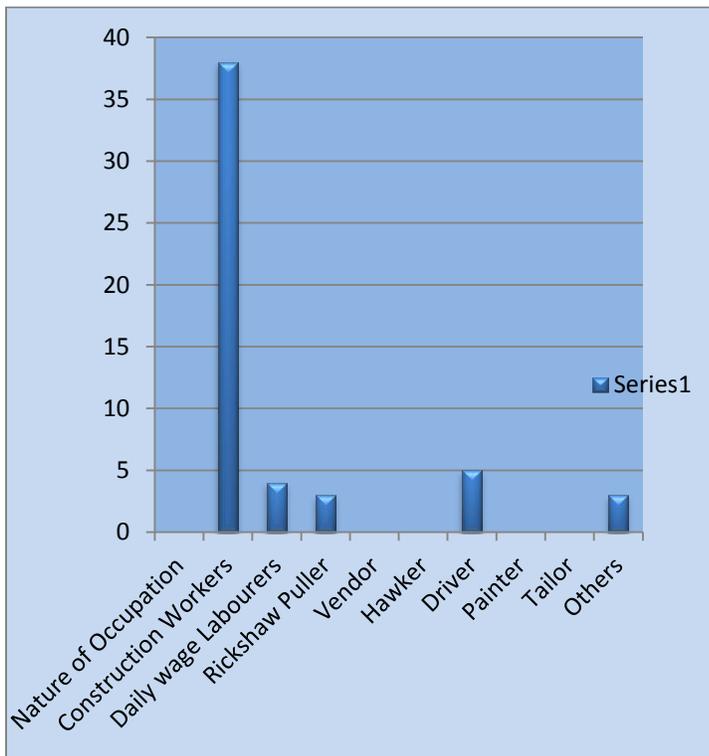
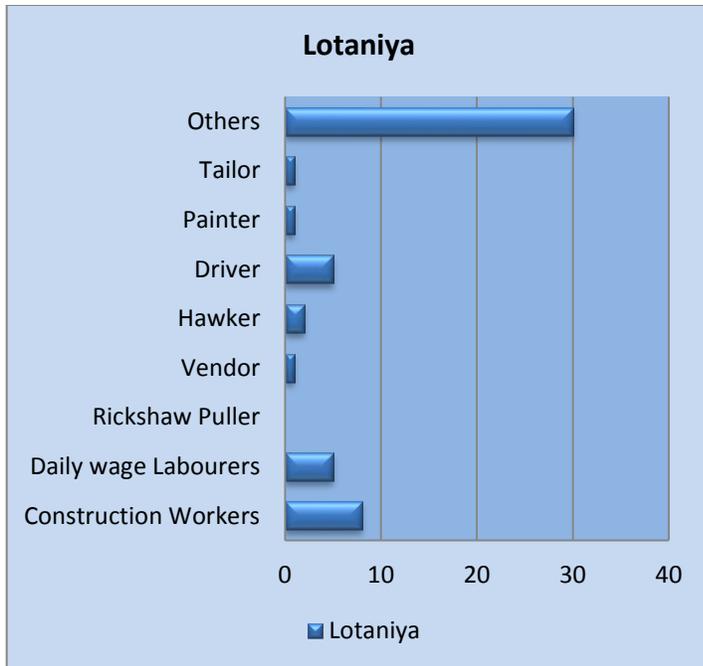
Data shows that the frequency of visiting home for migrant workers is mostly once or twice in a year if the contract is for six months. 12% only get to visit once in a year during festivals or seasonal time. They work throughout the year and then come during auspicious times. Some take leave during summers and only migrate in winters. The number of daily wage labourers in Lotaniya on the other side is more than Tikarpara. In Lotaniya the frequency of visiting home is more, around eighth to twelve times every month. It is interesting to observe that there is a stark difference between the frequency of migrants returning home to Tikarpara and Lotaniya respectively. Lotaniya has the highest frequency of migrants coming home every month, where as in Tikarpara vulnerability is seen more among construction workers. The number of migrants with a high frequency of visiting home in Tikarpara is very low. Through our surveys, the data shows that in Tikarpara most are engaged in construction workers or factory workers because they feel it better to work under contractor or some agents than to do manual scavenging. The Musahars are complete outcasts, and so to validate their identity and existence, and to make a living, they work over-time so that they can send their children to school. They cannot even raise their voices to defy their contractors because they come from a marginalized group and in Tikarpara are socially excluded: at least as a part of the labour force the type of work they do is less exclusive and stigmatised. Thus Musahars generally visit home once or twice in a year.

Data Analysis of Lotaniya and Tikarpar Panchayat



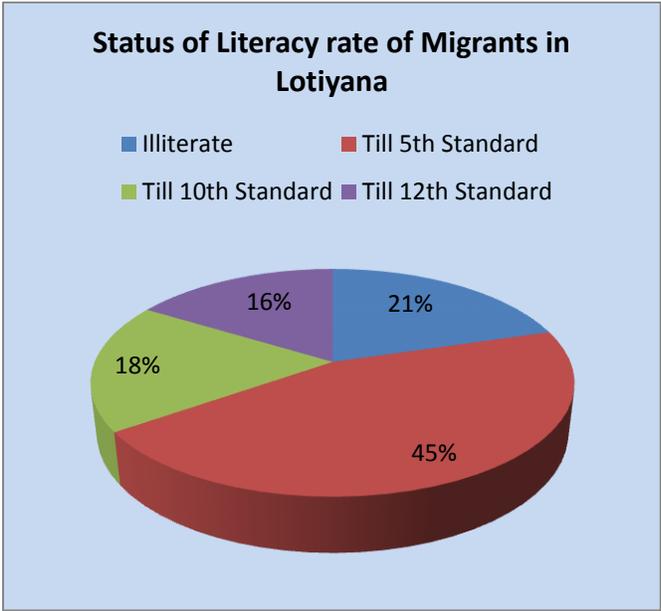
A migrant labourer's journey often begins through a contractor. Most migrants obtain information through a contractor at an early phase of their migration period. 32% of respondents in Lotaniya have obtained information through a contractor and then from friends and folks who have migrated earlier. This tradition have been continuing from a long time in Lotaniya, and many have a good rapport with their contractors so that their entire community can work in the same construction areas.

However in Tikarpar it is exactly opposite to Lotaniya. In Tikarpar, migrant workers mostly migrated through getting information from their friends and acquaintances. Most of these migrants are Scheduled Caste, so rather than facing discrimination they decide to migrate along with their friends and community.



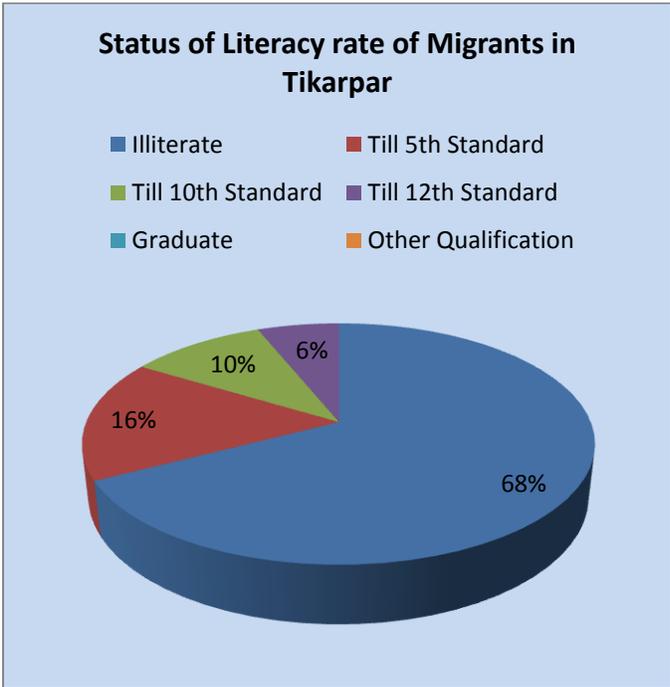
In Lotaniya there are more farmers or cultivators. There are land owners in the panchayats. The feudal system still exists in Jharkhand. There are contractual farmers too. However, these contractual farmers cultivate on landowners' land on contract basis. They are also known as bonded farmers. Lotaniya is dependent on the agrarian economy and most work as farmers.

In Tikarpar, it is surprising to see that almost more than half of the migrants are construction workers. One of the issues is that they are forced migrants. In the graph alongside, constructions workers are the highest in number because most of their friends and family have migrated before and now they too have followed in their footsteps. Followed by construction workers, a handful of migrants are drivers, and exploring other new skills.



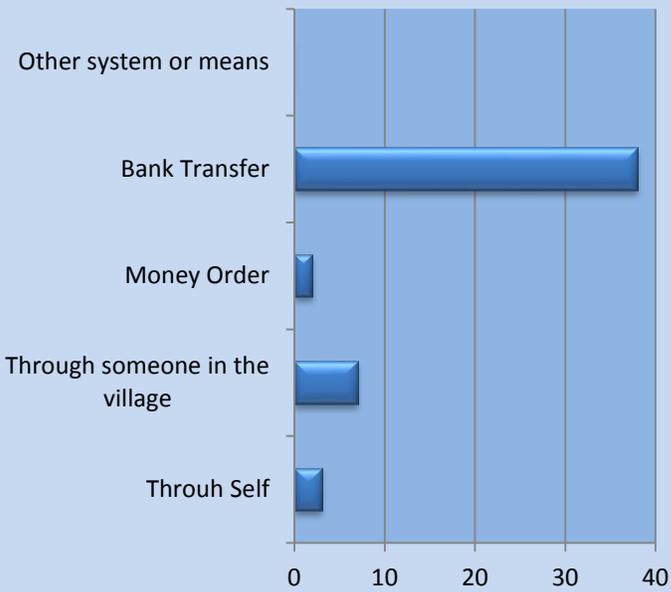
The literacy numbers decline gradually after individuals cross the 5th standard. It is observed that in Lotaniya 21% of respondents are illiterate, 45% studied up to the 5th standard.

In Tikarpar, data shows that 68% of people are uneducated. Only 6% of the population went up to class 12.

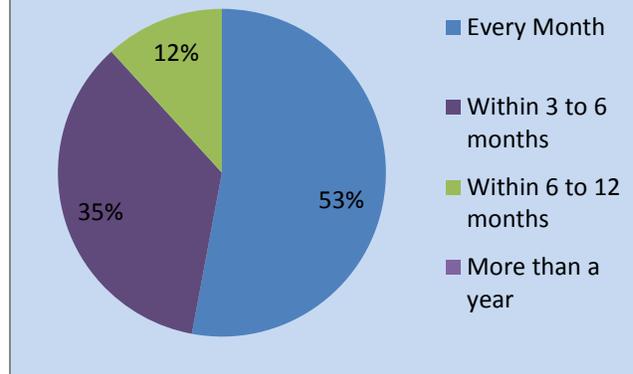


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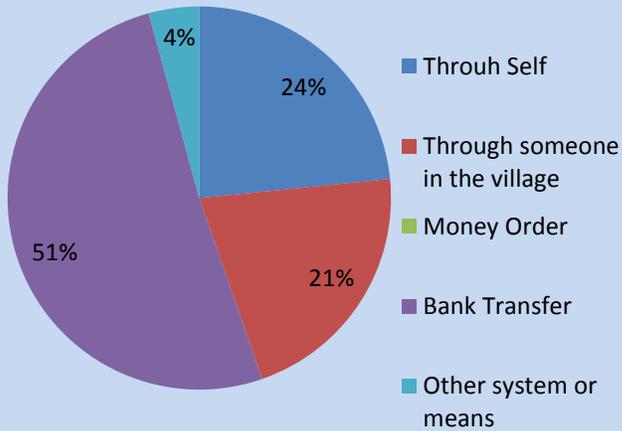
Different ways to transfer money to home in Lotaniya



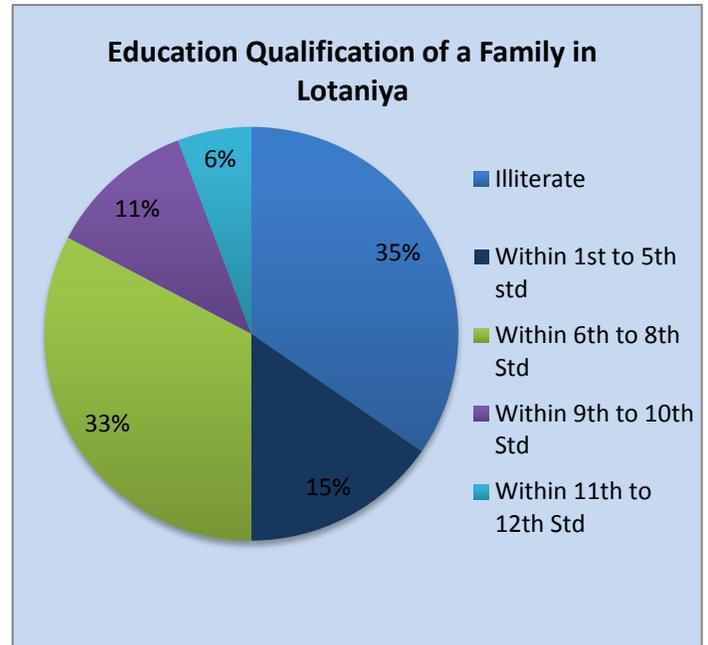
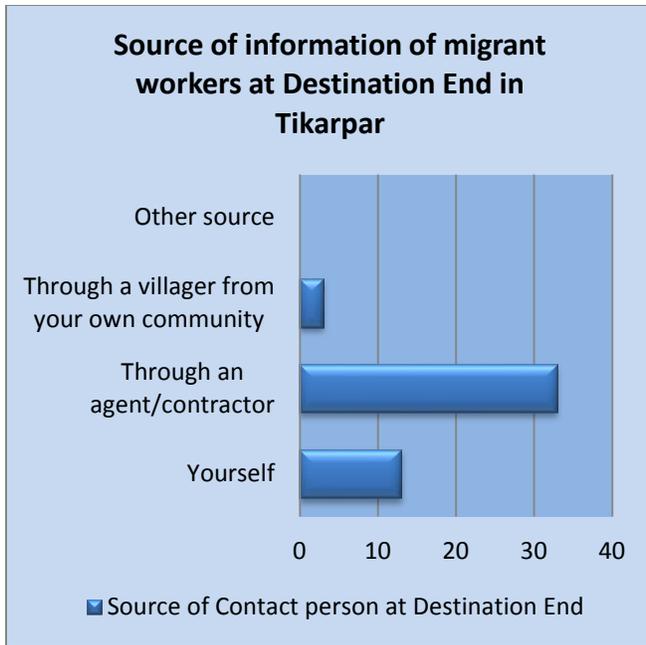
Duration of Migration in a period of 1 year



Different ways to transfer money to home in Tikarpar

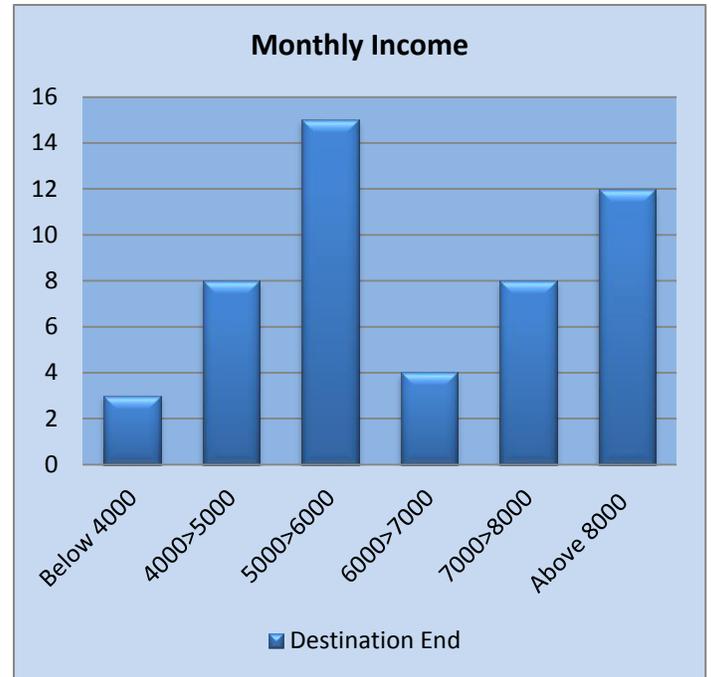
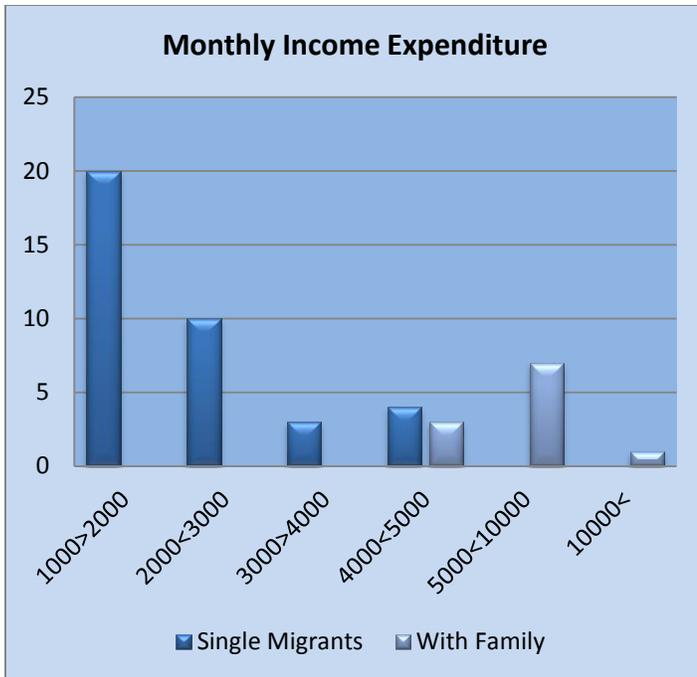


At both Tikarpar and Lotiyana, banks are primarily used to deliver or transfer money. This implies a certain degree of financial literacy, and it is heartening to see this as a mark of empowerment. In Tikarpar 51% of people have bank accounts and can transfer money through banks.

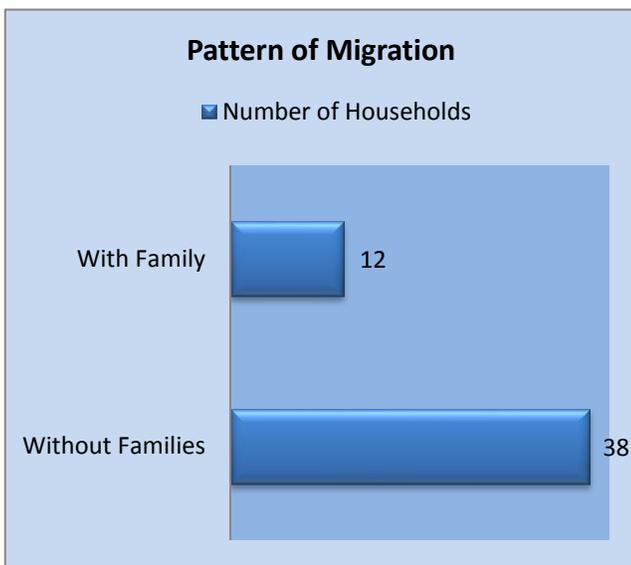
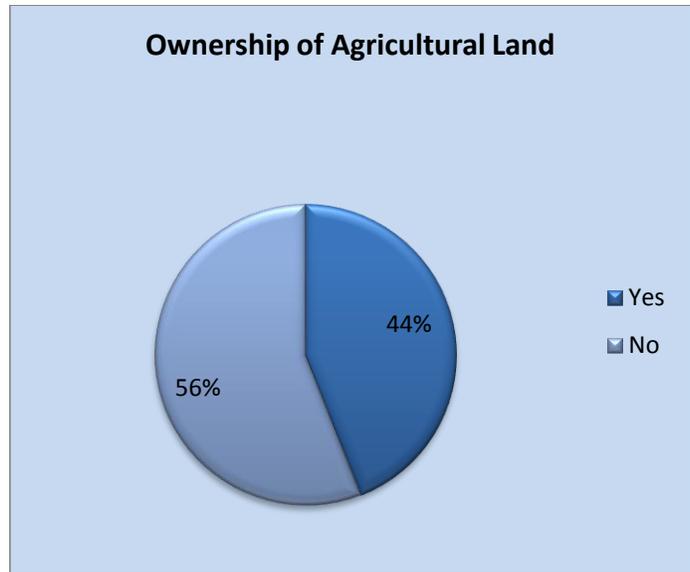
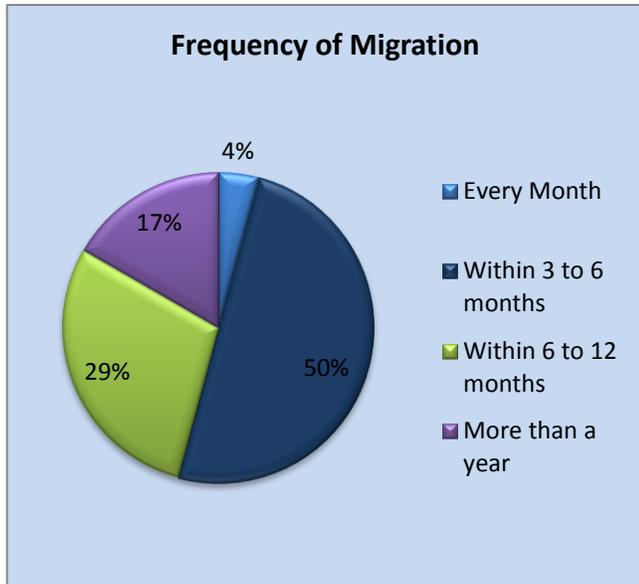


The quality of education amongst migrants was poor. Most of them shared that their children never go to school. A significant numbers of parents and guardians never visited the school of the children. The educational scenario in Tikarpar was worse as compared to Lotania in all parameters (Attendance of child and teacher, Parents visit to school, over all care of the children in school), but surprisingly, the people of Tikarpar were more satisfied with the education of their children and the services of the school. This could indicate lack of knowledge and understanding about the education system. Government school services at the village level are generally known to be very poor but here the perception is just the opposite. A majority of children go to the government school.

Name of revenue village	Primary School	Middle School
Lotaniya	1	1
Tikarpar	1	

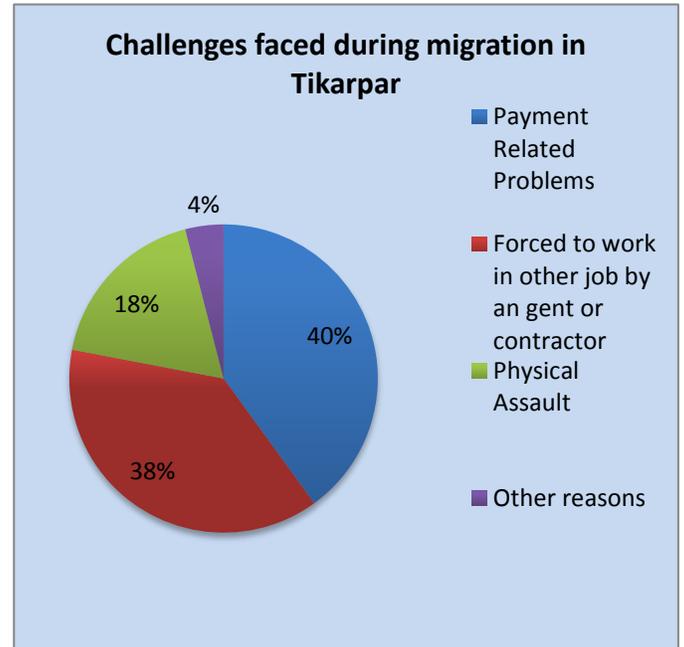
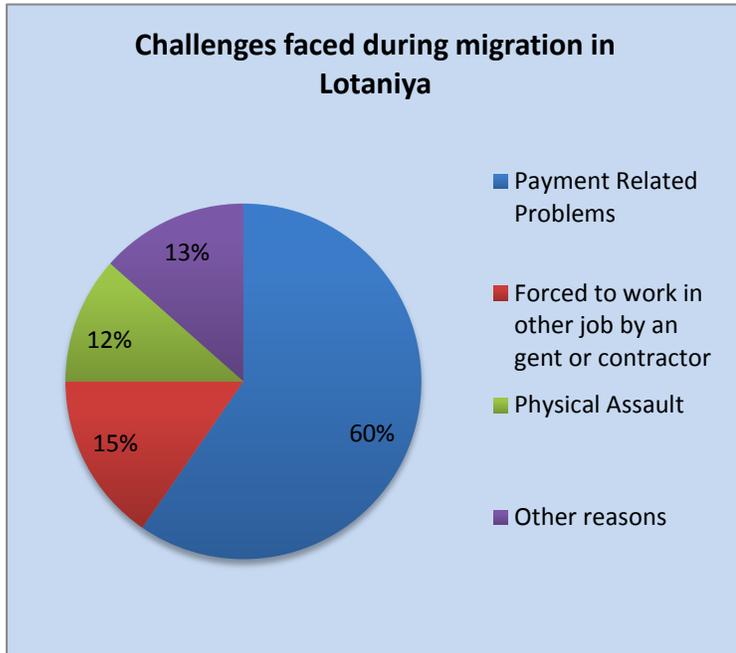


The monthly income in Lotaniya comes to an average of Rs. 5000/- to 6000/-. There is no gradual increase or decline. People who work in the fields have an income level within the range of Rs. 5000/- to Rs. 6000/-. However people who migrate earn slightly more than Rs. 8000/-. Individual Monthly income expenditure is also quite low, and remains within the range of Rs. 1000/- to Rs. 2000/-. However family expenditure is in stark contrast to this: falling within the range of Rs. 5000/- to Rs.10,000/-. A handful of respondents spend above Rs. 10,000/-. It was observed that they spend more than their income.

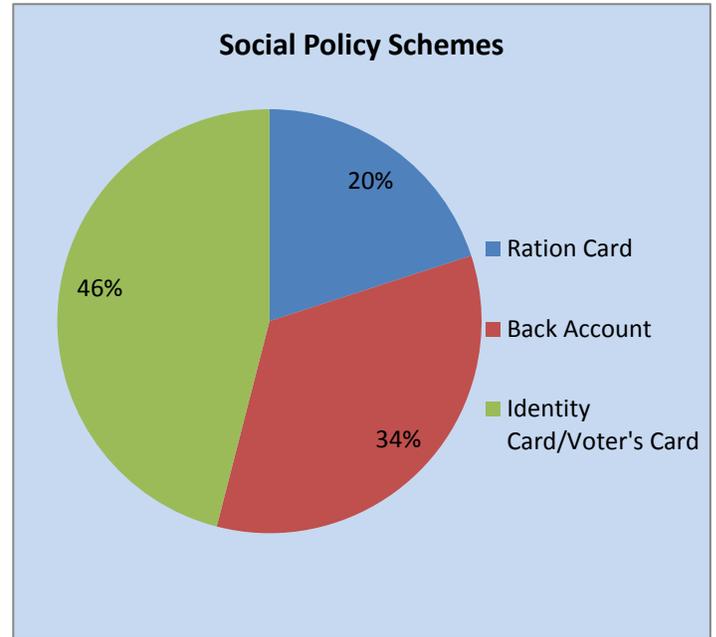
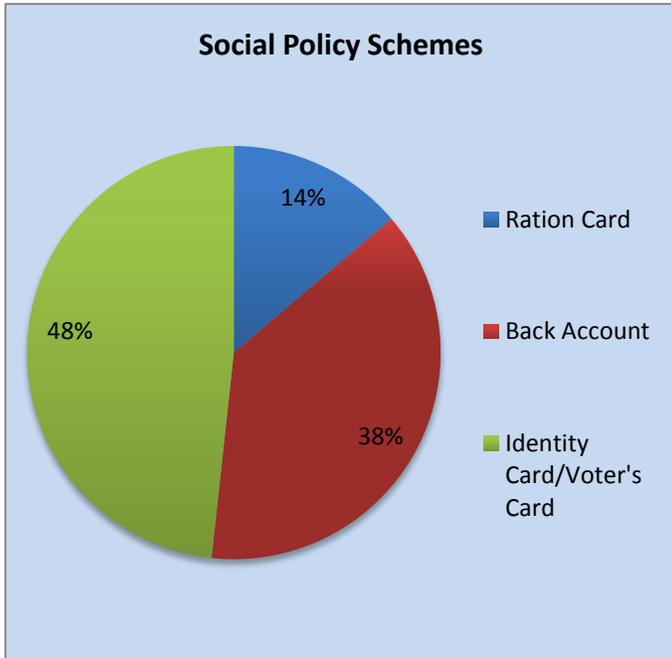


In the first table, data shows that the frequency of visiting home for migrant is mostly once in three to six months. The number of migrant with a high frequency of visiting their homes is very low. From the analysis, the clusters of daily wage labourers are unskilled workers, mostly in the categories *mazdoor*, loader, headloader, groundmen. In the second table, it can be observed that nearly 56% are landless farmers.

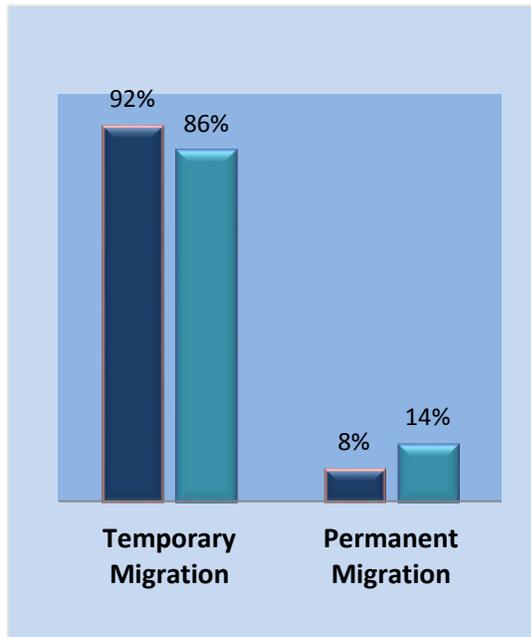
The pattern of migration has not transformed much. Migrants migrate without their families. Their monthly saving is extremely low and remains within Rs. 100/- to Rs. 500/-. Through our surveys it was found that due to inflation and better opportunity in urban areas, rural workers prefer to migrate, or given a choice, get involved in the unorganized sector rather than agriculture which is the tradition pattern of work.



Similar issues and challenges are faced by respondents in both the areas, where 40% to 60% have issues with payments by their contractors or agents. Many in Tikarpar were forced to work by their contractor or agents. Around 38% are forced to work in the informal sector. Both Tikarpar and Lotaniya have similar issues in terms of the physical assault of workers. The area lacks basic infrastructures i.e. roads, drinking water facilities and drainage systems. The allocation of funds to Gram Panchayats has not been utilized usefully; government flagship programs like NREGA are being implemented as per the 'whim and fancy' of government officials. Community participation in the process of planning and decision making is very low; almost negligible. Though the area is near the capital of the state, there is severe lack of information and unawareness among the rural masses. There is a gap between the panchayats and villagers. The villagers lack awareness about their basic entitlements and rights.



An interesting outcome of our analysis is that the Public Distribution System has been effectively restricted to BPL households. Under the PDS, households are entitled to subsidized commodities in accordance with the type of ration card that they possess. These commodities consist mainly of rice, wheat and edible oil. PDS especially for a migrant household should be universal regardless of what ration card they possess. As the household is already deprived and vulnerable, PDS should not be restricted for them. Both in Lotaniya and Tikarpara, migrants are seen to have very little access to PDS, but through analysis we derived that both blocks displayed maximum consumption and expenditure on food. Thus there is a clear contradiction: even if they are entitled to PDS, migrant households are still consuming food from their own income. Many households do not have access to ration cards, yet everyone holds an identity card or voter's card.



The number of seasonal migrants surpassed the number of permanent migrants. Migrants' working years start from 18 years to 55 years. However, temporary migrant workers only migrate for a short duration of time and they come back home to work in the fields or contribute to agriculture. These temporary workers are footloose migrants too. They keep changing their location as per their work. Around 92% in Lotaniya and 86% of respondents from Tikarpar are temporary migrants. The remaining are permanent migrants.

Permanent migration in the panchayats was very low, and mostly people migrated temporarily. This can be an indication of many issues at the work destination, such as the temporary nature of work, low wages, cost of living, poor living condition etc. All these factors may be responsible for not settling permanently at the destination with their families.

Conclusion

If we look closely at the economic condition of these migrants, we can more clearly assess how critical their situation is. Nearly half of the population of the two panchayats if taken together falls below poverty line. Tikarpar in comparison to Lotania has more families who fall below the poverty line. If we analyze the monthly income of migrant families we can see that for Tikarpar the majority earn between Rs. 2000/- to Rs. 4000/- per month, and in Lotania most earn within the Rs. 4000/- to Rs. 8000/- per month range. Those earning more than Rs. 8000/- in a month comprise a larger percentage in Lotania than in Tikarpar. Keeping in mind the fact that average family size in both the panchayats is 6 to 7 person per family, this level of earning can be identified as very low. 14% of migrant families who earn less than 2,000/- per month are facing acute poverty crisis. The monthly saving of both the blocks has been very low. A maximum of Rs. 500/- to Rs. 2000/- is saved.

Data on the caste-wise and religion-wise division income substantiates the deprivation and poor conditions of lower-caste migrant families. The data shows that the economic condition of the Muslims in Lotania Panchayat is the best among all the classes. Similarly the General category population has far better economic conditions than those belonging to the Scheduled Caste. In a panchayat-wise comparison, Tikarpar lags behind Lotania in terms of the economic status of migrants.

The burden of the family's sustenance and lack of opportunities forces male members of the family to migrate to far-off places in search of livelihood, creating an atmosphere of instability and uncertainty, and results in extreme vulnerability and dependence for those who are left behind.

Permanent migration in the panchayats was very low, and most people migrated temporarily. This can be an indication of many kinds of issues at the work destination: such as the temporary nature of work, low wages, high cost of living, poor living condition etc. All these factors may be responsible for migrants not settling permanently with their families.

Most migrants fell within the age group of 25 to 40 years, followed by 40 to 55 years. Minors and those above 55 years constituted a very small percentage. One striking observation is that the data shows that nearly all of them were literate (around 10% were even graduates): the number of illiterate migrants in both the panchayats was negligible. This gives a clear indication as to how their education was adversely affected by poverty and the burden to earn and sustain their family. Nearly all enrolled in, but could not carry out, higher education.

If we analyze the work that they do we can see that majority of them are unskilled workers followed by skilled manual workers. Migrants in the organized sectors holding a permanent job were very rare. These findings indicate the hardships that they are likely face because the plight of unorganized sector workers, and the exploitation of migrant labourers in India is not a hidden issue. The kind of risk and misfortune that they face is truly a matter of concern.

After all of this, we must ask what kind of returns they receive. Results shows that a majority of them earn between Rs. 3000/- and Rs. 5000/-, followed the group that earns Rs. 5000/- Rs. 8000/. Keeping in mind the cost of living in cities and the number of dependents back home, it appears to be a tough situation, which poses a real threat to their sustenance and the likelihood of a normal healthy life.

Migration enables migrants to survive despite adverse conditions. Its impact could be positive or negative: Positives are associated mainly with economic status as in absence of any kind of source of income, remittances become crucial. The negative impact includes deplorable working conditions, inadequate provision of housing/basic amenities, exploitation, and adverse effects on left-behind families, especially children.

Research into the effects of migration on children's education points towards both positive and negative effects: on one hand earnings obtained through migration are utilized in children's education, yet parental absence (mostly father's), has a negative effect on the growth and development of the children. Whether the positives of migration surpasses the negatives or whether the negatives have more of an effect, is a difficult question to answer.

Annexure: Narrative Glimpses of Migrants' Issues

Maheswar is a migrant and has to work overtime, because what he earns is too little for his living. Either he has to increase his working hours to earn more so that he can send money home, or he has to work for different contractors. Sometimes, it becomes difficult for him to manage at the destination, as well as to send money to his family. He needs to earn more than his living wage.

Pravesh felt that since he doesn't own the means of production, for his subsistence, his contractor has paid him less even after he has been working more. The contractor intentionally pays him less so that in the next month he gets the remaining of the previous income salary. Thus it seems he gets paid for his current work, but never gets paid for over-time.

Munna Lal complains that his due payments are still pending, and that his contractor tells him that the more he works for his contractor, the more secure his job is. Now, Munna always works over-hours/time, but does not get his daily wage. He is a daily wage labourer, but his contractor refuses to pay him daily.

Rajendra met with a serious accident while working as a construction worker. He did not get any help from the contractor. He experienced internal injuries and was not able to recover, and so came back home. He went to various places for treatment, and spent nearly 4 lakhs on treatment.

Suresh worked in road construction and due to heavy exposure to dust particles developed TB and came back home for treatment. This resulted in a financial crisis. He got treatment from a government hospital. However he still has cough problems today and though his TB is cured, his chronic cough gives him chest pain.

Bishwanath is from the Mushahar community, and along with his sons, works at cement factories. They are exploited severely by their contractor, who makes them work over-hours and never gives them due payment. Even if they ask, he refuses to pay their share of income; yet they are also afraid of being beaten by him.