



Migration and Education in Ghorahi-12, Dang: A Path to Rural Property Revitalization

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Article Info

Abstract

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The study identified multiple dynamics of rural to urban migration and aims to analyze the impacts of migration on rural property. Mixed-methods approach is employed to achieve the defined goals. Quantitative data collection and analysis is given priority and then, qualitative data is collected and analyzed to offer comprehensive understanding. The study population of 1470 households comprise total migration from Hapur to Ghorahi has a significant impact on mode of rural property use. Among the migrants, (30.61%) have reported low supply of agricultural work force in rural areas. This results in either selling rural property or leaving it barren. As reported by 6.87 % of respondents, high connectivity among the relatives, friends and local government is well entertained due to migration. A high majority of the migrants, 61.43%, expressed that quality education remained the reason behind migration from Hapur to Ghorahi but the property in Hapur remained neglected due to distance management. Not the expansion of the urban areas, but the transformation of rural to urban accelerates overall development. Education, in this context, can be the comprehensive tool for rural urbanization with strong socio-economic foundation.

Keywords: Congested settlement, connectivity, rural property, rural to urban migration

Introduction

One of the major driving factors of rural to urban migration is to access quality education. In rural areas, the establishment of sound educational institutions, empowerment of existing institutions with increased funding, supply of quality human resource and the provision of well-equipped educational environment can provide a solution to utilize rural property that would otherwise go waste due to rural to urban migration and help retain the rural population. This can ensure access to quality education and foster economic activities in rural areas. Similarly, it can bridge rural-urban education gap, retain rural population, promote equality and inclusivity and foster well-planned urbanization.

Over the past two decades, urbanization has experienced significant growth, particularly in many developing countries. This surge in urbanization has led to mass migration from rural to urban areas, driven by the pursuit of improved economic opportunities and a higher standard of living in urban centers. Currently, approximately 3.5 billion people reside in urban areas worldwide, which is projected to nearly double to nearly six billion by 2050. This trend poses a challenge for rural communities as they face the risk of depleting their natural and agricultural resources, along with the loss of human capital (A. E, 2017). In today's rapidly changing world, this rural to urban migration has posed waste of rural resources as critical challenges for sustainable development.

Rural-to-urban migration is when people move, either temporarily or permanently, from rural area to urban city. In its wider meaning, rural-urban migration is understood as a response to unbalanced development and unequal access to education and employment opportunities. There are wide range of socio-economic, political and capability issues behind the migration from family, community and society level. Present world is featured by globalization, competition in job market, housing and growing inequality. As a result of demographic changes, family members now are required to work and care for each other longer than they did a hundred years ago due to changes in the population. Family is always at the core of social life but remain invisible

in political and professional life. The out flow of rural population to the urban areas is a key component of internal migration. Search of better job opportunities, education facilities, business prospects, freedom seeking, to break through the poverty are some of the socio-economic reasons of rural-to-urban migration (Eshetu & Beshir, 2017).

After Maoist insurgency, rural to urban migration has grown faster mainly in search of peace and security in Dang. Migration from rural to urban areas is the most widespread demographic phenomena in the world. Urbanization comprises the concentration of people in small local townships as well as long-distance migration to large cities. these demographic shifts have a significant impact on rural areas. So, it is crucial to comprehend the reasons for and effects of migration in order to support sustainable development. This opinion based on the assumption that migration results in negative consequences for society, such as stagnant quality of life for migrants and creates shortage of human resource at local level, also, it causes environmental degradation in urban areas due to crowded settlements and, it also causes waste of resources in rural areas. However, there are some evidences that challenge these assumptions with positive outcomes from rural outmigration. Likewise, economic theory and some empirical evidences support rural-to-urban migration as the process of urbanization and advocates the needs to assimilate rural development plans and programmes accordingly (Grau & Aide, 2007).

The study findings indicate that in rural China, the migration paths are shaped by a variety of factors, including demographics, socio-economic condition, and characteristics of the birthplace (Chen, Lu & Treiman, 2021). The findings align with the theory proposing that limitations on migration decrease welfare and hinder the adjustment of labor markets. To pinpoint areas where current research is lacking and to address data needs, the evaluation is concluded (Selod & Shilpi, 2021).

In Afghan cities, agriculture served as the primary economic driver. Nevertheless, the increasing population density has led to the transformation of agro land into unplanned urban developments, resulting in a shift in the role of communities from productive societies to consumer-oriented and dependent ones (Amin & Helmi, 2021). The increasing number of migrants has placed considerable pressure on the infrastructure of urban areas. Issues such as haphazard use of land, reduced availability of open spaces, unmanaged settlements, and inadequate essential services are among the challenges arising from the continuous migration to urban areas (TRN, 2023). Internal migration generated rapid urbanization and uncontrolled infrastructure construction in urban and semi-urban areas in Dang.

Literature Review

Rural areas have long been the backbone of agriculture and leading in natural resource harvesting. However, with the increasing trend of rural to urban migration, rural resources and property are at risk. Such a migration trend has resulted to wastage of rural properties and resources (Ojha et al, 2017).

In many rural communities, the out-migration from rural areas to cities, rural resources and property, including rural housing, farmland, forests, water resources, and other infrastructure, have been found either neglected or underutilized (KC & Race, 2020). As people move to urban centers, the focus and investment in these resources decline, lack maintenance and renovation resulting to their degradation, deterioration and wastage. Finally, the potential productivity and value of these resources are not fully realized and go waste (Ishak et al, 2021).

The Panchayat era initiated 'back-to-the-village' campaign with the objective of enhancing rural infrastructure so as to encourage inhabitants to remain in their hometowns, thereby fostering rural development and consequently national progress to control rural to urban migration. Unfortunately, the campaign turned to be a failure due to the inadequate attention given by Panchayat rulers to ensure its success. Similarly, taking this endeavor as a role model, the CPN-UML led government introduced the 'build-your-own-village campaign'. During the time urban migration was on the rise. Although the campaign was well-intentioned, the government fell short in providing the necessary infrastructure and creating a conducive environment to persuade people to stay in rural areas. Consequently, the fate of this campaign mirrored that of the Panchayat initiative (TRN, 2023).

Furthermore, the wastage of rural resources and property has broader implications for local economies and communities. It can lead to a decline in employment opportunities, as the lack of investment and maintenance

makes rural areas less attractive for economic activities. On top of that, the wastage of rural resources and property also affects the overall sustainability and resilience of rural communities. With the migration to urban areas, people miss family cohesion and support which is crucial for maintaining social stability and well-being. Hence, family-centric development approaches and strategies are essential for ensuring inclusive and sustainable progress. Migration, on the other hand is inevitable to promote welfare and to properly adjust labor markets (Selod & Shilpi, 2021).

Urban development remains incomplete in the absence of rural development. Urban areas depend on rural ecosystem to meet their needs as food, water, wood and raw materials. Similarly, rural areas get benefitted from urban development in terms of market, agricultural inputs, employment opportunities (Gebre & Gebremedhin, 2019). This shows the mutual benefits both the areas can have. But out-migration from rural areas may challenge the interdependence. On one hand, there is mal-production of rural ecosystem products to satisfy growing urban needs; on the other hand, rural resources and properties go waste. The migrants in the urban areas need to re-invest in unproductive sector as housing and need to depend on market economy for food, vegetables, fruits etc. which otherwise would be free of cost for migrants while being in the village.

The approaches as, neo-ruralization, smart villages, or re-ruralization, can be the important tools for rebalancing rural–urban inequalities, hence attracting new inhabitants and promoting revitalization. Sustained local economies, and not just rural ones, increase permanent residents and ensures the development of trade and commerce on one hand, and on the other hand, these new settlers can find job opportunities and develop businesses for the community beyond traditional agri-cultural activities. Thus, re-ruralization aims to revitalize local communities that have lost population (Motta, Jaime & Escobar, 2022).

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Objectives

General objective of the study is to analyze the impacts of rural property abandonment on the migrants and to investigate the perspectives and experiences of the migrants. The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- To assess the impacts of outmigration on rural property,
- To assess migration motivations, and destination preferences with reference to education

Conceptual Framework

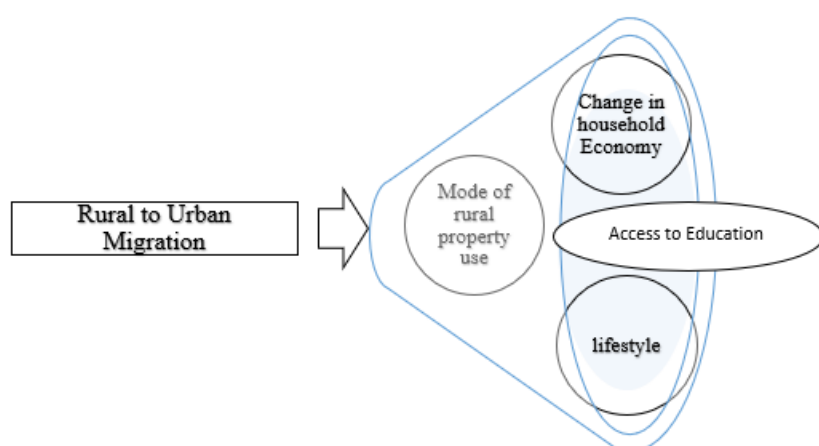


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Methods and Materials

A mixed-methods approach combining quantitative and qualitative research methods is employed to achieve the defined objectives. Based on embedded mixed method design, quantitative data collection and analysis is given priority and then, qualitative data is collected and analysed to offer comprehensive understanding.

Data collection and analysis

Pre-structured survey questionnaire was distributed among the total migrants who have migrated from Hapur to Ghorahi to collect primary data. The data of total migrated population only to Ghorahi (1470) was derived from Ward office as recorded under vital registration. The study population comprise total migrated household from Hapur to Ghorahi. Qualitative data was collected from the local government and leaders of rural society. Key Informants Interview with Ward officials, school head teachers, and society leaders using semi-structured questionnaire was used for qualitative data collection and analysed them using frequency table. Collected data were processed with the help of statistical software as SPSS. Survey data was analysed using descriptive statistics to quantify migration patterns, land use changes, and migration motivations.

Limitations of the study

The study is limited to Ghorahi, SMC-12. The logic behind area selection is that this ward remained backward, though it is only within ten minutes of driving distance from Ghorahi, the administrative and economic centre of Dang district.

Ethical consideration

Ethical considerations are prior to carry out any research work so as to ensure the well-being, rights, confidentiality of the participants. This process helps to maintain integrity of the research process as well. For this, informed consent was obtained from all participants within the professional standards and ethical guidelines.

Results and Discussion

The study has considered migration as the mode of rural property use, change in household economy and access to opportunities and quality of lifestyle. Total number of household migrated from Hapur to Ghorahi is 1470. They were inquired about the migration experience and derived multiple responses. The respondents' opinions are categorised in six different categories.

Table 1: *Mode of rural property use*

S. N.	Category	No. of Respondents	Total %
1	Lack agricultural human resource	450	30.61%
2	Low yield	119	8.09%
3	Harvesting problems	311	21.16%
4	Lack regular supervision	530	36.05%
5	Sold	45	3.06%
6	Barren/Stranded	15	1.02%
Total		1470	100%

Source: *Field Survey, 2023*

Table 1 presents the respondents' views on mode of rural property use. Majority of the household (36.05%) viewed that their rural property lack regular supervision after their migration and the resources go waste. Out of total 1470 households 30.61% reported that there is shortage of manpower in agricultural activities. The result offers valuable insights into the primary challenges and concerns faced by migrants regarding their rural property use in the agricultural sector.

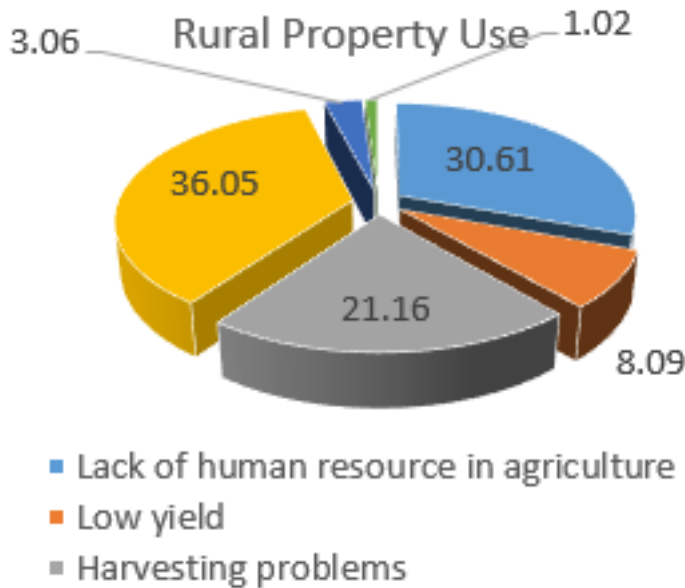


Figure 1: Mode of Rural Property Use

Table 2: Change in household economy and access to opportunities

S. N.	Category	No. of Respondents	Total %
1	Deteriorating	149	10.14%
2	Increased family expenses	1017	69.18%
3	Expensive living	203	13.81%
4	High connectivity	101	6.87
Total		1470	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The table presents the issues and situations faced by the migrants regarding change in household economy and access to opportunities. Out of the total 1470, 1017 respondents, representing the highest percentage at 69.18% indicated a significant concern regarding the rising expenses associated with supporting their families. Similarly, 13.81% reported experiencing expensive living conditions it is due to high costs of housing, utilities, or other essential goods and services. Overall, the table suggests that economic pressures and the increased cost of living have put the family in internal conflict. In spite of various negative experiences, the respondents felt some positive glimpse of high connectivity among the relatives, friends and local government.

Table 3: Lifestyle quality

S. N.	Category	No. of Respondents	Total %
1	Safe personal zone	102	6.94%
2	Easy access to basic services	609	41.43%
3	Relief from physical work burden	312	21.23%
4	Congested settlement	301	20.48%
5	Social and emotional distance	120	8.16%
7	Dull and monotonous	26	1.76%
Total		1470	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The above table presents respondents' perceptions of change in quality of lifestyle due to rural to urban migration from Hapur to Ghorahi, the core urban centre of Dang district. Majority of the respondents (41.43%) have experienced easy access to basic services which they were deprived from, while being in Hapur. Likewise, 21.23% of the surveyed population was of the opinion that they have relief from physical work burden. They used to be overburdened with the works as cattle caring, agricultural activities, fuel wood collection etc. The participants (20.48%) found congested housing situation in city area. Interestingly, the participants were so depressed with the experience that their social and emotional attachments were battered with the migration.

Table 4: *Distribution of respondents based on educational access and learning conditions*

S. N.	Category	No of Respondents	Total %
1	Easy access to quality education	903	61.43%
2	Healthy learning environment	60	4.08%
4	Peer effect	112	7.62%
7	Level of satisfaction	395	26.87%
Total		1470	100%

Source: *Field Survey, 2023*

Table 4 presents the facts as reported by the migrants when asked about the access to quality education in the migrated area. Most of the respondents (61.43 %) were of the opinion that search of quality education was the main objective of their migration. They viewed that visit to the hospital is rare and conditional but going to school is regular and is compulsory. So, easy access to educational institutions that deliver quality education to their children was driving factor for them to migrate. Hapur is only within 7 to 10 km. from Ghorahi and was connected to Ghorahi with graveled, again, 4.08 % of the respondents said that they had left the village in search of healthy learning environment and to manage time for extra tuition classes for the kids, which, according to them, was not favourable while being in the village. Similarly, 26.87% of the respondents expressed high level of their satisfaction with the decision they took.

Conclusion

This paper attempts to explore different dynamics of rural to urban migration. After Maoist insurgency rural to urban migration has grown faster mainly in search of peace and security. There is significant impact on mode of rural property use, change in household economy and access to oopportunities and lifestyle quality. Migrants have been suffering from low supply of agricultural human resource, low yield of crops and harvesting problems due to lack of regular first hand supervision and distant management. This has resulted to either selling rural property or leaving it barren/stranded or neglected. The sustainable residential growth is in crisis due to deteriorating household economy with increased family expenses in the city. Although, the life of the migrants has become expensive, high connectivity among the relatives, friends and local government is well entertained. In overall, there are positive impacts on personal zone, access to basic services and relief from physical work burden. But, congested settlement, social and emotional distance, dull and monotonous lifestyle have been the destiny of migrants' life. Various national level efforts and campaigns in different periods have been made to retain rural population but the scenario seems even worse. The approaches as, neo-ruralization, smart villages, or re-ruralization, can be the important tools for attracting new inhabitants in rural areas and promoting rural revitalization (Motta, Jaime & Escobar, 2022). Highlighting rural (Hapur) to urban (Ghorahi) migration, improvements or interventions from all three tiers of government, are needed. Rural-based urban planning with improved education, health and physical infrastructure can be instrumental to retain rural population and control rural to urban migration.

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