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## Impacts of Seasonal Migration on the Education of Children: A Case Study of Barahatal Rural Municipality in Surkhet District, Nepal

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### Abstract

*This study aims to study impacts of seasonal migration on children's education. This article examines the educational effects of seasonal movement in the Ekheni village of Barahatal Rural Municipality-6, Surkhet, Nepal. Descriptive and exploratory study design, were adopted for which data were gathered with semi-structured in-depth interview focus group discussion and interviews with 107 community-living persons and local informants selected by convenience sampling method. The data were processed through simple statistical methods to uncover patterns and highlights. The temporary movements have important effects on disadvantaged populations, notably in rural Nepal, where they affect children's access to education through changes in dropout and absenteeism patterns. This process is fueled by pull factors, better prospect of infrastructure, superior economic chances or education, medicine and transportation facilities in destination locations in comparison to pull locations, and push factors, low land productivity, economic difficulties and scarcity of important social services in origin locations. Results show that seasonal movement is driven mainly by the demand to maintain livelihood in the local environment and greater hopes of finding opportunity elsewhere. At the same time, the migration of economically productive people disrupts family compositions and exposes children to school disruption risks, like school dropout and chronic absenteeism. The study suggests that local actions are needed to provide for the roots of and outcomes of seasonal migration. Which enhanced employment opportunities, better access to schools and stronger rural facilities are equally important for minimizing the negative impact of seasonal migration on children's schooling.*

### Keywords

Seasonal migration, Rural Nepal, Education, Livelihoods, Children.

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## **Impacts of Seasonal Migration on the Education of Children: A Case Study of Barahatal Rural Municipality in Surkhet District, Nepal**

### **1. Introduction**

Migration, a major driving factor of population change, is the process of moving one area to another with the aim of living permanently (or semi-permanently) in that area. As defined by the United Nations Multilingual Dictionary, “Migration is a type of geographical transfer from geographical unit to another, and it regularly includes a change of domicile, from the place of departure (from the origin) to the place of arrival (at the destination)”. Migration can be voluntary or involuntary and is defined as the act of changing one’s place of residence by crossing specified administrative or political boundaries (IOM, 2005; Lee, 1966, as cited in Belbase, 2013: 29). Migration is a process of selection, and is mediated by economic, social, educational, and demographic aspects of individuals or families.

Internal migration processes are the change in population distribution between regions of a country without changing the total size of the national population. International migration, on the other hand, involves movement across national boundaries and may occur voluntarily, in search of better opportunities, or involuntarily, as a result of adverse circumstances (Acharya, 2018: 30).

Internal displacement of the population can also be a classification based on time, movement and geography (permanent, temporary, semi-permanent and seasonal migration). There are recurring patterns e.g., rural-to-urban, urban-to-rural, rural-to-rural and urban-to-rural movement in motion (Gyawali, 2011: 121) . Migration is one of the most intricate demographic phenomena, which is influenced by economic social conditions, political territorial stability, and so on. Push factors, such as limited resources, lack of opportunities, and unfavorable environments, compel individuals to migrate, while pull factors, such as better employment prospects and access to services, attract them to new destinations (Gyawali, 2011: 121).

Seasonal migration, i.e., short-term, repetitive movement for survival or occupation, is one form of temporary migration. It is frequently related to agricultural or climatic cycles (Nelson, 1976; Zelinsky, 1971). In the case of India, for example, the seasonal migrant is defined as any household member having stayed away for one month but not more than six months in the course of the past year, usually for work (NSSO, 2010). In Nepal seasonal migration is a continuum, and is usually carried out for economic reasons and there is an attempt to stay connected with the area of origin (Keshri & Bhagat, 2011).

Migration has significant implications, especially with rural populations where it degrades quality of life and, as in the case of school children, education. Quality of life includes all the resources and facilities which are needed for the well-being of the people (Acharya, 2018: 122). Seasonal migration adversely impacts children by increasing school dropout rates, absenteeism, and disrupting their academic progress and overall development (Suwal, 2014: 245).

In Nepal, a low-income, geographically diverse and socio-economically threatened country, internal migration is a major problem. Accelerated population growth and migration have engendered different social, economic, and political problems for municipalities and developmental projects. Migration is frequently a consequence of the undesirable situation in the place of origin, that of the promise of improvement in the place of destination (Suwal, 2014: 245).

Tarai area which has a climate of tropical and subtropical, provides an example of the intricacy of internal migration in Nepal. Despite covering only 23 percent of the country area, it houses a far greater proportion of its population. In 2001, the Tarai housed 48 percent of Nepal's population, with significant migration from the hills and mountains (Acharya, 2014: 123). In Surkhet district, the migration rate reached 20.68 percent with male and female migration rates of 21.76 percent and 19.64 percent respectively (CBS, 2002). The 2068 census showed a total population of 169 421 males and 181 303 females in the district with an annual increase of 1.95 percent (CBS, 2068). The 10 yr Maoist war exacerbated internal displacement within the Karnali belt to place like Surkhet.

Recently in so much of Barahatal Rural municipality-6 the Ekheni community has been suffering large-scale seasonal movement. With

restricted local employment, economically able persons have been forced to relocate to seek a better life, with both children and elderly people compromising with the situation. The consequences of this migration include family separation, disrupted education, parental absence, and early marriages. Although there has been a great deal of research regarding international migration and economic effects, few research has been made to examine the educational implications of seasonal migration in the country of Nepal. The present study seeks to address this gap investigating the direct and indirect effects of seasonal movement on the learning of children in Ekheni rural area.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Theoretical Review**

According to Bedford, Bedford, and Ho (2009: 14), seasonal migration, typically lasting less than a year, remains a consistent form of circular migration between countries with high and low income levels. The livelihood approach shifts away from traditional economic and Marxist frameworks of political and institutional analysis, viewing migration as a strategy employed by individuals, households, or communities to improve their livelihoods (Skeldon, 2002; Kothari, 2002; Ellis, 2000; 2003; de Haan, 1999; 2000; Deshingkar, 2004; McDowell & de Haan, 1997). Contemporary theories extend beyond Marxist and neo-classical economic interpretations by incorporating perspectives on livelihoods and social exclusion (Deshingkar & Start, 2003). Kothari (2002) highlights that while livelihood strategies are varied and multifaceted, migration remains a key component for many poor populations in developing countries.

Migration is not a modern idea, but rather an ongoing process in human history. It is a global phenomenon shaped by a complex interplay of social, economic, psychological, political, institutional, and environmental factors (Singh, 1998). Nepal, a country with a varied topography and socio-economic limitations, is not an exception. Migratory tendencies are so closely linked to the nation's history that Toni Hagen (1960) described Nepal as a "Migratory Nation". Historical documents give an estimate that by 1978, around 600,000 Nepalese 9 percent of the overall Nepalese population-permanently lived in locations other than their birthplace" (Sharma, 1978: 9).

The factors of migration are commonly described as push and pull factors. Push factors are those that compel individuals to leave their

place of origin, such as lack of job opportunities, inadequate access to education and healthcare, social and cultural constraints, environmental challenges, and political instability. On the other hand, pull factors entice migrants to destination areas by better employment opportunities, enhanced infrastructure and a good range of quality education and health services, fertile land for cultivation, and in general better living circumstances (Islam, 2015: 30).

## **2.2 Trends in Migration**

The process of migration has been an integral part of the socio-economic fabric of Nepal for the early years of its nation-building history. Internal migration was first concentrated in the eastern Terai, especially in hill and mountainous areas. The availability of fertile agricultural land in the Terai served as a major pull factor, leading to a significant population increase in the western Terai, which grew more than six fold between 1952/54 and 2001. The majority of migrants come from the western hills/mountains. Over time, urban migration has also become increasingly prevalent. Rural-to-urban migration share increased from 17.2 percent in 1991 to 25.5 percent in 2001, indicating the historic, changing nature of migration in Nepal (Gurung, 2012: 3).

Push and pull forces have an important role on migration patterns. Access to jobs, food, healthcare, education, and transportation and recreational facilities are potent attraction factors for migration to urban and Terai settlements. On the other hand, push factors, including fewer employment possibilities, lower health and education services, social and political bias, violence, natural disasters and undesirable environmental situation, compel people to emigrate from their home centers (Islam, 2015: 30).

## **2.3 Impacts of Migration**

Migration has significant effects on both origin and destination locations. In the place of origin, migration leads to a decrease in population, leaving behind a high proportion of dependent individuals such as children and the elderly. This loss of human power has a negative impact on local security, economic productivity, and civic vitality. Conversely, at the destination, migration results in population growth, increasing pressure on resources, escalating land values, and altering the demographic composition, often causing environmental degradation and social challenges such as crime and inequality (Gyawali, 2011: 133).

The demographic consequences of migration include changes in population distribution, composition, and growth patterns. At the point of origin, the death of young, working people lowers agricultural productivity and food security. In the meantime, at the destination, congestion, unemployment, and over-competition for scarce and limited services and resources are the typical results. These trends are highly salient in Nepal, where movement to the Terai region of the foothills and mountains has impoverished many rural areas of skilled labour and disrupted their customary agricultural practices (Belbase, 2013: 35).

#### **2.4 Economic Impacts**

Economically, migration generates a split in the place of origin and the destination. In rural areas, the absence of skilled and educated individuals hinders the mobilization of local resources, leading to reduced agricultural output and food insecurity. In urban and Terai area, migration leads not only to land price increase, but also to housing and service density, and employment rate increase as the competition between workers increase. Despite the level of education, many high educated migrants are forced to take low-skill jobs because they can find few job opportunities that are suitable for their skills (Dhakal, 2015: 65).

Foreign migration has further economic implications. Remittances sent by migrants are sources of household income, but lack of reinvestment or economic growth might occur. The exodus of highly skilled labour to other nations, and the inflow of foreign labour into Nepal, have generated a dependence on foreign economies which in turn affects the economic security of the whole country (Belbase, 2013: 35).

#### **2.5 Social and Health Impacts**

The social and health consequences of migration are multifaceted. In rural regions, the process of emigration has disrupted the ancestral family organization, and a large number of households have suffered from lack of male adult members. This trend adds new pressures to women and children, breaking the social fabric and enhancing the risks. Overcrowding in urban areas has overloaded infrastructure and services and resulted in unhygienic living environments, Limited access to drinking water and disease outbreaks. Further, unemployment in migrant

populations is a factor that often result in social crimes, i.e., theft, robbery and domestic violence (Dhakal, 2015: 66).

## **2-6 Demographic and Educational Impacts**

Migration exerts a demographic force on demographic attributes including sex ratio, age structure, and dependency structure. In rural areas, the mass exodus of young men depletes the working-age population, which in turn leaves behind a much larger proportion of women, children and elderly. At the destination, the arrival of youth, working age migrants, is pro-employment-age, and can at the same time lead to local-migrant tensions resulting in social tensions or conflict (Sapkota, 2016: 52).

Migration is a dynamic and complex phenomenon that shapes multiple dimensions of society. Push and pull forces of migration in Nepal contribute to substantial internal and external movement, which carries deep consequences on the demographic, economic, social, and health fabric of origin and destination areas. Addressing these challenges requires targeted policies and interventions that balance development across regions, reduce inequalities, and enhance opportunities in rural areas to mitigate the adverse effects of migration.

The education of children from migrant households is significantly disrupted by seasonal migration. These children are either left behind with one parent or no parental care or accompany their parents to work. Those who travel with their parents often face interruptions in their schooling, leading to early dropouts or complete withdrawal from education. Even when children remain enrolled in schools, either in their home communities or at migration destinations, frequent movement between source and destination regions hampers their academic progress and overall achievement (Shah, 2021).

## **3. Methods of Study**

The study was conducted in the Ekheni community of Barahatal Rural Municipality-6, Surkhet, Nepal, a rural area located on the banks of the Bheri River. The Ekheni community is composed of displaced individuals who were relocated during the Maoist armed revolution in 2009 AD from various districts of the Karnali Province. This community was selected due to its high prevalence of seasonal migration and its significant impact on children's education.

A descriptive and exploratory research design was adopted to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issue. The descriptive design facilitated a detailed examination of the patterns and impacts of seasonal migration, while the exploratory design allowed for an in-depth investigation of participants' perspectives and lived experiences.

Semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and field observations were used to gather data which provided qualitative insights into the socio-economic drivers of migration and its effects on children's education, while field observations offered a contextual understanding of the community dynamics and the challenges faced by children and families.

Convenience sampling was employed to select participants who could provide relevant and diverse perspectives on the topic. A total of 107 participants, including parents, children, community leaders, and teachers, were chosen to ensure a holistic understanding of the impacts of seasonal migration. The collected data were analyzed using simple statistical tools and techniques to identify trends, patterns, and key findings related to the educational impacts of seasonal migration.

## 4. Result/Findings

### 4.1 Caste/Ethnicity structure of Respondents

Nepal is multilingual, multi religious and multiethnic society. Many religions have made sufficient foundation for vividness of castes too. There is saying "Nepal is a country of four castes and thirty-six different tribes". The social features of migrants are diverse. Another important factor that has a direct impact on migration is ethnic composition. Caste and ethnicity compositions of seasonal migrant's in study area are given in the following table:

**Table-1: Caste/Ethnicity Composition of Respondents**

Ethnicity	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Brahmin	1	0.93
Chhetri	1	0.93
Thakuri	2	1.86
Magar	19	17.75
Dalit	84	78.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024.

Table-1 shows that majority 78.50 percent of respondents were Dalit. Similarly, 17.75 percent of respondents were Magars. Likewise, 1.86 percent respondents were Thakuri, 0.93 percent from Chhetri and 0.93 percent from Brahmin. The above table shows that the majority population is found from Dalit.

#### 4.2 The Respondents' Occupational Status

One of the key characteristics of migrants is their occupation. Seasonal migrants frequently look for better jobs that would improve their level of life and financial situation. People's occupations have an impact on their lifestyles, traditions, and educational attainment. The occupational composition has a significant impact on people's social and economic standing. Occupational composition of the seasonal migrants in study area is given below

**Table-2: Occupational Status of Respondents**

Occupation	No. of respondents	Percentage
Agriculture	27	25.23
Trade	5	4.67
Seasonal migration labour/ agriculture	70	65.42
Government service	5	4.67
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024.

The above table shows that 65.42 percent of all respondents worked in agriculture and seasonal jobs. Similarly 25.23 percent of total respondents were involve in agriculture as their occupation. Likewise, 4.67 percent population engage in small business in the community.

The Focus Group discussion reveals that majority of the people migrated in the Kala Pahad (India) for seasonal employment because they have no any option of livelihood except of seasonal migration. Ramesh Ramjali adds that most people of Ekheni have 9 kattha land per house hold but due to the lack of irrigation thought the year we have food sufficiency only for three month so we had to survive by eating roots of Thakal from the forest during the lockdown during the covid 19<sup>th</sup> period.

### 4-3 Literacy Status and Educational Attainment of Respondents

Education is the prominent factor of human being to be a rational responsible. Literacy and educational attainment are vital indicators of migrants' social status. Educated population migrated more than non-educated person because educated person wanted to more opportunity in every sector than illiterate population. Educated people migrate in search of various life chances than uneducated.

**Table-3: Distribution of Respondents by Literacy Status and Educational Attainment**

Literacy status	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Literate	91	85.04
Illiterate	16	14.95
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024.

Data contained in the table above show that 85.04 percent of the total respondents were literate and rest of them 14.95 percent of respondents were illiterate.

### 4-4 Average Monthly Income of Respondents

The level of living standards and other economic activities are significantly influenced by the average monthly income. They may live a better life if their average monthly salary is higher. In the study area, average monthly income of the respondents is given below:

**Table-4: Distribution of Respondents by their Average Monthly Income**

Monthly Income (NPR)	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Less than 5000	20	18.69
5000 -10000	70	65.42
10000 - 20000	12	11.21
20000 and Above	5	4.67
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024.

The above table on the preceding page shows that 65.42 percent of respondent's average income was 5000-10,000. Likewise, 18.69 percent of the total respondent's average monthly income was less than 5,000 and above. In this way, nearly 11.21 percent of respondent's in come was 10000-20000 like wise 4.67 percent of respondents had above 20,000 income in per month.

#### 4.5 Causes of Seasonal Migration

No one people will ordinarily like to leave the place of origin, friends as well as kin and near relatives. The causes of leaving or migratory movements are deliberately made and many causes are responsible for it. We have to take into consideration the factors accountable for such deliberate movement of people.

**Table-5: Distribution of Respondents by Causes of Seasonal Migration**

Causes	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Lack of opportunities in locality	93	86.91
Lack of irrigated land	7	6.54
Lack of capital	4	3.73
No land	3	2.80
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024.

The above table shows that 86.91 percent of respondents were leaved their community in temporarily due to lack of opportunities. Likewise 27.27 percent of the total respondents were leaved their community due to the lack of irrigated land . In this way, 3.73 percent of respondents were leaved their origin due to lack of capital in their community and rest of respondents were leaved their origin due to no land for agriculture.

#### 4.6 Impacts of Seasonal Migration on Education

Education is the backbone of an individual for his/her further career but searching better opportunity most of the people leave their birthplace Education is the light of life which shows a successful future. But sustaining is seen most priority in Ekheni community which causes seasonal migration of the parents hamper on the education of children Quality education causes of leaving or migratory movements are deliberately made. The following table shows the impacts of seasonal migration on education:

**Table-6: Impacts of Seasonal Migration on Education of Children**

Impact	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Going with parent to India for specific time	83	77.57
Being parent less	9	8.41

Early marriage and drop out	8	16.82
Lack of Study environment	7	6.54
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024.

The above table shows that, among total respondents majority 77.57 percent of respondents responded caused of dropout is seasonal migration because we take our children with us to India while we go for seasonal migration to India. Likewise 8.41 percent of the total respondents are being like parentless because there is no any responsibility toward the children of those people who are in India. Likewise, 16.82 respondents responded had early marriage due to the parent lessens and leaved the school.

The Focus Group discussion represents that majority of the people leave their place of origin for job opportunities seasonally due to the lack of opportunities in the study area. Most land of the Ekheni Community of Baraha Rural Municipality have no irrigated land at all and rest of the people leave due to the lack fertile land and opportunities.

#### 4.7 Impacts of Seasonal Migration

Similarly, developments of society, change in the misconceptions, nuclear family, improvement of economic status of women, job opportunities are the positive impacts of internal migration in the destination (Sharma, 1978: 10). But the seasonal migration from the Ekheni community to India did not any positive changes rather it created different problems in the community among them education dropout is important problem seen in Ekheni community as discussed in the issue of social mobility for searching the opportunities by the people of study area. Following table presents the distribution of respondents by impacts that seen in the study area:

**Table-7: Distribution of Respondents by Impacts that were seen in the Study Area**

Impact	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Irregularity in school	45	42.05
Drop out from school	13	12.21
Poor performance of children	49	45.79
Total	107	100

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024.

Table-7 shows that majority 42.05 percent of respondents answer was there is lack of school regularity due to the seasonal migration labour children do not go to school due to poor condition likewise there is lack of human resource in the study area because women and male are found here most of the young male go to kala pahad for seasonal job . Similarly, 12.21 percent of respondent's answer was children were dropped out due to the seasonal migration and 45.79 answered that there is poor performance due to irregularities in school as well as frequently migration of the parents along with children.

The Focus Group discussion reveals that Majority of the people felt difficulty in education due long period absenteeism and seasonal migration in the Ekheni community. On the other hand, seasonal migration creating the situation of parentless family because of the second marriage of father and mother too during the period of seasonal migration. Among the participants of FGD the Puja BK reveals her family sufferings due to the seasonal migration of her father who married with another girl during seasonal migration and ignored the family members after this economic crisis was created so mother also married with another husband as a result Puja BK and her two younger sister became parent less , after some years Puja BK also married with a boy of the same community in recommendation of villagers on the other hand two sister are becoming helpless in family now they are spending their life by living in the relatives' house turn by turn . This process is gradually increasing day by day in the Ekheni community due to the effects of seasonal migration.

It is quite clear that the data highlight that the majority of respondents 78.50 percent are Dalits, indicating their significant reliance on seasonal migration labour, with 65. percent of all respondents engaged in this occupation. Agriculture is the second most common livelihood, involving 25.23 percent, while trade and government service each account for only 4.6 percent. The dominance of Dalits and other marginalized groups in seasonal labour suggests persistent socio-economic disparities and limited local opportunities. These findings point to an agrarian-based economy with high economic vulnerability and minimal occupational diversification, emphasizing the need for inclusive development policies, skill-building programs, and improved local employment opportunities.

The findings reveal that the majority of respondents 65.42 percent earn a modest monthly income of NPR 5,000-10,000, with 18.69

percent earning less than NPR 5,000, highlighting widespread economic vulnerability. Seasonal migration is primarily driven by a lack of local opportunities, as reported by 86.91 percent of respondents, followed by the absence of irrigated land 6.54 percent, lack of capital 3.73 percent, and landlessness 2.80 percent. These factors suggest that limited income and structural challenges in local livelihoods compel migration, underscoring the need for policies that promote local job creation, agricultural infrastructure, and resource accessibility to alleviate dependence on seasonal migration.

Seasonal migration in the Ekheni community has significant adverse effects on children's education. The majority 77.57 percent of respondents reported taking their children to India during migration, causing school dropouts. Additionally, 16.82 percent cited early marriage and school dropout due to parental absence, and 8.41 percent mentioned children being left parentless, leading to neglect. Seasonal migration also results in 42.05 percent of children experiencing irregular school attendance, 45.79% facing poor academic performance, and 12.21 percent dropping out entirely. The Focus Group Discussions revealed that migration disrupts family stability, increases absenteeism, and fosters issues like second marriages, leaving children without parental care. These challenges emphasize the urgent need for community-focused interventions, such as improving local opportunities, providing educational support, and addressing family instability caused by seasonal migration.

## **5. Discussion**

The study of the Ekheni community reveals compelling insights into the reasons behind migration. A significant proportion, 86.91 percent, of respondents reported leaving their community temporarily due to a lack of local opportunities. This highlights the pressing need for livelihood options within the community. Additionally, 27.27 percent migrated because of limited access to irrigated land, indicating the role of agricultural challenges in driving migration. A smaller fraction, 3.73 percent cited the lack of capital as a reason for their departure, while others left due to the complete absence of agricultural land. These findings underscore the structural challenges that compel individuals to seek opportunities elsewhere.

Previous research provides a broader context to these migration patterns. KC (2015) identifies poverty, income inequality,

unemployment, difficult living conditions, and food insecurity as key drivers of internal migration. These same factors are increasingly pushing individuals to explore opportunities abroad. When viewed together, both the Ekheni-specific findings and broader studies suggest that migration is not merely an individual choice but rather a response to systemic socio-economic and environmental pressures. Addressing these underlying issues requires targeted interventions to enhance local livelihood opportunities and reduce disparities, which could potentially mitigate the need for migration.

Insights from the focus group discussions (FGD) further highlight the educational struggles faced by children in the Ekheni community, particularly those whose parents engage in seasonal migration. A high dropout rate is observed among these children, primarily because no one is available to provide adequate care or support in their parents' absence. This lack of supervision not only contributes to poor academic performance and chronic absenteeism but also exposes children to other socio-economic vulnerabilities, including an increased likelihood of early marriage, driven by poverty and limited opportunities.

Seasonal migration poses significant challenges to the education of children from migrant families, disrupting their learning and overall development. As noted by Shah (2021) and Adunts and Afunts (2019), children often either accompany their parents to work sites or remain behind with minimal parental supervision. Those who migrate with their families frequently drop out of school or remain enrolled only nominally, with constant relocations severely hindering their educational continuity and progress. This transient lifestyle places children in a vulnerable position, making consistent schooling an unachievable goal for many.

This study reveals that 42.05 percent of respondents reported irregular school attendance due to seasonal migration, exacerbated by poor living conditions. School dropouts were linked to migration in 12.21 percent of cases, and 45.79 percent of respondents attributed poor academic performance to frequent parental migration and irregular attendance. Moreover, the migration of young males to Kala Pahad for work leaves communities with insufficient local resources to support children's education.

The previous researches show that seasonal migration disrupts children's education, particularly for those migrating with parents or

engaging in temporary work. As Rai *et al.* (2023) highlight, these children often prioritize earning over schooling, resulting in academic struggles and missed opportunities for higher education, which perpetuates cycles of labour migration. Siddiqui (2003, as cited in Moala & Lam, 2016) adds that while parental migration may sometimes enhance education through remittances, the absence of mothers adversely impacts educational outcomes.

In developing countries, seasonal labour migration from rural to urban areas or less developed to more developed regions is a common household strategy to combat poverty. However, children of migrants are the most adversely affected, whether they travel with their parents or remain in their villages (Roy *et al.*, 215).

## **6. Conclusion**

Seasonal migration significantly disrupts children's education in the Ekheni community, primarily due to the socio-economic vulnerabilities and structural challenges faced by migrant families. The study shows that most of respondents migrate due to insufficient prospects in their community, disproportionately affecting underprivileged communities like Dalits. Parents are frequently forced to move with their kids due to seasonal migration, which results in low academic performance, inconsistent attendance, and school dropouts. Furthermore, neglect, early marriage, and insufficient supervision are common among children who are left behind, which further impedes their academic and psychological growth. These difficulties draw attention to the serious social and educational repercussions of migration, especially for marginalized groups, and underscore the necessity of focused initiatives to address these problems.

Migration as a coping strategy underscores systemic issues, including low agricultural productivity, lack of irrigation, insufficient capital, and limited access to quality education and local employment. These challenges perpetuate cycles of poverty and dependence on migration while destabilizing family structures. Addressing these issues requires targeted interventions, such as improving local livelihoods, enhancing educational infrastructure, and providing support systems for migrant families. Without such measures, seasonal migration will continue to undermine the educational opportunities and long-term potential of children in the Ekheni community.

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