

Impact of Kosi River Floods on Migration: A Geographical Analysis

1. Mrinalani Priya

Research Scholar

Department of Geography

Patna University, Patna

Email ID : mrinalani.priya@gmail.com

Research Supervisor

2. Prof. (Dr.) K.N. Paswan

Pro Vice Chancellor

Magadh University, Bodh Gaya

Department of Geography

Ex. Head of Department Geography

Patna University, Patna

Abstract

The Kosi river is famous for furious flood. Certainly after the construction of flood protection embankment the impact of flood has confined in the area existing between two flood protection embankment. Areas lying outside the embankment face the problems when excess flood water damages the embankment. Whenever such floods take place people residing in the area face lot of problems. More particularly the labour class people face more problems. They move to relatively better developed areas like Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat, Western Uttar Pradesh etc. scheduled cast communities belonging to landless labourers and economically hard pressed face more problems than their communities. They become homeless and even face the damage of crops which they grow on land of rich people.

Introduction:

Since occurrence of flood in the Kosi flood plain considerably affects the labour class people of the poor people, the paper has given more emphasis on the effects of flood on scheduled caste communities more particularly labourers. Whenever such conditions prevail, labour class people or the poor people out-migrant some money for the maintenance of their family members living at the native places. These migrants also try to improve the economic and social conditions of the family members.

Objectives of the Study

The present study is based on the following objectives:

1. The present study aims to study migration phenomena in the Kosi plain.
2. The study highlights the factors affecting migration.
3. The study analyses the socio-economic condition of the migrant families of scheduled castes in the study area.

Hypothesis

The present study is based on the following hypothesis:

1. More flood affected areas are dominated by scheduled caste people.
2. Most of these people are involved in primary activities.

- Scheduled castes migrants families have recorded better improvement in social & economic conditions.

Methodology

The present study is based on both Primary and Secondary data. The collection of primary data has been done with the help of questionnaires. The secondary data has been also used.

Study Area

The flood prone areas of Kosi include the districts of Saharsa, Supaul, Madhepura, Purnia, Araria, Katihar, Kishanganj and Khagaria but in the present study only three districts of the Kosi division mainly Saharsa, Supaul and Madhepura have been considered. The study area extends from 25°20' north to 26°30' east longitude and comprises an area of about 6727 sq. km. and about 61 lakh population as per 2011 census.

The study has analysed the economic factors responsible for out migration of different scheduled caste communities vide the table 1.

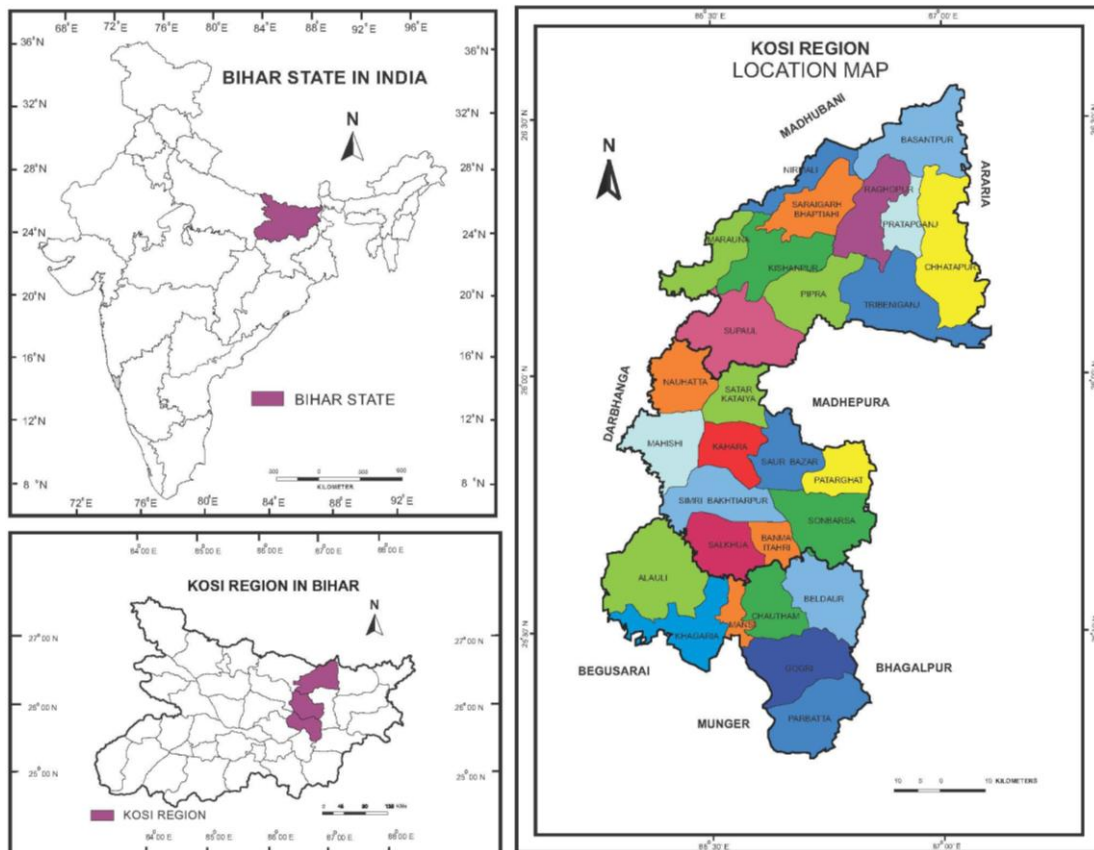


Fig. : Kosi Region-Location Map

Table-1
Economic factors of external migration (caste-wise analysis)

Economic factors/ Sub-casts	Lack of agricultural Land	Poverty and debt sufferers	Job opportunities	Other Factors	Total Sum
Dhobi	53	39	45	79	216
%	11.23	12.91	17.38	15.34	13.95
Chamar	104	66	49	117	336
%	22.03	21.85	18.92	22.72	21.71
Dusad	135	70	79	139	423
%	28.60	23.18	30.50	26.99	27.33
Dom	25	18	10	30	83
%	5.30	5.96	3.86	5.83	5.36
Pasi	52	48	39	57	196
%	11.02	15.89	15.06	11.07	12.66
Mushar	42	27	9	37	115
%	8.90	8.94	3.47	7.18	7.43
Labourer	8	10	10	7	35
%	1.69	3.32	3.86	1.36	2.26
Bhangi	46	19	15	39	119
%	9.75	6.29	5.79	7.57	7.69
Nut	7	5	3	10	25
%	1.48	1.66	1.16	1.64	1.61
Total	472	302	259	515	1548
%	30.49	19.50	16.71	33.27	-

Source : Regional Survey 2017-18.

Table-I shows the outmigration of scheduled caste from the study area due to economic factors. Out of 148 selected families from 6 selected sample villages of 1548 defined SC, 30.39% were defined externally due to lack of agricultural land. 19.50% of the families have migrated for reasons of poverty and debt. 16.74% for jobs and 33.27 for other reasons.

Land use and Agriculture

Due to lack of agricultural land, the study area has contributed more migrants. Certainly experience of migrants which they gain at the destination apply at native place in growing cash crops. The table 2 analyses migrants & non-migrants families involved in growing cash crops.

Table-2
Migrant and Non-migrant families involved in growing cash crops

Percentage of land engaged in production of cash crops	Migrant families	Percent	Non-migrants families	Percent
Under 10%	40	28.84	208	57.34
10 to 20%	33	21.12	78	21.61
20 to 30%	59	38.02	48	12.96

Above 30%	24	15.02	29	8.09
Total sum	156	100.00	363	100.00

Irrigation Facilities

In terms of the development of irrigation facilities, migrant families have revealed more interest than the non-migrant families because they know the importance of irrigation in growing various crops. The study area has irrigation facilities like tubewell, canal, tank etc. Under minor irrigation scheme, small and marginal farmers are provided grant funds under government schemes. 100% grant is provided to Harijan and Dalit families. Under this system, a large number of tubewells have been installed in the study area.

The migrant families of scheduled caste communities have revealed better interest in taking financial support from government in developing irrigation means than the non-migrant families.

Household Industry

Even in the development of household industries migrant families have revealed more interest because they got out-side experience and they know the loan facilities provided by the government. The following table reveals the development of household industry in the study area, developed by the migrant & no-migrants families.

Table-3
Development of household industry operated by Migrant and Non-migrant families

Household Industry	(a) Capital based industry		
	Total industry	Operated by migrant families	Operated by non-migrant families
Rice and flour mill	64	44	20
%	100.00	68.75	31.25
Oil Mill	16	12	4
%	100.00	75.00	25.00
Total industry	80	56	24
%	100.00	70.00	30.00
Domestic industry	(b) Labour based traditional industries		
Pottery industry	32	5	27
%	34.41	15.63	84.38
Bowl industry	17	2	15
%	18.28	11.76	88.24
Laundry	44	19	25
%	47.31	43.18	56.82
Grand Total	93	26	67
%	100.00	27.96	72.04

Source : Field Work.

Table shows the status of household industry developed by the migrant and non-migrant families of Kosi plain. The major industries in these areas are rice mill and flour mill industries. Apart from this, the oil mill industry, the pottery industries, the bowl making industry and the textile washing industry are domestic. There is a total of 64 mills of rice and wheat in the region. There are

Impact of Kosi River Floods on Migration: A Geographical Analysis

44 units run by the migrants and 20 units run by the non-migrants. Similarly, in the total of 16 oil mills, 12 are operated by migrant families and 4 by non-migrant families.

Conclusion

To conclude, a study of SC migrant and non-migrant families in the Kosi plain has shown that the number of migrant families is more conscious of development than the non-migrant families. The economic conditions of the Scheduled Caste families of Kosi plain have developed due to outmigration.

References:

1. Singh, R.P. and Kumar, A. (1972): "Monograph of Bihar" Bharti Bhawan, Patna.
2. Sinha, V.N.P. and Sinha, S.P. (1992): "Bihar Ka Bhugol", Rajesh Publication, New Delhi.