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Capacity Building for a Better Future

A Report on
**Causes and Consequences of Out-Migration
from Middle Ganga Plain**

By

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highwages
landlessness
hunger
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Chapter 10 Consequences of Migration on Children

10.1 Key Findings

There is a regional difference when it comes to education of children of migrants. The left behind children of migrants in Eastern UP were performing better academically than their counterparts in Bihar.

45% of the sample population is below 18 years of age.

Cost of education and a lack of interest in studies are two reasons for children discontinuing their education.

Dropout rates among children from migrant families in Bihar is higher (9%) than children hailing from non-migrant households (5%) whereas in Eastern UP, the opposite is true with children from migrant households having a lower dropout rate (7%) than their counterparts from non migrant households (10%).

Migration of fathers may increase the chances of their sons staying on in school and completing their education in Eastern UP. However, it does not appear to influence the education of daughters in either of the two states and appears to have a detrimental effect on children in Bihar resulting in higher dropout rates amongst children from migrant families.

For children across developing countries living in single-parent (usually the mother) households due to the migration of the other parent (usually the father) is a normal childhood experience (Nobles 2013). On the one hand, the absence of the father often proves to be challenging in more ways than one. On the other hand, as some studies (Taylor 1987) point out, remittances could and do have a positive effect on the educational achievements of children from migrant households. However, many times, the remittances are just enough to meet the everyday needs of the family, forcing older children to discontinue their education to either care for their younger siblings or provide economic support to their families (Jetley 1987).

This study attempts to develop a deeper understanding of this dual effect of migration on children. To this end, the study focuses on two groups of children, i.e., those under the age of five and those belonging to the 6 to 17 years age group. For the first group, the study examines the place of birth (home versus institutional birth) and ANC provided to the children under the age of five years, while educational attainments are the focus for the second group of children. Information related to profile, educational status, and reason for not being in school for all the children in households were collected in the household roster. Data collected in women’s schedules was used for analysing the impact of migration of fathers on ANC and institutional delivery of under-five children. The children from different categories of migrant households are compared with children from non-migrant households across these to enable a deeper understanding of how migration affects these two parameters.

10.2 Age Profile of Children

The Middle Ganga Plain is demographically a young region where 45 percent of the total sample population is below age 18 years. This includes a 12 percent share of children under the age of five and 28 percent of children belonging to the 6-17 years age group. These two age groups are extremely critical from the programme point of view i.e., health care utilization and immunization cover of younger children and nutrition and education attainments of older children.

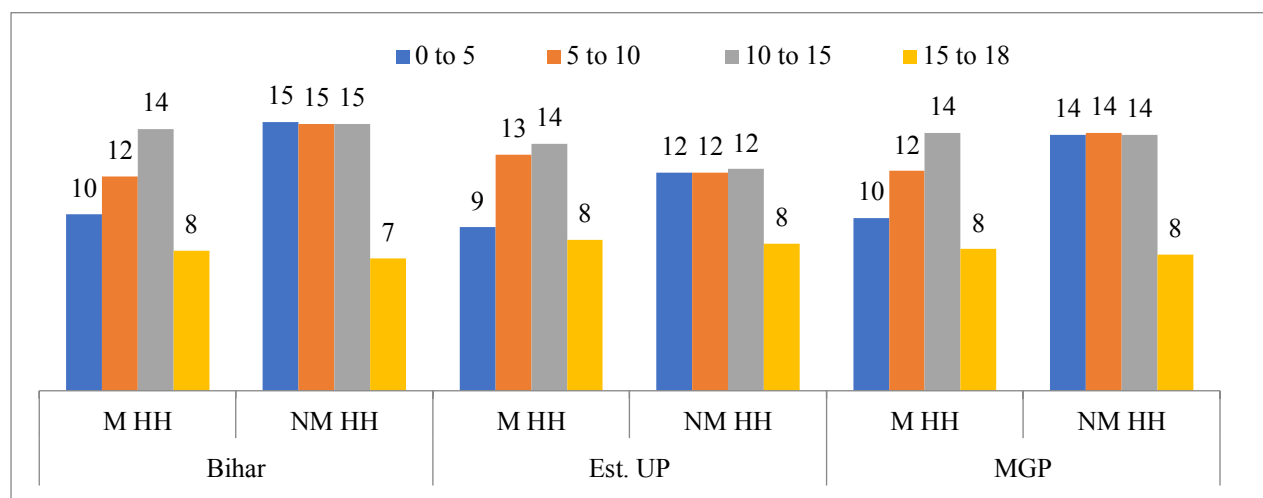


Figure 10.1: Percentage distribution of children by age group

Socioeconomic characteristics of children in age group 0- 5

The total number of children between ages 0 to 5 years in the sample households is 2898. Of these, 1779 are from migrant households and 920 from non-migrant households. The total number of children from sample households in Bihar is 1550 (983 from migrant households, 461 from the non-migrant household) and in Eastern Uttar Pradesh is 1348 (796 from Migrant households, 459 from non-migrant households). The characteristics of children in the 0-6 years age group are similar to those reported for children of the 7-17 years age group. The majority are Hindus, OBC followed by SC, nuclear family, and landless households with few exceptions.

Table 10.1: Socio-economic characteristics of children in the 0=5 years age group by migration status of households

	Bihar		Est. UP		MGP	
	M HH	NM HH	M HH	NM HH	M HH	NM HH
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Religion						
Hindu	76.2	77.5	87.5	89.6	78.7	80.3
Muslim	23.8	22.5	12.5	10.4	21.3	19.7
Caste Category						
ST	2.1	2.1	2.8	5.4	2.2	2.8
SC	23.9	22.0	33.9	42.2	26.1	26.8
OBC	58.6	60.9	50.8	40.8	56.9	56.1
Others	15.4	15	12.5	11.6	14.8	14.2
Family Type						
Nuclear	56.9	66.9	26.4	57.6	50.3	64.7
Joint	43.1	33.1	73.6	42.4	49.7	35.3
Landholding						
Landless	72	70.7	40	56.7	65.1	67.4
< 1 Acre	22.3	20.1	29.9	17.5	24.0	19.5
≥ 1 acre	5.7	9.1	30.1	25.9	11	13.1
Gender						
Male	51.5	54.7	52.6	52.8	51.8	54.3
Female	48.5	45.3	47.4	47.2	48.2	45.7
Total (n)	983	461	796	459	1779	920

ANC and Institutional birth

Data related to the ANC received by mothers as well as the place of birth for a specific child below the age of five at the time of the survey had been collected from the women respondents in the sample households. The data indicates that more than 80 percent of women received at least one ANC; however, less than 14 percent received all four ANCs with a slightly higher number of women from non-migrant households receiving these (15%) than their counterparts from migrant households (12%).

Table 10.2: Percentage of children (0-5 age group) whose mother received ANC by migration status of their husbands

	Bihar		Est UP		MGP	
	Migrant	Non migrant	Migrant	Non migrant	Migrant	Non migrant
	% children whose mothers received ANC	82.9	81.3	79.5	73.9	82.3
No of ANC received						
< 4	87.6	82.8	92.4	94.9	88.3	85.4
≥ 4	12.4	17.2	7.6	5.1	11.7	14.6
Total	569	390	339	367	908	757

Regarding the place of birth of the child (Table 10.3), more than half of the expectant women gave birth to their children in government hospitals. However, a slightly lower proportion of women from migrant households' avail of government services. A relatively lower number of children of migrants are born in hospitals. The birth of a child at home without any trained attendant is higher among the mothers from migrant families in Bihar. In UP, however, a higher proportion of children from migrant households are born in institutions than children from non-migrant households.

Table 10.3: Percentage of children (0-5 age group) by place of their birth (institutional and non-institutional)

The place of delivery	Bihar		Est UP		MGP	
	Migration status					
	Children of Left behind women	Children of non- migrant women	Children of Left behind women	Children of non- migrant women	Children of Left behind women	Children of non- migrant women
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Government Hospital	46.6	54.4	58.6	62.1	59.5	56.2
Private Hospital	15.5	17.6	24.9	17.3	17.1	17.6
Home with skilled attendant	18.8	13.9	4.1	6.7	16.3	12.1
Home without skilled attendant	19.0	14.1	12.4	14.0	17.8	14.1
Total	702	503	438	504	1140	1007

Socio-economic characteristics of children in age group 6- 17 years

The data collected covered 6167 children across Bihar (3117; 1702 from migrant households and 1163 from non-migrant households and 252 from return migrant households) and Eastern UP (3050; 1561 from migrant households and 1250 from non-migrant households and 239 from return migrant households). As is seen in Table 10.1 a majority of the children belong to Hindu (82%) and OBC (58%) households, followed by those from SC households (25%). Nearly two-thirds (67%) live in nuclear families except for migrant households in Eastern UP where the corresponding percentage is around two-fifths (45%). More than 70 percent of the children are from landless or marginal landholding households. Migrant children from Bihar tend to be from landless/ marginal farming households (92%) when compared to those from non-migrant households (83%) in the same state. Less than a third (29%) of children in Eastern UP hail from families that own an acre or more of land as against 12 percent of their counterparts in Bihar. Less than two percent of children aged 6 to 17 are economically active, and less than one percent of children are married, indicating that both child labour and child marriage are not prevalent in these areas.

Table 10.4: Socio economic characteristics of children in age group 6- 17 years

	Bihar			Est UP			MGP		
	Migration status			Migration status			Migration status		
	NM HH	M HH	RM HH	NM HH	M HH	RM HH	NM HH	M HH	RM HH
Religion									
Hindu	83.0	76.8	82.9	86.4	86.2	90.7	83.9	78.9	84.6
Muslim	17.0	23.2	17.1	13.6	13.8	9.3	16.1	21.1	15.4
Caste Category									
ST	2.3	1.8	2.0	3.5	2.0	1.6	2.6	1.8	2.0
SC	23.3	23.0	18.7	33.3	33.2	36.8	25.9	25.2	23.0
OBC	60.6	60.5	70.9	50.1	48.5	44.1	57.9	57.8	64.6
Others	13.8	14.7	8.4	13.1	16.3	17.4	13.6	15.1	10.4
Family Type									
Nuclear	72.7	66.8	76.9	69.8	44.3	55.9	71.9	61.7	72.0
Joint	27.3	33.2	23.1	30.2	55.7	44.1	28.1	38.3	28.0
Landholding									
Landless	54.9	64.3	51.4	45.1	35.9	37.2	52.4	57.9	48.1
< 1 acre	27.8	28.7	38.2	28.3	34.6	33.2	27.9	30.0	37.1
≥ 1 acre	17.3	7.1	10.4	26.7	29.5	29.6	19.7	12.1	14.8
Demographic profile									
Gender									
Male	52.5	49.2	51.4	51.0	49.8	50.8	52.1	49.4	51.3
Female	47.5	50.8	48.6	49.0	50.2	49.2	47.9	50.6	48.7
Marital status									
Never married	99.4	99.2	100.0	99.6	99.7	99.6	99.4	99.3	99.8
Ever Married	0.6	33.2	0.0	30.2	0.3	0.4	0.6	38.3	0.2
Economically active	1.6	1.4	1.6	1.5	1.2	2.8	1.6	1.3	1.8
Total (n)	1163	1702	252	1250	1561	239	2413	3263	491

Source: Information based on the household roster

10.3 Education of Children

Table 10.5 presents the gender differential in levels of literacy of children across the different types of households following the definition of literacy in the Census of India⁶. The data revealed that 90 percent of children aged 7 and above were literate in that they could read and write. The level of literacy was slightly lower amongst girls from international migrant (82%) and return migrant (88%) households.

Table 10.5: Gender wise child literacy rate in migrant and non-migrant households

	NM HH	IM HH	OM HH	SM HH	RM HH	Total
Male	90.6	98.0	89.8	89.8	88.4	90.4
Female	89.1	80.2	90.4	89.5	87.8	89.4
Total	89.9	88.7	90.3	89.4	88.1	89.7

Note: NM HH- Non-migrant households, IM HH- International migrant households, OM HH- internal migrant households, SM HH- Seasonal migrant households, RM- Return migrant households

School Enrolment

Nearly 12 percent of children aged 6 and above from across the Middle Ganga Plain have never been to school (Table 10.6). The percentage was relatively higher in international migrant households (16%) and seasonal migrant households (13%). The non-enrolment rate was higher

⁶ any person who is older than 7 years and can read and write with full understanding is a literate

amongst girls from non-migrant (12%), international migrant (19%), seasonal migrant (13%), and return-migrant (14%) households. Close to 90 percent (89% boys and 90% girls) of all children have been enrolled in school and most of these (94% boys and 92% girls) are known to be attending school (at the time of the survey). Girls from international migrant households have a lower rate of enrolment (81%) when compared to their counterparts in other households.

Table 10.6: Gender wise school enrolment and school attendance rate among 6+children in migrant and non-migrant households

	NM HH	IM HH	OM HH	SM HH	RM HH	Total
Never been to school						
Male	9.7	12.7	12.7	13.4	10.7	11.4
Female	12.3	19.2	10.4	12.5	14.2	11.9
Total	10.9	15.9	11.6	12.9	12.4	11.6
Ever been to school						
Male	90.3	87.3	87.3	86.6	89.3	88.6
Female	87.7	80.8	89.6	87.5	85.8	90.1
Total	91.0	89.1	91.0	89.2	89.4	90.6
Currently attending school						
Male	93.9	94.9	95.2	89.7	93.4	94.1
Female	93.9	95.0	90.0	87.4	92.3	91.5
Total	93.9	96.9	92.5	88.5	92.9	92.8

Out of school children

UN Institute of Statistics (UNIS) and UNICEF have devised a new method of measuring out-of-school children for assessment of MDG No 4. The new methodology adopted in 2019, defines any children enrolled in formal education, regardless of the level, as considered to be in school, including children of primary school age enrolled in pre-primary education. Globally, about one-sixth of the children, adolescents, and youth in the age group 6-17 were out of school (UNESCO and UNICEF, 2019). The following table presents the data (percent) on children who are out of school by gender and migration status of the households at primary (6-11 year olds), lower secondary (12-14 year olds), and upper secondary (15-17 year olds) levels.

The overall pattern of the rate of out of school follows the ‘L’ shape pattern for males and the ‘U’ shape pattern for females. It implies that the rate of out of school is higher for boys at the primary level and decreases with an increase in age and then remains constant. However, for the girl child, the rate is higher both at primary and upper secondary levels and lower at the lower secondary level. This indicates that school enrolment in the study area starts at a later age than is the norm.

The out-of-school rate at primary school is more than 15 percent for both males and females. In the lower secondary age group, the rate of out-of-school children comes down to six percent which implies that 94 percent of children belonging to the 12-14 years age group are enrolled in schools. This also indicates that school enrolment in the study area starts at a later age than normal.

The out-of-school rate was higher for the children in the 15-17 years age bracket. Around 7-9 percent of children in the senior secondary age group were out of school and these numbers

were greater when it came to girls of that age with nearly 20 percent of those from return migrant households as well 12 percent of those from seasonal migrant and non-migrant households never being enrolled in schools.

It was decided to combine the school dropout rate with the non-enrollment rate to determine the true numbers of children who were out of school. The data indicates that these percentages are nearly 18 percent at the primary level, 11 percent at the lower primary level, and between 20 to 30 percent at the upper primary level. This indicates that the school dropout rate is directly proportional to the age and that 30 percent of children from the study area belonging to the 15-17 age group are out of school in that they either never enrolled or dropped out without completing their education. More girls are out of school than boys of the corresponding age group. Children from non-migrant households are more likely to remain in schools. Educational attainment appears to be highest for children from international migrant households followed by children from non-migrant, internal migrant, return migrant households. The children from seasonal migrant households are the most affected and show the lowest educational attainments with forty-four percent of the children in the age group 15-17 from these households not attending school.

Table 10.7: Out of school rate by gender and migration status of the households

		NM HH	IM HH	OM HH	SM HH	RM HH	Total
Never enrolled							
Primary (6-11)	Male	15.7	25.0	18.5	16.2	13.6	16.9
	Female	14.6	38.2	15.7	16.3	17.0	16.0
	Total	15.2	31.1	17.1	16.3	15.2	16.5
Lower secondary (12-14)	Male	4.1	0.0	7.7	6.3	6.3	5.8
	Female	8.3	3.6	6.5	3.9	6.7	6.8
	Total	6.0	2.2	7.2	4.8	6.5	6.3
Upper secondary (15-17)	Male	4.9	4.3	6.9	9.8	10.5	6.5
	Female	12.4	6.3	4.4	11.9	19.0	9.4
	Total	8.5	5.1	5.6	11.0	14.8	8.0

Table 10.8: Out of school rate including school dropout by gender and migration status of the households

		NM HH	IM HH	OM HH	SM HH	RM HH	Total
Primary (6-11)	Male	16.1	25.0	19.3	16.2	13.7	17.4
	Female	15.8	38.2	16.8	18.1	21.5	17.5
	Total	15.9	31.1	18.1	17.1	17.4	17.4
Lower secondary (12-14)	Male	9.6	0.0	11.0	18.8	8.9	10.4
	Female	13.2	3.6	11.1	10.4	6.8	11.1
	Total	11.2	2.2	11.0	13.6	7.8	10.8
Upper secondary (15-17)	Male	18.2	8.7	18.8	43.1	30.4	21.0
	Female	23.6	25.0	31.1	45.5	37.3	30.0
	Total	20.8	15.4	25.4	44.4	33.9	25.6

School Dropouts

In the MGP region, for every 100 children enrolled in school; 6 children from non-migrant and 8 from migrant households drop out of school. Similarly, in Bihar children from non-migrant households have lower dropouts (5%) compared to children from migrant households (9%). In contrast to Bihar, in Eastern Uttar Pradesh, the school dropout rate is lesser for children from migrant households (7% as compared to 10% in non-migrant households).

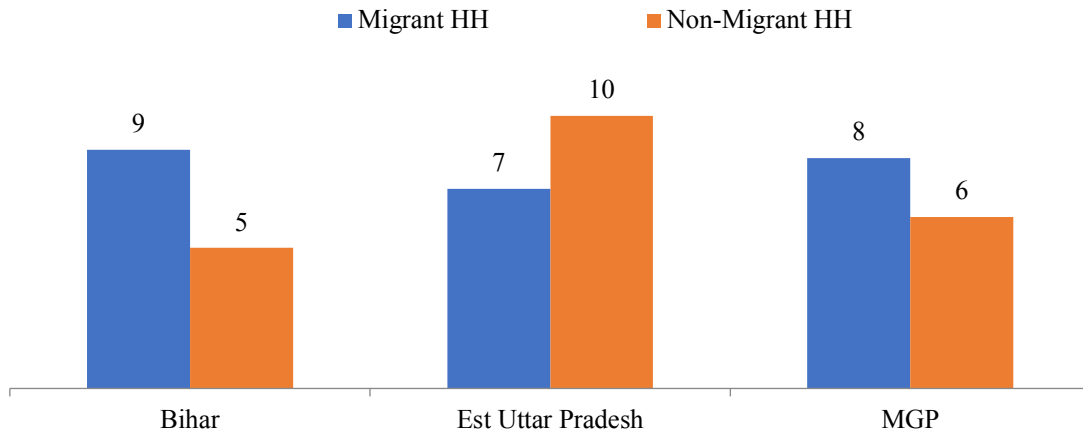
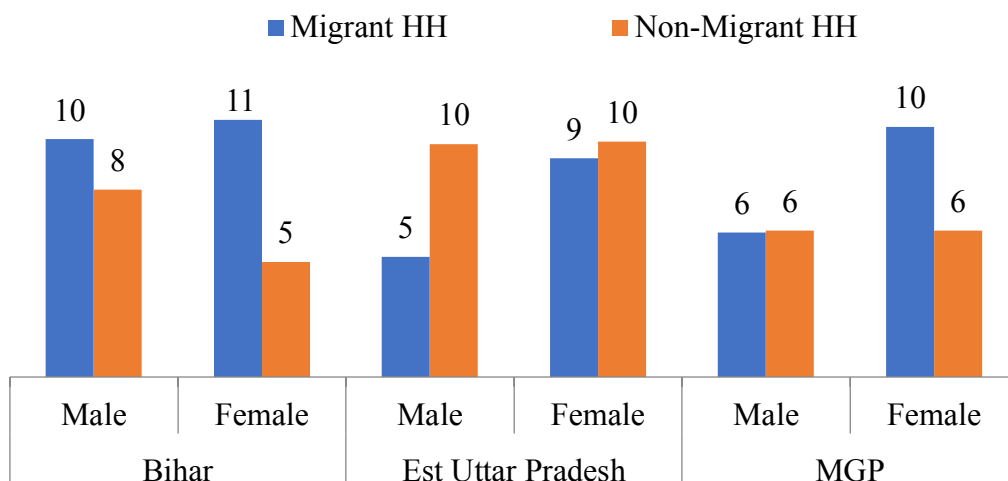


Figure 10.2: School dropout rate across regions and migration status of households

In general, girls tend to drop out more frequently than boys. As evident from Figure 10.3, girls from migrant households have a higher rate of discontinuing their education than their male counterparts (10% to 6%). However, the percentage of dropouts across gender in non-migrant households is the same (6% each). It can be concluded that the presence of the father (as in non-migrant households) has a positive effect on the education of the daughters with fewer daughters from non-migrant households dropping out of school as against their counterparts from the migrant households.

The dropout rate was further analysed across the different forms of migration (Figure 10.3). The picture is very clear that the dropout rate is inversely proportional to the earning capacity of the migrant families as this increase with a reduction in the earning capacity. For children from international migrant households, the dropout rate is lower (<1% for boys and 5% for girls) than those from internal migrant households (5% and 10% respectively).



The high Figure 10.3: School dropout rate across gender, migration status and region ch have the lowest earnings with 10 percent of boys and 15 percent of girls from these discontinuing their education. The data indicates that the greater the level of distress migration, the higher the chances of children from these families discontinuing their education or dropping out of school.

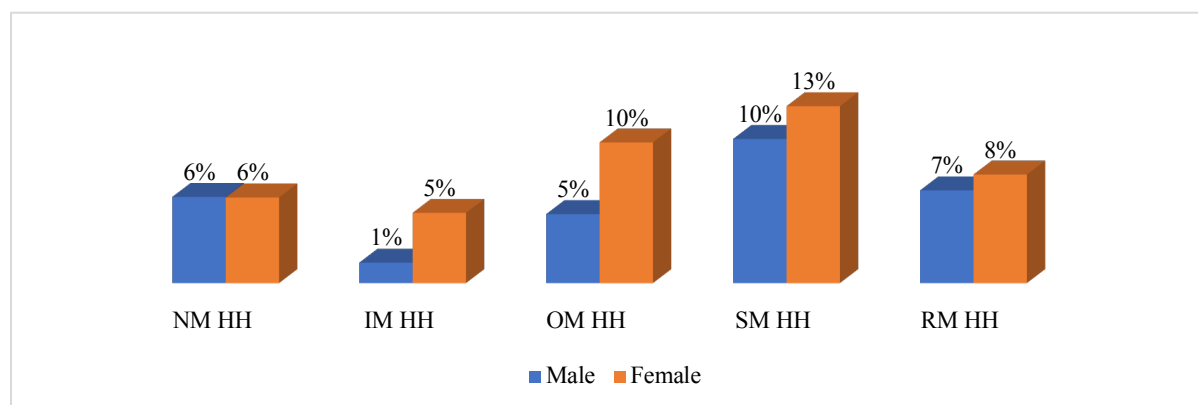


Figure 10.4: School dropout rate by gender and migration typology of the household

Reasons for dropping out from school

Table 10.9 presents the major barriers to education across gender, migration status of the household, and region. The two most commonly occurring reasons for discontinuing education of both girls and boys across the study area are financial (*cost too much*) and the lack of interest of the child (*not interested in studies*). Other reasons for boys from internal migrant households discontinuing their education include the school being too far and lack of transport facilities (17% in Bihar and 8% in Eastern UP) as well as the requirement of children to help in household chores and farm-related work (8% in Bihar and 4% in Eastern UP). Additionally, a few parents in Bihar stated that education is unnecessary. The reasons remain the same for boys from seasonal migrant households in Bihar.

The dropout rate among girls is higher, and the reasons include diverse factors related to economic, social, safety, household responsibility, and structural issues in both Bihar and Eastern UP. In Bihar, one-fourth dropped out due to cost of education, 21 percent were required at home to work in household chores/farm/sibling care, 13 percent were unable to attend school because of distance and limitation of transport, followed by not interested (10%) and the lack of civic facilities at school (9%). Safety issues and marriage were additional social barriers that kept girls from attending school.

Table 10.9: Reasons for school dropout in Bihar and Eastern UP by gender and migration typology

Bihar (Male)							Est. UP (Male)						
Reasons for dropout	NM HH	IM HH	OM HH	SM HH	RM HH	Total	Reasons for dropout	NM HH	IM HH	OM HH	SM HH	RM HH	Total
Costs too much	62.5		8.3	28.6	50.0	35.3	Not interested in studies	42.0		42.3	40.0	27.3	39.8
Not interested in studies	8.3		41.7	35.7	50.0	29.4	Costs too much	32.0		34.6	60.0	27.3	34.4
Required for HH work	8.3		8.3	28.6		11.8	Transport not available	4.0		7.7		9.1	5.4
Education not necessary	4.2		12.5	7.1		7.4	Required for HH work	6.0		3.8		9.1	5.4
School too far	4.2		16.7			7.3	Repeatedly failed in class	2.0				18.2	3.2
Others	12.5		12.5			8.9	Others	14.0		11.5		9.0	11.8
Bihar (Female)							Est. UP (Female)						
Reasons for dropout	NM HH	IM HH	OM HH	SM HH	RM HH	Total	Reasons for dropout	NM HH	IM HH	OM HH	SM HH	RM HH	Total
Costs too much	19.0		30.6	22.2	16.7	25.5	Costs too much	42.6	40.0	24.5		40.0	33.6
Not interested in studies	19.0		8.2	11.1		9.6	Not interested in studies	21.3	20.0	22.6		20.0	21.6
No proper facilities for girls	14.3		4.1	11.1		8.5	Required for HH work	14.9		13.2		10.0	12.9
Required for HH work	28.5	19.0	19.0	19.0	19.0	21.1	School too far/transport	6.4	40.0	15.1		10.0	12.1
School too far/transport	14.2		8.1	11.1	16.6	12.7	Education not necessary	6.4		7.5		10.0	6.9
Required education completed			4.1	5.6		3.2	No proper facilities for girls	4.3		3.8			3.4
Got married	4.8		4.1			2.1							
Not safe to send girls			4.1			2.1							
Others		81	17.7	19.8	47.6	15	Others	4.3		13.2		10.0	9.5

Helping households in managing the family by working at home or, at the farm or business is another major barrier to the continuation of school in seasonal migrant households in Bihar. The factors like cost, distance, the requirement at home to work are structural or poverty issues that have a bearing on the enrolment and continuation of education which may be improved with effort. However, the substantial proportion of children not showing interest in education (29% boys in Bihar, 39 percent boys in Eastern UP, and 10 percent and 21 percent of girls in Bihar and Eastern UP) is a major cause of concern. Whether this is due to an indifferent curriculum or whether it is a result of social exclusion patterns needs to be explored in greater detail possibly through a separate study.

10.4 Conclusion

An analysis of the data suggests that children belonging to migrant households in Eastern UP are doing better when compared to children of non-migrant households in the same region. On the other hand, children from migrant households in Bihar performed poorly in comparison to those from non-migrant households in Bihar. This implies that the nature of migration influences the performance of the children, especially since the proportion of seasonal migrant households is higher in Bihar than in Eastern UP. Children of return migrants display poor educational outcomes when compared to migrant and non-migrant households in both Bihar and Eastern UP. In general, the cost of education and a lack of interest in studies are the two important reasons for the drop of students among both migrant and non-migrant households in the study area.

Similarly, fewer mothers from migrant households received the full complement of four ANC, and close to 40 percent of their babies were home deliveries. Institutional delivery provides better care to both mother and infant and plays a big role in their overall health and wellbeing. It was interesting to note that in Eastern UP, more children from migrant families were institutional deliveries than those from non-migrant families. It thus appears that the migration of fathers positively influences the health and education of children in Eastern UP while it has a negative effect on both with regard to children in Bihar.

The next chapter discusses the consequences of migration on senior citizens by comparing the situation of the elderly living in migrant households with the elderly living in non-migrant households.

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