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WOMEN EMIGRATION AND ITS IMPACT ON THEIR FAMILIES IN GOA : A CASE STUDY OF USGAO VILLAGE

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Abstract

Emigration is the relocation of the people from one country to another. In last two decades or so, increased number of woman migrants has gone abroad. In India, female migration is closely interconnected with the male migration indicating that women accompany men after marriage. In Goa, migration of women to industrialized developed countries and the Middle East countries is on the rise mostly to the United Kingdom followed by the countries of Middle East. The study was conducted to determine emigration of women and its impact on the life of their families left behind in Usgao village of Dharbandora Taluka of Goa. The study is carried out using primary data obtained from administration of questionnaires and personal interviews supplemented by secondary data. Women emigration has prevailed in the age group of 20-45 years, which comprises of both married and unmarried woman. Low wages in the home country and the demand for female labour in the foreign countries offering high wages are the main push and pull factors of international migration of women from the study area. Women emigration has added income level of the family and has enhanced the standard of living among the emigrating families. It has left its drawbacks such as emigration of women has made the life of the children and the elderly members of the family difficult as the migrant women used to take care of all the members of the family in general and children and elderly in particular in addition, they were handling all the household affairs of the family. Emigration of women thus, has increased women's access to economic resources and has improved their autonomy and status but its negative impact on the families is significant.

Keywords: women migration; emigration; remittances; better standard of living; emotion

Introduction

International migration is a universal phenomenon as it has been happening from time immemorial. It is the movement of the people from one

place to another by crossing the national boundary. People migrate on grounds of employment or government may encourage it as a means to solve the problem of unemployment of the people from one place to another.

The international migration in the beginning was mostly motivated by non-economic reasons. However, the recent international labor migration has been motivated only by economic reasons mainly the prospect of earning higher wages and income abroad (Salvatore, 2005). Among the Asian migrants, the Indians, Chinese and Pakistanis constitute the majority all over the world. Emigration of the Indian mostly took place during the colonial rule of the British, most of whom were laborers went to Burma, Sri Lanka, Malaya, Fiji, Trinidad, Mauritius and the British Guiana to work mainly on rubber, tea and sugar plantations. The most important and the largest migration, that is, transfer of civilian population, occurred in 1947 between India and Pakistan. It is estimated that, in this transfer nearly 7.2 million persons migrated from India to Pakistan and about the same number was transferred to India from Pakistan.

People of Goa (Goans) have been migrating through the ages from their land either to settle permanently or for short period of time. There is a reference to sporadic migration of Goans from early period. According to M. N. Pearson, Goa had always, even in pre-Portuguese time, been open to the Arabian Sea and its littoral. Overseas migration from Goa began in the early 16th century, when Goans helped the Portuguese to penetrate in the inhospitable territories in Africa.

The migration of women has always been an important component of international migration in the 20th and 21st centuries. Earlier it was considered that women migrated for family unification. In recent years, women migrate on their own, not accompanying the husband or children as a dependent. Female migrants till the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic are, had become increasingly a part of flow of migrant workers, moving on their own to become the principal wage earner for their families. Emigration is a transforming experience for the women as it affects not only themselves but also their family members. The effect on those who stay behind can be either positive or negative, depending on individual circumstances. Although remittances are a potentially important means of easing family budget constraints and alleviating poverty, the most vulnerable population get deeply hurt by this emigration.

Aims and Objectives

The main aim of this paper is to study women emigration and its impact on the families left behind in the midland village of Goa, namely Usgao. The following were the objectives of the study.

- To analyze the demographic and the work profile of the emigrating women.
- To examine the factors responsible for emigration of women and

- To study the socio-cultural life of the family members at origin and the impact of female migration on them at home.

Database and Methodology

The study relies on both primary and secondary data. The secondary data was collected from census of India, 2011, websites, research papers and articles published in Journals, which were reviewed. Primary data was collected through questionnaire and personal interviews of 60 household populations by simple random sampling method.

The collected data was sorted, classified and tabulated and then analyzed using cartographic techniques such as bar graphs, pie charts, tables, etc. Statistical tools like Mean and Mode were used for purpose of analysis and interpretation of the data.

Review of literature

There is wide variation in the definition of migration due to the difference in nature, purpose and scope of the studies. According to Everett Lee (1965), the potential migrant is influenced by positive and negative factors associated with both the place of origin and the possible destination. For a move to result the attraction of the destination must be great enough to outweigh the advantage of staying and to overcome any intervening obstacles. Personal factors also affect the evaluation process. According to Weinberg (1975) human migration is the changing of the place of abode permanently or temporally for an appreciable duration.

One of the most significant trends has been the feminization of migration streams that had been primarily male. Significantly, many of the new female migrants relocate as principal wage earners rather than accompanying family members. Stephen Castles and Mark Millers (1990) observation about Asian migration could be applied more generally, “A key development in recent years has been the increasing feminization of migration: about 1.5 million Asian women were working abroad by the mid-1990s, and in many migratory movements they outnumbered men”. For example, more than 60% of migrants from Sri Lanka are women, employed primarily in domestic services.

Introduction to Study Region

Usgao is a village situated in Dharbandora taluka under North Goa district. It lies in the latitudes of 15°26'0"N and longitude 74°4'0"E. This Place is in the border of the North Goa District and South Goa District. It is located 22 km towards East from District head quarters Panaji and 22 km from State capital Panaji.

As per census 2011, Usgao had a population of 12,436 of which 6370 are males while 6066 are females, i.e. Female sex

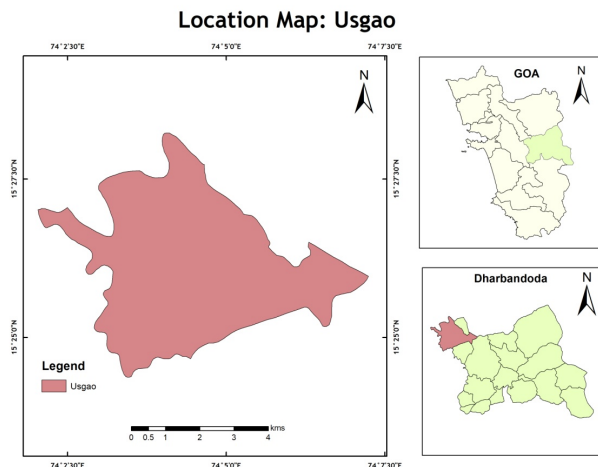


Fig. 1. Locational Map of Usgao Source: Compiled by Researchers using ArcGIS

ratio is 952 against state average of 973. Population of children with age group of 0-6 is 1254 which is 10.08 per cent of total population of Usgao. Significantly, the child sex ratio in Usgao is 1042 compared to Goa state average of 942. Literacy rate of Usgao is 87.13 per cent. Hindus are a major group in the village (82.61%) followed by Christian population (8.81%), Muslim (8.20%), Sikh (0.09%) and Jain and Buddhist (0.02% and 0.07%) are the smallest religious groups.

Results and Discussions

From the study it is observed that there are various factors affecting the local women emigration, which have affected the socio-economic status of the women and their families left behind. There is shift in the responsibility of the household, which has affected the family and the children in particular. Different findings related to women emigration have been discussed below.

Age Structure

Age structure, which represents the number of people of different age groups is an important indicator of population composition, since a large size of population in the age group of 15-59 indicates a large working population. A study of age composition of emigrant women was attempted (Figure 2).

The above figure presents the age of female emigrants. The average age of the women emigrant is 36 years. The largest proportions of women who have emigrated are in the age group of 20-30 as they are most active and productive workforce of the society. The young take with them the great assets of youth, resilience and resourcefulness.

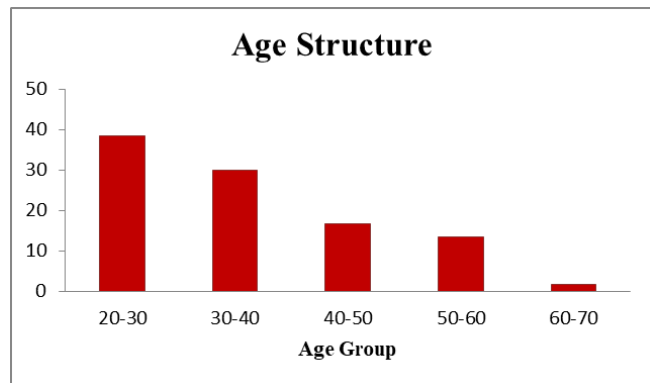


Fig. 2. Age Structure of the Women Emigrant of Usgao, 2019-20 Source: Compiled from Surveydata by Researchers, Jan 2020

Marital Status of Women Emigrants

Marital status explains whether the female emigrants are currently married or unmarried (Fig. 3). The pie chart depicts the marital status of the women emigrants. At the time of data collection it was found that 62 per cent of the women emigrants were currently married. About 35 per cent of the emigrants were unmarried, favorable employment opportunities in destination country seem to be the primary factor for migration. The remaining 3 per cent widow emigration as there is no bread earner of the family and the women had to migrate to take up the responsibilities.

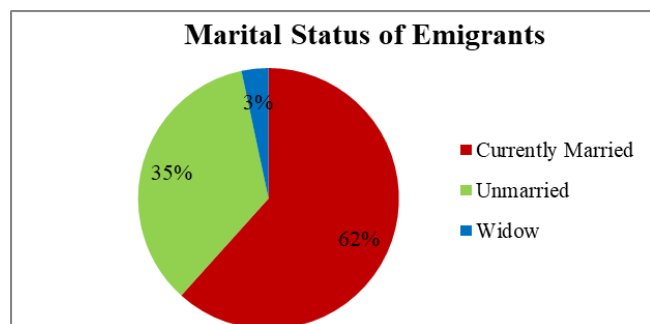


Fig. 3. Marital Status of the Women Emigrants of Usgao, 2019-20 Source: Compiled from the Survey data by Researchers, Jan 2020

Female emigrants after completing their education immigrated to other countries; after emigration within a short period of time, they got married and hence, it was found that maximum women emigrants were married and a few were widowed or were unmarried in Usgao village.

Religious Composition

Religion is one of the most dominant forces affecting the emigration from India as well as Goa. Catholics or the Christians are prone as a major group to immigrate

to other countries (Figure 4). The pie chart presents the religious composition of the women emigrants. Majority of the emigrants are Christians (80 per cent) because of their easy adaptability to any environment, their cultural openness and liberal attitude due to historical and cultural factors. Hindu women were 13 per cent and Muslim women were only 7 per cent. The percentage of Muslim women emigrant is the least because of their problems in adapting to the food habits, family compulsions and various socio-cultural restrictions.

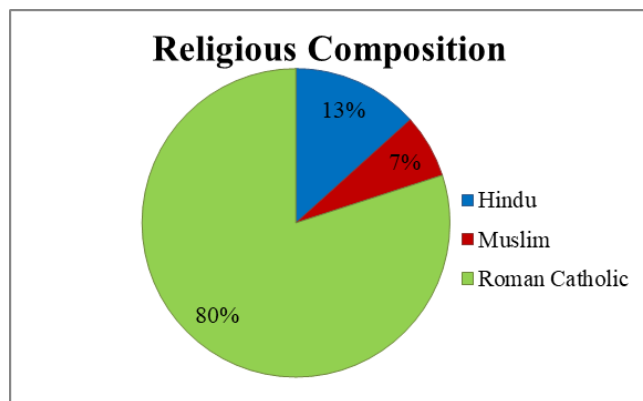


Fig. 4. Religious Composition of Women Emigrants in Usgao, 2019-20 Source: Compiled from the Survey data by Researchers, Jan 2020

Table 1. Destination of Women Emigration from Usgao, 2019-20

Country	No. of Women Emigrated	Percentage
America	1	2.0
Australia	3	5.0
Canada	1	2.0
Cayman Island	1	2.0
Dubai	8	13.0
Jerusalem	1	2.0
Kuwait	14	23.0
Muscat	3	5.0
Oman	1	2.0
Qatar	3	5.0
Saudi Arabia	2	3.0
Sharjah	1	2.0
United Kingdom	20	33.0
United States	1	2.0
Total	60	100

Source: Survey by Researchers, Jan 2020

Table 1 shows the destination countries of female emigrants with reference to Usgao village of Dharbandora taluka. The maximum international movement by women emigrants of Usgao was to European countries such as United Kingdom (33%) as high employment opportunities existed there and

the workers are paid on hourly bases. Gulf countries occupy the second place in attracting and absorbing the women emigrants. Within the Gulf countries, Kuwait (23%) and Dubai (13%) seems to be the preferred direction of emigration by women. The proportion of female migrants to the countries of America and Australia seemed relatively small. It can be inferred that large scale emigration flows of women of Usgao village are predominantly towards European countries followed by gulf countries.

Reasons for Emigration

People migrate due to economic and socio cultural reasons. The economic reasons are in search of better opportunities of income and employment and socio-cultural reasons for the migrants desire to break away traditional constraints and inequalities and alteration of cities. Low wages, long working hours are common reasons for emigration.

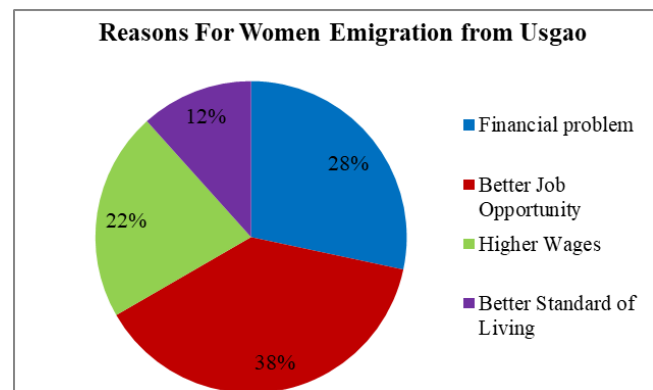


Fig. 5. Reasons for Women Emigration from Usgao, 2019-20 Source: Compiled from the Survey data by the Researchers, Jan 2020

The Figure 5 presents the factors or reasons for women emigration from Usgao village. There are various push and pull factors that affected the emigration of the women. Nearly 28 per cent of the women migrated to cope up with the financial problems of the family. Around 12 per cent of the women emigrated to attain better standard of living. Higher wages accounted for 22 percent and better job opportunities motivated 38 per cent in the destination countries. Overall, it may be inferred that the availability of better employment opportunities overseas with higher salary attracted the women emigrants.

Occupational structure

The occupational structure refers to the workforce employed in different economic ventures. The occupational structure of the women emigrants from the study area highlights that majority of them are employed as house maids (15 per cent) because their literacy level is low and due to financial burdens they had decided to immigrate to other countries.

Table 2. Occupational Structure of emigrant women from Usgao, 2019-20

Occupation	Percentage of Women
Accountant	5.0
Airhostess	7.0
Bank	5.0
Bill Counter	2.0
Beautician	3.0
Call Center	2.0
Care Taker	2.0
Cashier	3.0
Co-operative Manager	2.0
Front Office Supervisor	2.0
Front Office	2.0
Ground Hostess	5.0
House Keeping	2.0
Kitchen Assistant	4.0
Maid	15.0
Nurse	6.0
Packing	7.0
Post Office	2.0
Receptionist	5.0
Sales Executive	2.0
Sales Assistant	3.0
Software Engineer	2.0
Tailor	2.0
Teacher	8.0
Pharmacists	2.0

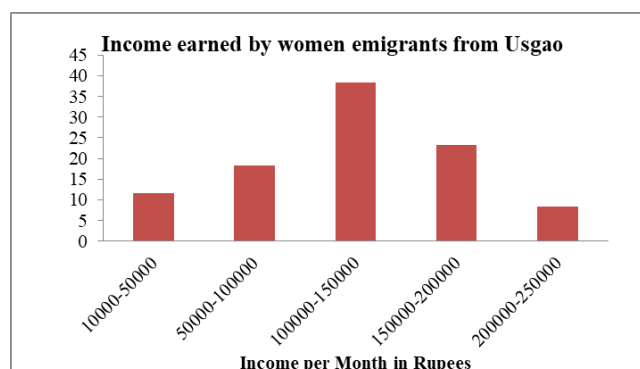
Source: compiled from the Survey by Researchers, Jan 2020

About 8 per cent of women were engaged in teaching and 7 per cent were working as airhostess or as accountants, who emigrated for better job opportunities in the destination country. Domestic and care workers is the most common profession that is carried out by women emigrants. From the primary survey of the study, it was found that majority of the women are employed on contract basis and a small proportion of women emigrants are engaged in seasonal work with limited working hours.

Income earned by the women emigrants

The migration of a family member brings additional income through remittance, which can support the household consumption, savings and at times investment. There is wide variation in income earned by the women depending on the kind of occupation. The study shows that women emigrant sought employment abroad primarily to bear their family expenses and meet healthcare needs. The figure 6 shows the variation in the monthly income earned by the women emigrants. The minimum monthly earning ranged between Rs. 10000-50000;

these are women who are employed as maids, kitchen assistant, tailor and so on. Maximum income is earned by women serving as airhostess, teachers, accountants and engineers, where earning ranges between Rs.200000-250000 per month. Women with better skills and higher educational qualification earned more income.

**Fig. 6.** Income earned by women emigrants from Usgao, 2019-20
Source: Survey data by Researchers, Jan 2020

Emigration's Impact on the Family members left behind

When women emigrate there are various impacts on the family members and the children left behind in particular.

Responsibility of the household

When the women of the house is abroad to earn their livelihood there is change in intra-family role, where the responsibility of the house is shifted to another family member. The graph (Fig. 7) depicts the responsibility of the household shouldered in the absence of the active women. It was observed that Mother-in-laws played a very important role in taking over the responsibility of the households, i.e. 22 per cent and 20 per cent of the mothers handled all the affairs of the household in absence of the daughter or daughter-in-law. The uncles and the brothers of the family too take care of the household but the responsibility is mainly on the elderly females. The responsibility is generally shared by the people who are more attached to the family and on whom the family members can rely on.

Types of Impact of women emigration

Emigration of women has both positive and negative effect on the family members left behind in the home country (Table 3). The emigration of mothers can impact the social and emotional well-being of their children. The study shows that 65 per cent of the mothers have handed over the responsibility of their child to their family members. This

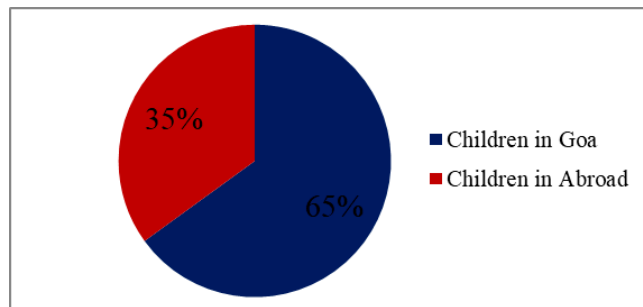


Fig. 8. Usgaon Women Emigrant's Children in Goa or Abroad
Source: Survey data by Researchers, Jan 2020

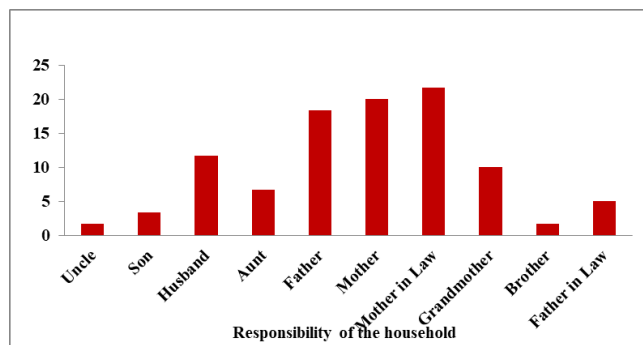


Fig. 7. Responsibility of the Household among Emigrant Women in Usgao, 2019-20
Source: Compiled from the Survey data by Researchers, Jan 2020

Table 3. Impact of women emigration in Usgaon, 2019-20

Positive Impact	Negative Impact
More economic gain in short period of time	Brain Drain
Economic stability and financial security	Social problems faced by men and children left behind, loneliness occupies the number one position.
Increase in asset holding	Burden of added responsibility on the family member in absence of women.
Increase in savings	Up bringing of the children is difficult in absence of a mother
High standard of living	Care for aged parents neglected
Ability to extend financial help to family and relatives.	Men is burdened with dual roles- house & office
Opportunities for higher studies.	Feeling of insecurity among children.

Source: Survey by Researchers, Jan 2020

in turn affects the children who suffer from loneliness and feeling of insecurity. Despite emigrant mothers' efforts to

remain in touch with their children, their interactions are often irregular. The children's education is also affected by the lack of supervision and parental support. Remaining 35 per cent mothers took their children under 10 years along with them as these children require more attention and affection.

Major Findings

Migration of women is showing an increasing trend in Usgao. This trend represents a key opportunity for their economic independence and empowerment. The largest proportions of women, who have emigrated, are in the age group of 20-30. The direction of emigration has changed in recent years as the migration is largely towards the European countries i.e. United Kingdom. The earning of women emigrants of American countries are relatively higher than the earnings of women emigrants of European countries, Gulf countries and others. Remittances from women emigrant's workers are mostly used for education, family and community development. The emigration of women forces men who are left at home to adapt new gender norms.

Conclusion

Women emigration is an important factor responsible for the economic development of a family. It has increased women's access to economic resources and has improved their autonomy. Emigration of women has led to large amount of remittances, which in turn lead to the development of the family economy. As a result, it has increased the work participation of the women and has reduced unemployment to great extent. The female migration is economically benefiting the family members who are left behind. Remittances transfer has eased budget constraints and thereby increased spending on health care and education, improving household welfare in Usgao. However, the emigrant's absence has negative consequences on the children, elderly and the spouse in the village.

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