

Migration and Food Insecurity

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Abstract:

With the rise in population, migration has become a prominent phenomenon, which is designing the global economic, political and social policies. While migration has been the sources for changes in economic and cultural benefits, the current global trends are showcasing different travesties that the population faces to a large scale and it is indicated by the lack of food security and is responsible for the conflicts.

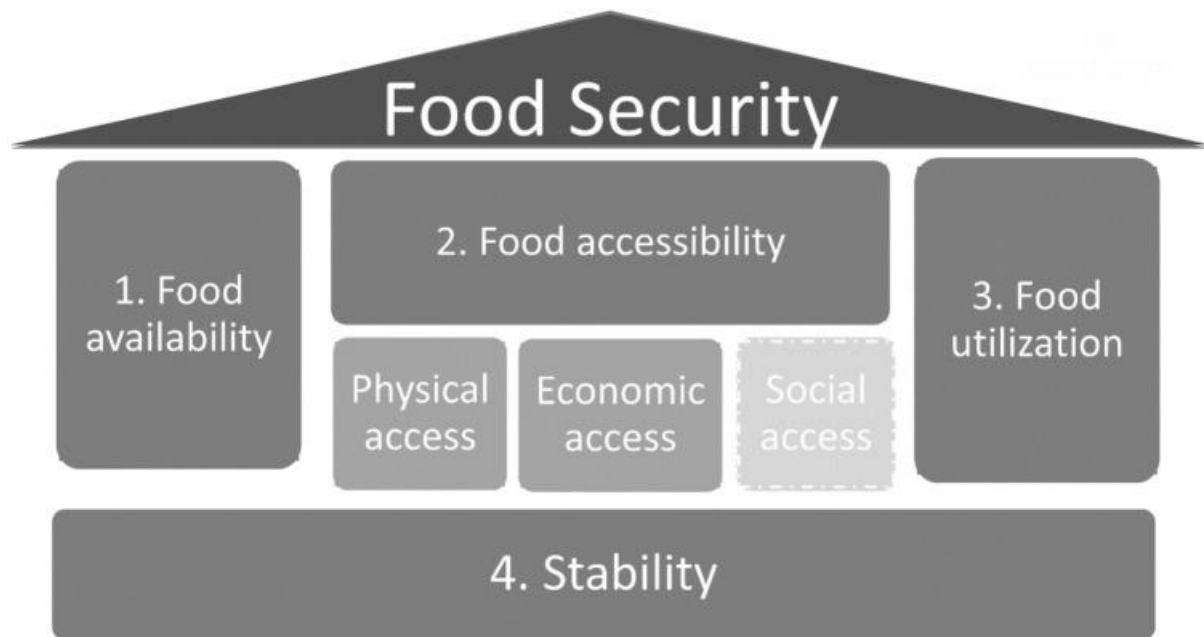
In this paper the concerns of migration induced food insecurity has been highlighted and the potential solution in terms of community efforts even though they may be temporary for the short run are being discussed.

Keywords: Migration, Food Insecurity, Community Efforts, Socio-Economic Benefits

Introduction:

Migration is a term that refers to human mobility or forced displacement of people due to socio-economic reasons. This particular factor is at a constant rise in the global panorama. It encompasses the change of residence to another locality either within the nation or internationally which is away from their place of their birth. It has to be noted that statistically in 2019 the global numbers for migration stood 272 million. Such high numbers means that people are constantly on a move which would entail that they are constantly in the fear of being food insecure in the process of their migration.

As has been explained by the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), the term food security includes the 4 dimensions of food security which has been showed in the diagram below. The disruption of any of the following dimension's results in the household facing food insecurity. The food security dimensions include Food availability, Food accessibility, Food utilization and stability through food consumption are critical areas of focus. Within the food accessibility dimension there are three sub-dimensions which includes the physical accessibility, economic accessibility and social accessibility. Physical accessibility refers to the presence of food in the broad area but lack of access for the same in terms of appropriate quantity for consumption. Economic accessibility refers to the capacity of an individual to purchase the food that is available in the society. Social access is a dimension which lacks appropriate definition and a proper scale of measurement. However, in the broad sense it refers to the presence of physical and economic accessibility but being socially not included by the social groups on grounds of gender, age or any other unit of discrimination.



Food security dimensions and subdimensions. Adaptation based on UN FAO

Research Methodology:

The method of study used was collection of secondary data especially the international documents on food security and its impact on migrants. Globally there are 281 million migrants, within this almost 169 migrants account as active work laborers. One such important document discussing the role of migrants and other stake holders has highlighted the following which is a strong outline that has been provided by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), which has requested the stakeholders in food system especially the migrants to follow certain steps which can ensure that there is appropriate growth and development of the nation and the migrants:

- Respect, protect and fulfil the human and labor rights of all migrants working in food systems, regardless of migratory status and without discrimination;
- Address the adverse and structural drivers of migration, including poverty, food insecurity, malnutrition, climate change and environmental degradation, and gender inequality, making migration from, to and between rural areas a choice;
- Promote dialogue between all stakeholders in food systems to strengthen policy coherence and ensure agricultural policies and programs recognize migrants' role and agency while migration policies embed the needs of food systems;
- Facilitate regional and cross-regional labor mobility for migrants in food systems, through international or bilateral cooperation arrangements in accordance with decent work principles, national priorities, and local market needs;
- Improve access to healthy diets, including by promoting educational and information campaigns on nutrition, accessible to all, including migrants and their families;
- Facilitate access to – and use of – remittances, particularly in rural areas, lower the costs of sending and receiving remittances in line with SDG target 10.c, and foster digitization, financial inclusion and remittances-linked financial products;

- Support measures and instruments that encourage migrants and diaspora to invest in the transformation of food systems (FAO, 2020).

Another source of information has been several articles regarding the efforts that were undertaken by individuals and groups both registered and unregistered during the pandemic time. They have showcased that the efforts of a community are far more mobilized as compared to the schemes that are set up under the government proviso. However, the pertaining concerns in this line of thought has been whether it is ideal to just provide the food for free or should there be an economical return on the food provided so that it is something that is valued at face value.

Objective of the Study:

The study aims to establish a relation between migration and food insecurity. The fact that people are migrating showcases that usually the underlying concern is the lack of livelihood as a means of sustenance which has direct relation to the concern of being food insecure. However, besides that war, pandemic and other natural and man-made calamities too tend to have an impact on trend of migration. Food insecurity seems to showcase a trend which is studied in this article especially during the interim phase of migration as well. The transition of humans from one destination to another destination is not easy and there is constant need for food during that period. The study has tried to study the impact of that phase of transition as well.

Findings:

Human mobility is deeply rooted in the structural transformation of rural areas. Often, people leave rural areas to escape poverty, food insecurity, lack of access to basic services, the effects of climate change and environmental degradation, or to find better jobs.

It has been found that study across different economic aspects of the relationship between migration and food security has been bilateral in nature to a large extent. In effect showcases that while the process of migration contributes to the overall food insecurity that is faced across the globe, the same migrant workers are the ones who through the phase of movement attempt to help lessen the gap of food security in the global scenario through their contribution in all the process that involve the farm to table food security concerns. They also manage to indirectly through the economic process of income, remittances, saving and investment ensure that the food accessibility concern to a large extent is addressed. Even though they laborers provide a positive contribution to the food security system almost 90% of the migrants are the ones that suffer from the economic disadvantages of food insecurity. They are constantly in the circle of moving, poverty, malnutrition, poor health and labour condition and once again moving to another place to ensure some kind of security for these rising concerns.

In specification women and child migrants are further suffering from deficit working conditions which are extremely poor and unfair for them on several socio-economic grounds which intensifies the food insecurity concerns that they suffer from.

The consistent hardships that small and marginal farmers have to undergo, especially with respect to the Indian scenario of climate change and consistent demeriting conditions associated to lack of good research and development in the field of agriculture, it is not hard to explain the primary reason why a large number of youth population migrate to the urban centres and not carry on their inherited occupation. If the hardship in farming is not brought under control while the concerns of health and nutrition being addressed both on

nutritional and economic grounds till then the migration taking place especially in India will be more of distressed in nature rather than out of choice.

So far, the secondary data on migration in India has been very specific to numbers but the magnitude and severity of food insecurity amongst the migrating population has not materialized largely. The truth is that the current data on food security is in a time frame either before or after the migration process has taken place as the unit of measurement is always the household and not concerned with regards to the individual or those in active mobility.

During the global crisis of Corona virus when countries were forced to a constant spiral of lockdown it was noticed that the migrating population especially in a country like India were the ones that suffered the most on the hands of the precipice death by disease or death by hunger. Several efforts on humanitarian grounds were recorded for community kitchens which popped up for short term goals of feeding the unfed in the migratory phase (Kundu, 2020). Such steps indeed ensured that there was a parallel way in which the community was ensuring to support the efforts that the Union and the State governments were already working towards but due to the fine-tuned concerns of the Public Distribution system was actually failing to materialise into a more holistic effort.

Conclusion:

Food insecurity is a major contributor to the negative wellbeing of human health and it has been having farfetched impact during the vulnerable times. It has to be noted that while food insecurity is both a driver as well as a contributor to the concerns of food insecurity that are impacting the global health conditions at large, food insecurity is also being the reason for concerns of migration. Besides that, food insecurity recently has been understood as the modicum of concern even during the interim phase of movement when the migrants have lost their homes and are seeking still employment. Thus, during such times it is essential that there be some form of community intervention which can be temporary in nature but essentially help them to settle down and at the same time improve the overall human wellbeing. It is indeed necessary that the community must participate in a way that they teach the members to learn how to fish so that they can learn to feed them for a lifetime rather than providing them with a fish which will merely feed them for the day.

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