Journal of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Research (JIMR)
E-ISSN:1936-6264| Impact Factor: 8.886| UGC CARE II
Vol. 19 Issue 02, February- 2024
Available online at: https://livejimrjournal.in/

(An open access scholarly, peer-reviewed, interdisciplinary, monthly, and fully refereed journal.)

Return Migration and its Role in Economic Resilience: A Post-COVID-19 Study in Nawada District

AMIT KUMAR
Assistant Professor,
Department of Geography
S.N Sinha College, Warisaliganj,
Nawada, Bihar

Dr. DEEPAK KUMAR
Assistant Professor,
Department of Geography
Daudnagar College, Daudnagar
Aurangabad, Bihar

Abstract

Why do people all across the globe move or prefer to move? There are several reasons, but one of them is to earn a better livelihood. People migrate from one region to another. Over the course of human history, migration has been a consistent phenomenon that has had a significant impact on the cultures, economics, and demography of people all over the world. People have moved to new locations in search of better livelihoods, security, and freedom throughout history. The pandemic and associated lockdowns resulted in widespread disruptions to economic activities, particularly in sectors such as construction, manufacturing, transportation, and services, which employ a large number of migrant workers from Nawada District. With businesses shut down, job losses, and uncertainty about livelihoods, many migrants were forced to return to their native villages in Nawada and other parts of Bihar. Nawada District faced major issues as a result of the in-flow of returning migrants. It has been 2 years since Covid-19 but it is important to analyze what this pandemic has taught us because this will help us in knowing what our situation is after Covid-19 passes.

Keywords: Migration, Return Migration, Epidemic, Covid-19

Introduction:

Migration is a phenomenon that is both complicated and multidimensional, and it has very significant consequences for people, communities, and civilizations all across the world. It involves the migration of individuals from one area to another, whether they are moving voluntarily or being compelled to do so. This movement may be caused by a wide variety of circumstances, including as economic possibilities, political instability, changes in the environment, and interpersonal dynamics. Migration is the most important aspects of human history and the evolution of society, which may be defined as the movement of people from one location to another for a variety of reasons. Among the many different types of incentives that it

incorporates are economic possibilities, social reasons, political turmoil, and changes in the environment. It is vital to have an understanding of migration in order to realize the significant influence that it has on people, communities, and governments all over the globe.

Over the course of human history, migration has been a consistent phenomenon that has had a significant impact on the cultures, economics, and demography of people all over the world. People have moved to new locations in search of better livelihoods, security, and freedom throughout history. An example of this can be seen in ancient nomadic tribes as well as in modern-day international migration movements. It is common for migration to be impacted by a complex interplay of variables such as poverty, violence, globalization, technical breakthroughs, and demographic trends. The reasons of migration are numerous and interwoven. The purpose of this insight is to investigate the many facets of migration, including its many motivations, patterns, effects, and problems. Economic factors play a significant role in driving migration patterns. People frequently migrate in search of employment opportunities, higher wages, and better living standards. Rural-to-urban migration, for instance, is a common phenomenon observed in many developing countries where individuals move from agricultural areas to cities in pursuit of better jobs and improved living conditions (Ravenstein,1885).

Environmental factors, including natural disasters, climate change, and environmental degradation, also contribute to population displacement and migration. Rising sea levels, extreme weather events, and environmental degradation can render certain areas uninhabitable, leading to mass displacement and migration of populations to more hospitable regions (Neil Adger et al., 2005). Migration has far-reaching impacts on both sending and receiving communities, shaping socio-economic, cultural, and political dynamics. In destination countries, migrants contribute to labor markets, fill critical skill gaps, and drive innovation and entrepreneurship (Kapur, 2014). They enrich cultural diversity, enhance social cohesion, and stimulate economic growth through consumption, investment, and entrepreneurship (Kahanec & Pytliková, n.d.). As a developing nation, the process of migration is very deep rooted in India, and migration plays a very significant role in shaping the cultural-topography of peoples of India including its state.

But as discussed above there are various drivers/factors on which the movement of people impacted and one of them is forced migration. Forced migration, which is defined as the forced

transfer of people and groups away from their areas of origin, is a prominent problem in the different districts of Bihar. This phenomenon is caused by a variety of socio-economic, political, and environmental hazards, and pandemics i.e. Covid-19. The pandemic has triggered unprecedented challenges globally, including significant disruptions to migration patterns and population movements. In Bihar, India, the pandemic has exacerbated existing vulnerabilities and compelled many individuals and families to migrate (mostly return to their native place) involuntarily due to economic hardships, health concerns, and social disruptions. The Covid-19 induced lockdowns and restrictions have led to widespread job losses, income insecurity, and economic insecurity among migrant workers in Bihar (Kumar et al., 2021). Many migrants, predominantly employed in the informal sector and industries such as construction, agriculture, and manufacturing, faced acute financial hardships and were forced to return to their native villages in Bihar in search of basic sustenance and support. The fear of contagion and lack of access to healthcare facilities in urban centers during the pandemic prompted many migrants to flee crowded cities and return to Bihar, where they perceived safety and support from their families and communities (Singh & Gupta, 2020).

However, the influx of returnees posed challenges for local health infrastructure and raised concerns about the spread of Covid-19 in rural areas. Forced migration due to Covid-19 has also resulted in social disruptions and psychological stress among migrant populations in Bihar (Sharma & Patel, 2020). The sudden relocation, the separation from family, and the uncertainty about the future have all led to mental health concerns and psychological distress among migrants. This highlights the need of providing comprehensive support and mental health services. Besides the tragic loss of human lives, there is also the large toll on people's livelihoods that were severely disrupted by the pandemic, either directly by disease and death among family members or indirectly by the shutdown of large parts of the economy through lockdowns and mobility restrictions imposed for shorter or longer periods in a bid to contain the spread of the virus (Datt et al., 2021). In the present research paper, with the help of primary data, an attempt has been made to find out that those migrants within Nawada district who returned to Nawada during the Covid-19 pandemic but after the end of the pandemic did not return to their old places in their districts. By staying here, he engaged himself in economic activities or opened or established his own business. Through such works, we will find out

whether people adopted self-reliance in the economic sector, whether the economic condition of Nawada district improved, or whether improvement is expected in the future.

Scholarly literature on post-pandemic economic recovery emphasizes the importance of targeted interventions, policy support, and community resilience (Adams & Yellen, 2020; IMF, 2021). Previous studies have highlighted the role of government stimulus packages, investment in healthcare infrastructure, and the promotion of digitalization in facilitating economic revival post-pandemic (World Bank, 2022; Rajan, 2023). Understanding these frameworks and best practices is crucial for designing effective recovery strategies in South Bihar districts. The pandemic and associated lockdowns resulted in widespread disruptions to economic activities, particularly in sectors such as construction, manufacturing, transportation, and services, which employ a large number of migrant workers from Nawada District. With businesses shut down, job losses, and uncertainty about livelihoods, many migrants were forced to return to their native villages in Nawada and other parts of Bihar. Nawada District faced major issues as a result of the in-flow of returning migrants. The capacity of the local infrastructure and resources to support the spike in population was stretched to its limits. During the wake of the epidemic, many returning migrants struggled to obtain job, get access to social services, and reconstruct their lives. This made it difficult for them to reintegrate into their initial communities. Due to the unexpected reversal of migrant patterns, local businesses, remittance inflows, and social networks were all disturbed. This had long-term ramifications for household incomes, poverty levels, and the socio-economic development of the Nawada District communities.

A great number of families were forced into poverty and food insecurity as a result of the loss of their livelihoods, income, and social support networks, which added to the existing socioeconomic inequities and vulnerabilities. When vulnerable communities were already struggling to deal with the physical, economic, and social effects of the epidemic, the fact that they had limited access to healthcare, education, and social protection made the situation much more difficult for them. It has been 2 years since Covid-19 but it is important to analyze what this pandemic has taught us because this will help us in knowing what our situation is after Covid-19 passes or we remain like this. Let us tell you how Covid-19 has affected migration and brought about changes.

Objectives:

1. To quantify the number of returned migrants with influence of Covid-19.
2. To study the impact of Covid-19 on employment pattern of return migrants.
3. To examine the contribution of return migration on local economic activities.

Review of Literature:

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought more attention to the topic of return migration, especially in areas like Nawada District, Bihar, India. The purpose of this literature study is to investigate how return migration helped strengthen economies during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Studies indicate that Nawada District has a significant migrant population, with many individuals migrating to urban centers for employment opportunities (Kumar, 2019). However, the COVID-19 pandemic triggered a reverse migration wave, leading to the return of many migrants to their native villages in Nawada District (Raj, 2020). The sudden influx of returning migrants has posed various challenges, including the strain on local resources and infrastructure (Verma, 2020).

Understanding the dynamics of return migration is crucial for devising effective policies to address these challenges. Return migration has both short-term and long-term economic implications for Nawada District. In the short term, the return of migrants has resulted in increased demand for local goods and services, thereby providing a temporary boost to the economy (Singh et al., 2020). However, in the long term, the sustainability of this economic resilience depends on the ability of returnees to reintegrate into the local economy and find stable sources of income (Kumar & Gupta, 2021). Return migration presents both challenges and opportunities for Nawada District. Challenges include the need for skill development and capacity building to enhance the employability of returnees in the local job market (Jha & Mishra, 2020). On the other hand, return migration also creates opportunities for entrepreneurship and local economic development, as returnees may bring back new skills, knowledge, and capital accumulated during their migration experiences (Yadav & Kumar, 2021).

Policymakers must formulate targeted interventions to harness the potential of return migration for economic resilience in Nawada District. This includes investment in infrastructure development, skill training programs, and support for small-scale entrepreneurship initiatives

(Government of Bihar, 2021). Additionally, there is a need for greater coordination between various stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, and community-based organizations, to ensure the effective implementation of these policies (Singh & Tiwari, 2020). Return migration has played a crucial role in influencing the economic resilience of Nawada District post-epidemic. To fully use the potential of returnees for sustainable economic growth and development, Nawada District should focus on grasping the dynamics of return migration and addressing associated challenges through specific policies and interventions.

Methodology and Data Collection:

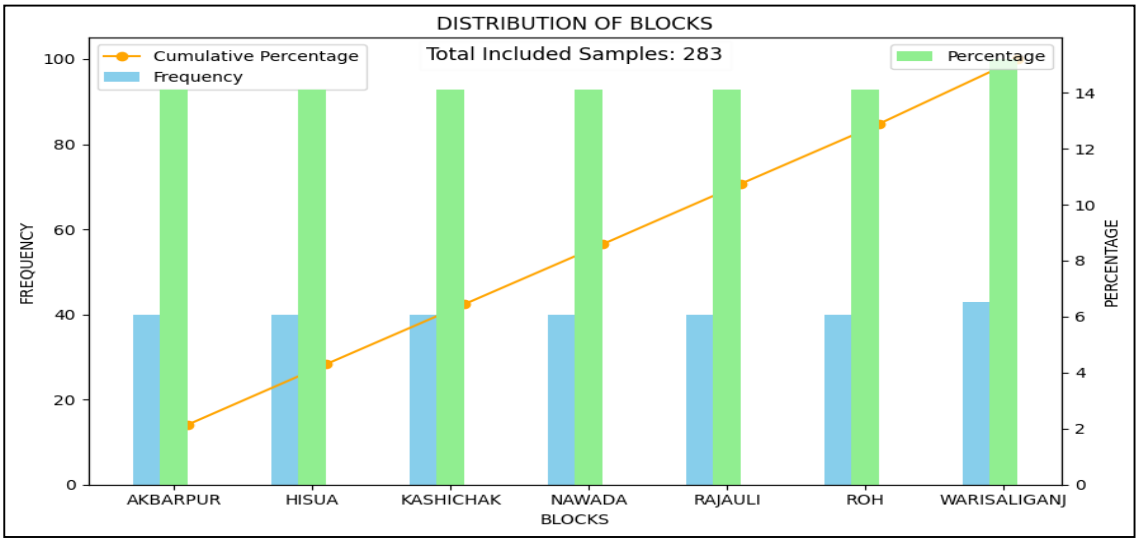
Both secondary and primary data are used in this paper. For secondary data analysis, mostly published data from various articles and government sites was used. For primary data, self-generated questionnaires are taken into consideration. After the development of the questionnaire, the data is collected from 07 blocks out of 14 blocks of Nawada district between December 2022 and April 2023. For collection of data, simple random sampling method is used. Simple random sampling is a method of selecting a sample from a population in which each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected. This technique is commonly used in research studies to ensure that the sample is representative of the population and to minimize bias. By randomly selecting participants, researchers can increase the likelihood that their findings will be generalizable to the larger population.

In this sampling methodology, the selection of sample members is based solely on chance and randomization. Consequently, the sampling process ensures that the sample quality remains unaffected, as each member of the population has an equal probability of being chosen for inclusion in the sample. This sampling method is most suitable for a population that exhibits a high degree of homogeneity (Makwana et al., 2023). As per the 2011 census, Nawada district had a population of approximately 2.22 million. If we look at the religious composition of Nawada district, about 88.53% of the population identified as Hindu, and 11.01% identified as Muslim. This indicates a high degree of homogeneity in terms of religion, as the majority of the population follows Hinduism (Directorate of Census Operations, Bihar, 2011).

Figure: 1 – Total Sample, frequency of blocks & cumulative percentage

Journal of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Research (JIMR)
E-ISSN:1936-6264| Impact Factor: 8.886| UGC CARE II
Vol. 19 Issue 02, February- 2024
Available online at: https://livejimrjournal.in/

(An open access scholarly, peer-reviewed, interdisciplinary, monthly, and fully refereed journal.)



Source: Primary data

The above figure shows the summary of sampling. In the first step, out of 14 blocks in Nawada district, seven blocks are selected from both the two sub-divisions, i.e., Nawada (Nawada, Hisua, Kashichak, and Warisaliganj) and Rajauli (Rajauli, Akbarpur, and Roh). In the second step, villages were selected randomly from the selected blocks. In the third step, care is taken at the time of data collection, and an equal number of responses by the migrants is collected from all seven blocks. The frequency range for the blocks in the above figure is between 40 and 43.

Study Ares:

The latitudinal extension of Nawada district is between 24.88° N and a longitude of 85.53° E, with an altitude of 81 m above sea level. In 2021, woods occupy around 20.72% of the district's entire geographical area, which is equivalent to 4,976 square kilometers. The area is surrounded by Nalanda and Sheikhpura districts to the north, Jharkhand to the South, Jamui district to the east, and Gaya district to the west. The climate of Nawada district exhibits intense heat in the summer and relatively chilly temperatures in winter. The district received a total of 1352.4 millimeters of rainfall in the year 2021-22. The district is administratively divided into 2 sub-divisions: Nawada and Rajauli. Additionally, these sub-divisions are subdivided into 14 blocks i.e. Kawakol, Warisaliganj, Nawada, Rajauli, Akbarpur, Hisua, Narhat, Govindpur, Pakribarawan, Sirdala, Kashichak, Roh, Nardiganj, and Meskaur. According to census 2011, the district total population is 2,219,146, with 1,144,668 men and 1,074,478 females. The district has a sex ratio of 953 Females for 1000 Male. Between 2001 and 2011, the district's population increased by 22.63%, with men growing by 23.09% and females by 22.14%. Hinduism is the

Journal of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Research (JIMR)
E-ISSN:1936-6264| Impact Factor: 8.886| UGC CARE II
Vol. 19 Issue 02, February- 2024
Available online at: https://livejimrjournal.in/

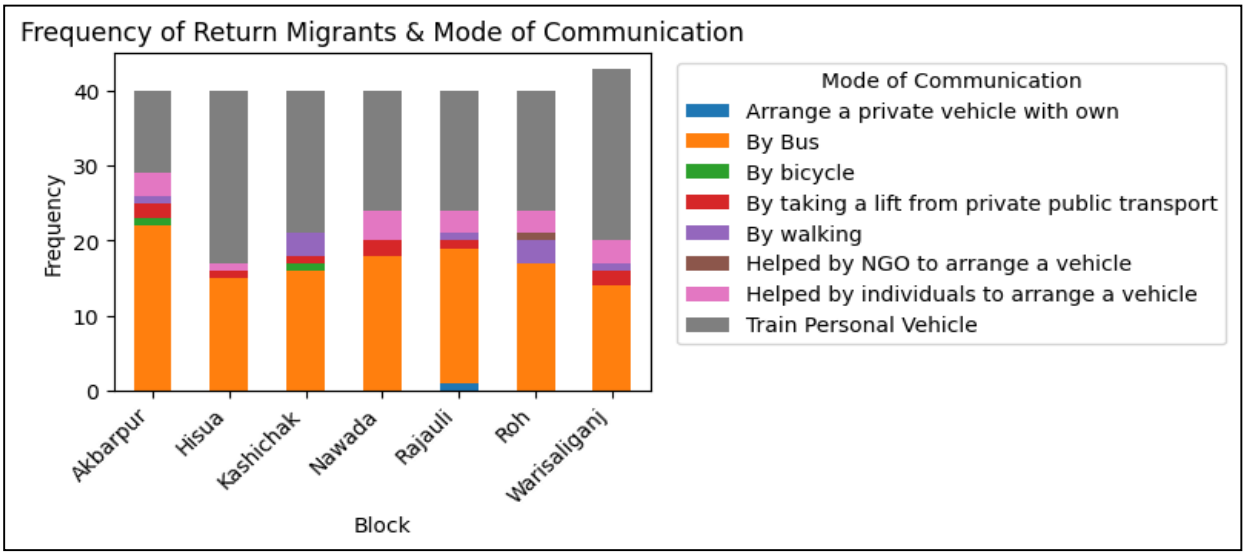
(An open access scholarly, peer-reviewed, interdisciplinary, monthly, and fully refereed journal.)

predominant religion in the district, accounting for 88.53% of the total population. The district has a population density of 446 people per sq. km. The primary language in the district, is Hindi, spoken by 92.21% of the population. In 2020, there were 51,915 live births in the district, with 26,705 men and 25,204 females. In the same year, there were 7,164 fatalities in the area, with 4,557 being men and 2,607 females.

Result and Discussion:

How does lockdown affect you, and how did you return while it was under lockdown? These two questions were tested on 283 respondents in order to obtain the number of people who returned home with mode of transportation:

Figure: 2 – Frequency of return migrants



Source: Primary data

The above figure showing approximately 40 people in each block returned during lockdown. During the study, it was found that the people returned because they did not have the reason to stay, which is the "Pull Factor for Migration," for which the state is known. We can see hear say they returned by-force or phenomena of reverse migration. These days, we know this kind of migration as forced migration. The lockdown has triggered massive reverse migration in the country. Millions of workers have left their destination cities and gone back to their source towns and villages, a majority of them in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, and Madhya Pradesh. (Sapkal et al., 2020)

Table 1: Reason for return migration

Block	Loss of Job	Closure of Business	Impact on Education	Any Other Impact	Total
Hisua	14	20	1	5	40
Kashichak	20	9	0	11	40
Nawada	19	19	0	2	40
Warisaliganj	21	21	1	0	43
Akbarpur	20	17	1	2	40
Rajauli	6	17	1	16	40
Roh	11	11	3	15	40

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows the probable reason for return of migrant, when the above table further more analyzed, following results are obtained: In Hisua, residents experienced a notable change in monthly income patterns before and after the lockdown. Before the lockdown, the mean monthly income stood at 2.85, with a standard deviation of 1.562, reflecting moderate income variability. However, post-lockdown, the mean income surged to 4.72, accompanied by a narrower standard deviation of 0.933, indicating reduced income variability. This shift suggests a substantial increase in income levels and a tightening of income distribution post-lockdown, as evidenced by the higher kurtosis value of 1.965. Similarly, Kashichak residents witnessed changes in income dynamics. Before the lockdown, the mean monthly income was 3.33, with a standard deviation of 1.385, while after the lockdown, the mean income rose to 4.38, accompanied by a slight decrease in the standard deviation to 0.925. The decrease in skewness from 0.292 to -1.045 indicates a shift towards a more negatively skewed distribution post-lockdown, suggesting a redistribution of income.

In Nawada, the mean monthly income increased from 2.75 before the lockdown to 4.25 after, with corresponding standard deviations of 1.373 and 1.335. Despite the rise in mean income, the skewness decreased from 0.227 to -0.213, implying a more balanced income distribution post-lockdown. Warisaliganj exhibited similar trends, with mean monthly income rising from 3.26 to 3.56 after the lockdown, accompanied by a decrease in standard deviation from 1.663 to 1.315. However, the kurtosis value decreased from -1.348 to -0.889, indicating a shift towards a distribution with thinner tails post-lockdown. Akbarpur experienced increases in mean monthly income from 3.85 to 4.18 post-lockdown, with corresponding standard deviations of 1.61 and 1.174. The negative skewness and kurtosis values after the lockdown suggest a redistribution of

Journal of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Research (JIMR)
E-ISSN:1936-6264| Impact Factor: 8.886| UGC CARE II
Vol. 19 Issue 02, February- 2024
Available online at: https://livejimrjournal.in/

(An open access scholarly, peer-reviewed, interdisciplinary, monthly, and fully refereed journal.)

income towards a more negatively skewed and thinner-tailed distribution. Rajauli residents reported a decrease in mean monthly income from 3.52 to 2.68 post-lockdown, with standard deviations of 1.219 and 1.655, respectively. The shift towards a more positively skewed distribution after the lockdown is indicated by the skewness and kurtosis values, with heavier tails suggested by the higher kurtosis value of 2.738. Finally, Roh residents saw a decreasing trend in mean monthly income from 4.55 in pre-pandemic period to 3.08 post-lockdown, with standard deviations of 1.339 and 1.559 respectively. Overall, these statistical trends highlight the dynamic changes in income patterns across different blocks following the COVID-19 lockdown.

Table 2: Monthly income of migrants (Pre & Post Covid-19)

Name of the Block	Monthly Income - Before & After Covid-19	Mean	Std. Dev.	Variance	Skewness	Kurtosis
Hisua	Before	**2.85**	1.562	2.438	0.602	-0.881
	After	**4.72**	0.933	0.871	-1	1.965
Kashichak	Before	**3.33**	1.385	1.917	0.292	-0.464
	After	**4.38**	0.925	0.856	-1.045	0.513
Nawada	Before	**2.75**	1.373	1.885	0.227	-0.837
	After	**4.25**	1.335	1.782	-0.213	-1.055
Warisaliganj	Before	**3.26**	1.663	2.766	0.158	-1.348
	After	**3.56**	1.315	1.729	-0.099	-0.889
Akbarpur	Before	**3.85**	1.61	2.592	-0.015	-1.203
	After	**4.18**	1.174	1.379	-1.058	0.994
Rajauli	Before	**3.52**	1.219	1.487	-0.329	-1.236
	After	**2.68**	1.655	2.738	0.873	-0.447
Roh	Before	**4.55**	1.339	1.792	-0.585	-0.845
	After	**3.08**	1.559	2.43	0.126	-1.106

Source: Primary data

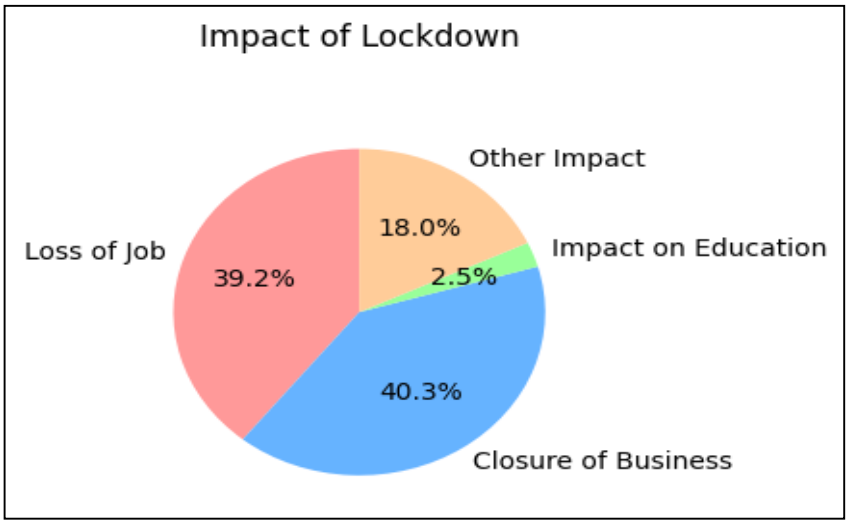
So, in general from the above discussion we can say that the mean monthly income has risen in some blocks **(Hisua, Kashichak, Nawada, Warisaliganj, and Akbarpur)** and fallen in others **(Rajauli, Roh)** above table. This suggests varying economic effects of COVID-19 in various regions. The further investigation in this study shows the reasons behind these differences, which could include factors such as the nature of work/contribution towards local economy by participating in various governmental scheme in these areas and personal attitudes towards self-reliance, etc. When further analysis is done to check the impact of COVID-19 on the employment

Journal of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Research (JIMR)
E-ISSN:1936-6264| Impact Factor: 8.886| UGC CARE II
Vol. 19 Issue 02, February- 2024
Available online at: https://livejimrjournal.in/

(An open access scholarly, peer-reviewed, interdisciplinary, monthly, and fully refereed journal.)

patterns of return migrants, by asking a simple question "How Lockdown affected you?" In response for the same the following results are found:

Figure: 3 – Impact of lockdown on individuals employment



Source: Primary data

Table 3: Employment status after the lockdown & way of earning, if migrant did not return to their previous job.

Name of the Block	Mean	Std. Dev.	Variance	Skewness	Kurtosis	Question
Hisua	1.70	.823	.677	1.495	2.526	What is your employment status after the lockdown?
Hisua	2.63	1.372	1.881	-.213	-1.845	If you did not return to your old job after the lock down, then how do you earn for living?
Kashichak	1.92	1.071	1.148	1.077	-.018	What is your employment status after the lockdown?
Kashichak	2.70	1.203	1.446	-.406	-1.389	If you did not return to your old job after the lock down, then how do you earn for living?
Nawada	1.53	.640	.410	1.447	3.891	What is your employment status after the lockdown?
Nawada	2.37	.952	.907	.097	-.856	If you did not return to your old job after the lock down, then how do you earn for living?
Warisaliganj	1.35	.720	.518	2.570	7.091	What is your employment status after the lockdown?
Warisaliganj	2.30	1.145	1.311	.064	-1.505	If you did not return to your old job after the lock down, then how do you earn for living?
Akbarpur	1.43	.747	.558	2.210	5.391	What is your employment status after the lockdown?

Journal of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Research (JIMR)
E-ISSN:1936-6264| Impact Factor: 8.886| UGC CARE II
Vol. 19 Issue 02, February- 2024
Available online at: https://livejimrjournal.in/

(An open access scholarly, peer-reviewed, interdisciplinary, monthly, and fully refereed journal.)

Name of the Block	Mean	Std. Dev.	Variance	Skewness	Kurtosis	Question
Akbarpur	2.40	1.374	1.887	.095	-1.887	If you did not return to your old job after the lock down, then how do you earn for living?
Rajauli	1.62	.925	.856	1.659	2.106	What is your employment status after the lockdown?
Rajauli	2.17	.903	.815	.077	-1.008	If you did not return to your old job after the lock down, then how do you earn for living?
Roh	1.83	1.035	1.071	1.245	.485	What is your employment status after the lockdown?
Roh	2.38	1.148	1.317	-.052	-1.501	If you did not return to your old job after the lock down, then how do you earn for living?

Source: Primary data

Figure 3 reported that 80% of the people lost their jobs because COVID-19 shut down everything, and approximately 18% of them have other kinds of difficulties. It is very common and general thinking that if people are struggling with finding a job or are out of work, they do face more problems. Table 3 and Figures 4 and 5 tell another story by depicting the results of the two questions mentioned above. The average employment status in Hisua increased from 1.70 to 2.63 after the lockdown, suggesting a positive change in employment trends. Further analysis suggests that the standard deviation is closer to the mean, which means that during post-lockdown, people have more consistent employment opportunities.

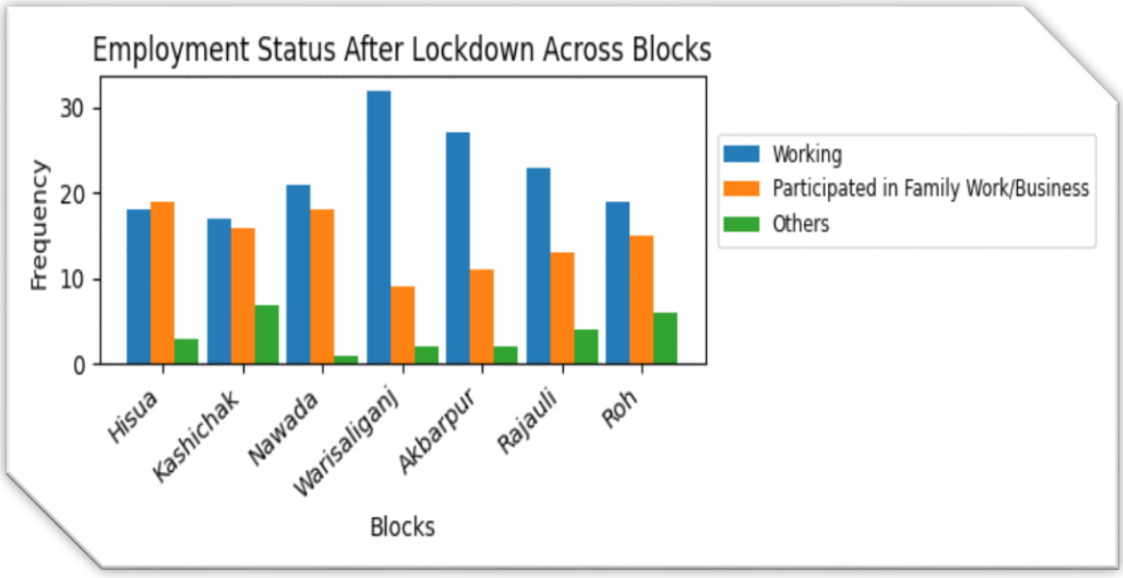
Kashichak had an increase in average employment status together with a reduction in skewness, indicating a shift towards a more symmetrical distribution. The decrease in standard deviation indicates less variability after the lockdown. Nawada indicated increases in both mean employment status and standard deviation, reflecting heightened employment levels and more variability. The reduction in skewness suggests a movement towards a more symmetrical distribution. The employment status of Warisaliganj before the imposition of lockdown is very unequal, but again, this block also shows a consistent pattern in engaging themselves in jobs, which results in consistent and consistent income.

Journal of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Research (JIMR)
E-ISSN:1936-6264| Impact Factor: 8.886| UGC CARE II
Vol. 19 Issue 02, February- 2024
Available online at: https://livejimrjournal.in/

(An open access scholarly, peer-reviewed, interdisciplinary, monthly, and fully refereed journal.)

Akbarpur exhibited an increase in average employment status, along with a reduction in skewness and kurtosis, indicating a more balanced distribution. Rajauli noticed a decline in the average employment status but a rise in the standard deviation, suggesting more variability, which was further analyzed. Roh had a significant rise in average employment status, along with reductions in both skewness and kurtosis, suggesting a shift towards a more balanced distribution. The changes in job status and income sources highlight the diverse effects of the lockdown in different areas. Comprehending these processes is essential for evaluating the wider economic implications of such occurrences.

Figure: 4 – Employment status after lockdown



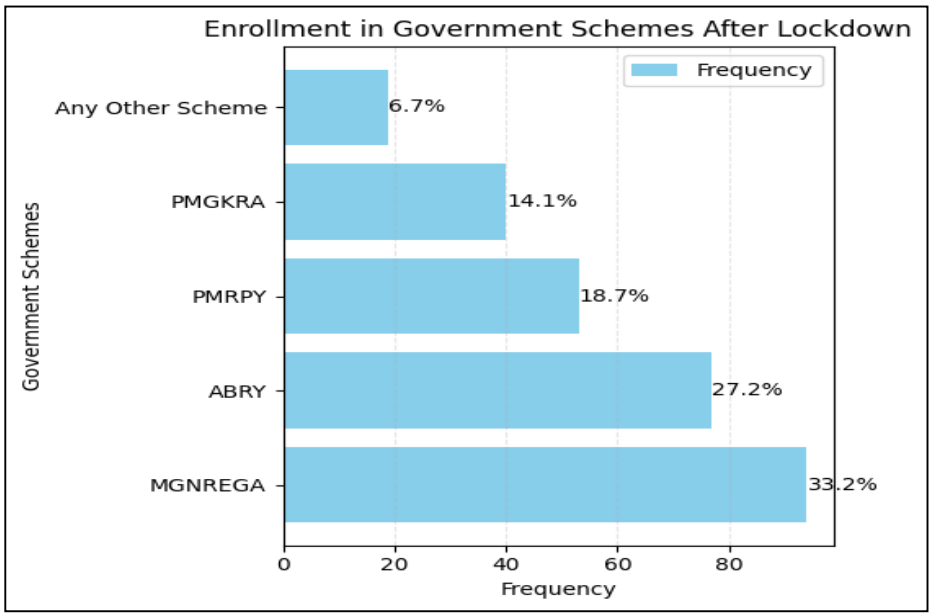
Source: Primary data

Fig. no. 4 clearly indicate about how people engaged themselves in after lock down. Approximately 70% of people is working under different sectors. This might be the probable reason for a slight economic betterment after lockdown. Further an attempt is made to understand, whether there any relationship between return migration and local economic activity.

Journal of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Research (JIMR)
E-ISSN:1936-6264| Impact Factor: 8.886| UGC CARE II
Vol. 19 Issue 02, February- 2024
Available online at: https://livejimrjournal.in/

(An open access scholarly, peer-reviewed, interdisciplinary, monthly, and fully refereed journal.)

Figure 5: Employment in Government scheme after lockdown



Source: Primary data

The graph mentioned above clearly indicates the enrollment of migrants under various schemes. About 33% of the total migrants who were interviewed agreed that they enrolled themselves in the Manrega scheme. 27% enrolled themselves in the Aatmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana (ABRY). So the question is, if the people engaged themselves in government schemes by staying only in Nawada, then is this a reason for a slightly improved economic condition or anything else boasting the local economy?

Crosstabulation method is used to test two set of variables i.e., "Do you enroll in any government schemes? and did you get benefits (daily wages or any other) from government schemes?

Table 4: Enrollment in Government schemes and benefits received

Name of the Block	Test Type	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Hisua	Pearson Chi-Square	15.735	8	0.046
Kashichak	Pearson Chi-Square	0.705	8	1
Nawada	Pearson Chi-Square	9.559	12	0.0655

Journal of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Research (JIMR)
E-ISSN:1936-6264| Impact Factor: 8.886| UGC CARE II
Vol. 19 Issue 02, February- 2024
Available online at: https://livejimrjournal.in/

(An open access scholarly, peer-reviewed, interdisciplinary, monthly, and fully refereed journal.)

Name of the Block	Test Type	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Warisaliganj	Pearson Chi-Square	21.108	10	0.02
Akbarpur	Pearson Chi-Square	11.264	8	0.187
Rajauli	Pearson Chi-Square	6.944	6	0.326
Roh	Pearson Chi-Square	9.541	6	0.145

Source: Primary data

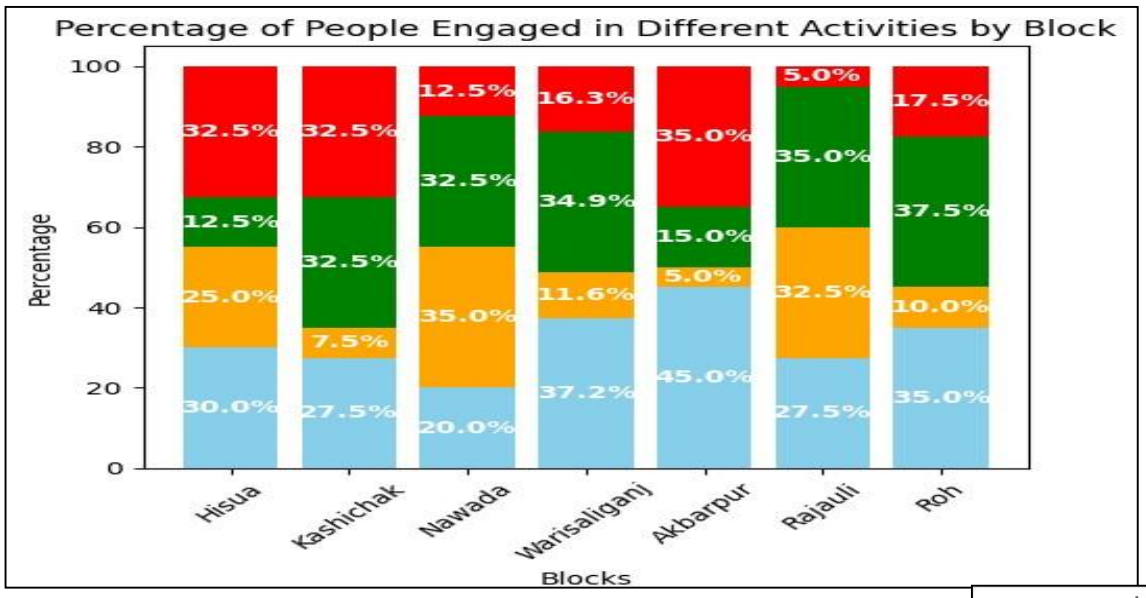
The purpose of conducting test is to check relationship between enrolling in government schemes and receiving benefits. The p value is a number, calculated from a statistical test, that describes how likely you are to have found a particular set of observations if the null hypothesis were true. *P* values are used in hypothesis testing to help decide whether to reject the null hypothesis. The smaller the *p* value, the more likely you are to reject the null hypothesis. The p value tells you how often you would expect to see a test statistic as extreme or more extreme than the one calculated by your statistical test if the null hypothesis of that test was true. If your p *value* is 0.05, that means that 5% of the time you would see a test statistic at least as extreme as the one you found if the null hypothesis was true. (Bevans, 2020)

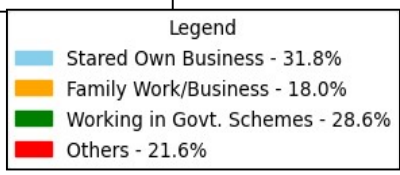
Hisua and Warisaliganj show a statistically significant relationship between enrolling in government schemes and receiving benefits. The Chi-square test score for both blocks is p = 0.046 and 0.02, respectively. The rest of the of the blocks, i.e., Kashichak, Nawada, Akbarpur, Rajauli, and Roh, do not show any statistical significance with the variables used. The average asymptotically significant score is 0.4626. A significance level (alpha) of 0.05 is considered to determine statistical significance. The local economy is uplifted by return migrants in Hisua and Warisaliganj only under Nawada District.

Journal of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Research (JIMR)
E-ISSN:1936-6264| Impact Factor: 8.886| UGC CARE II
Vol. 19 Issue 02, February- 2024
Available online at: https://livejimrjournal.in/

(An open access scholarly, peer-reviewed, interdisciplinary, monthly, and fully refereed journal.)

Figure: 6 – Employment status after lockdown & block wise people participation in various activity





Source: Primary data

The above graph shows the percentage of people's engagement in different activities. Even after a higher degree of enrollment of people in government schemes under Kashichak, Nawada, Akbarpur, Rajauli, and Roh, the return migrants have hardly uplifted the local economy through government schemes because they might be less paid or unpaid. However, 31.8% of return migrants started their own businesses, which is a positive sign for local economic development.

Conclusion:

Why do people all across the globe move or prefer to move? There are several reasons, but one of them is to earn a better livelihood. People migrate from one region to another. This movement was stuck as the lockdown was announced and people were instructed to either stay where they were, if they could, or to go back to their native land. From then on, the year 2020 and mid-August 2021 experienced a huge inflow of return migration. So, approximately two years later, those who were staying in their native village have no work to do? So, the question here is: how do they sustain themselves in that pathetic situation? The research further suggests that during COVID-19, the mindset of people changed; now they started relying on local economic opportunities. People started thinking about starting their own business and started to participate

in family business or work. During COVID-19, more people are staying in regional areas and not moving to capital cities. The first releases of the new prime data confirm that COVID-19 is affecting people's decisions about where to live.

Prime data also confirm that there has been a net shift in favor of regional areas (Centre for Population, 2020). In Nawada, out of the total surveyed people, 28.6% of them engaged themselves in government schemes, especially in Manrega (33.2%). 31.8% of them started their own business, and approximately 18% have started to participate in their family-run business or work. Further works by the scholars also believe that even COVID-19 creates havoc in diverse fields, but the post-pandemic period is a period of self-reliance and believing in ourselves. In a situation, when employment in agriculture was limited and workers were not allowed to commute to towns for non-agricultural employment, employment creation through the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) could have been a lifeline for the rural household (Rawal et al., n.d.).

Further research suggests that return migrants are also thinking of alternative sources of income and are more dependent on government schemes. Among those who were still in the village, about 65% of first migrant workers and 58% of second migrant workers found alternative work in or around the village. Only about 4% of the returnees found MGNREGA work; about 48% and 44% of the first and second returnees respectively found other wage work; while the rest, about 13% and 11% of first and second returnees respectively, resorted to self-employment activities. (Datt et al., 2021). Finally, we can say the post-pandemic period for Nawada is a period of self-reliance for the people of this area, as many of them have started to believe in the resources present in their area, and as a result, more entrepreneurs will rise.

Reference:

1. Adams, F., & Yellen, J. (2020). Economic Recovery Strategies Post-COVID-19: Lessons from Past Crises. *Journal of Economic Policy*, *15* (2), 123–135.

2. Bevans, R. (2020, July 16). *Understanding P-values: Definition and Examples*. Scribbr. /https://www.scribbr.com/statistics/p-value

3. Centre for Population. (2020). Migration between Cities and Regions: A quick guide to COVID-19 impacts [Report]. https://population.gov.au/sites/population.gov.au/files/2021-09/the-impacts-of-covid-on-migration-between-cities-and-regions.pdf

4. Datt, G., Dutta, S., & Mishra, S. K. (2021). *The COVID-19 pandemic and migrant workers from rural Bihar* (CDES Working Paper No. 06/21). Centre for Development Economics and Sustainability. https://www.monash.edu/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/2651448/Covid-19-in-rural-Bihar-Full-Report-30-July-2021.pdf

5. Directorate of Census Operations, Bihar. (2011). Village and Town Directory Census of India 2011.

6. Government of Bihar. (2021). Bihar Economic Survey 2020-21. Patna, India: Author.

7. Jha, A., & Mishra, S. (2020). Return Migration in Bihar: Challenges and Opportunities. Journal of Migration Studies, 15(2), 123-140.

8. Kahanec, M., & Pytliková, M. (n.d.). *The Economic Impact of East-West Migration on the European Union*.

9. Kapur, D. (2014). Diaspora, Development, and Democracy: The Domestic Impact of International Migration from India. Princeton University Press.

10. Kumar, R. (2019). Dynamics of Rural to Urban Migration: A Case Study of Nawada District. Nawada Journal of Sociology, 7(1), 45-58.

11. Kumar, S., & Gupta, A. (2021). Economic Resilience and Return Migration: Evidence from Nawada District. Economic Development Quarterly, 36(3), 275-290.

12. Makwana, D., Engineer, P., Dabhi, A., & Chudasama, H. (2023). *Sampling Methods in Research: A Review*.

13. Neil Adger, W., Arnell, N. W., & Tompkins, E. L. (2005). Successful adaptation to climate change across scales. *Global Environmental Change*, *15*(2), 77–86. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2004.12.005

14. Rawal, V., Kumar, M., Verma, A., & Pais, J. (n.d.). *COVID-19 Lockdown: Impact on Agriculture and Rural Economy*.

15. Rajan, R. (2023). Economic Policy Responses to COVID-19: Insights from South Asia. *Economic Development Quarterly*, *18* (2), 167–182.

16. Raj, V. (2020). Impact of COVID-19 on Return Migration: A Study of Nawada District. International Journal of Population Studies, 10(2), 189-205.

17. Ravenstein, E. G. (1885). The laws of migration. Journal of the Royal Statistical Society, 48(2), 167-235.

18. Sapkal, R. S., Shandilya, D., Majumdar, K., Chakraborty, R., & ActionAid Association. (2020). Workers in the time of COVID-19: Round I of the National Study on Informal Workers.

In S. Sreemala & J. Mathai (Eds.), *ActionAid Association*. https://www.actionaidindia.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Workers-in-the-time-of-Covid-19_ebook1.pdf

19. Singh, R., & Gupta, S. (2020). Forced Migration and Health Vulnerabilities: Insights from Bihar during COVID-19. *Journal of Public Health, 17* (3), 245-260.

20. Singh, R., et al. (2020). Socio-economic Impact of Return Migration: A Case Study of Nawada District. Journal of Economic Geography, 40(1), 89-104.

21. Singh, P., & Tiwari, N. (2020). Role of Return Migration in Economic Recovery: Lessons from Nawada District. Journal of Development Economics, 25(4), 567-582.

22. Verma, S. (2020). Reverse Migration and its Impact on Nawada District. Population and Development Review,16 (3), 321-335.

23. World Bank. (2022). Building Back Better: Post-COVID-19 Recovery Strategies for Developing Countries World Bank Publications.

24. Yadav, A., & Kumar, M. (2021). Harnessing Return Migration for Local Economic Development: Lessons from Nawada District. Journal of Rural Development, 30(2), 201-215.