

# Deciphering Tribal Migration through the Pages of Contemporary Literary Narratives in Translation

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## Abstract

Migration, encompassing both international and internal movements, is a multifaceted and pervasive global phenomenon with social, economic and cultural implications. The internal migration of tribal population in India is one such movement that opens up avenues of discussion regarding the socio-cultural, economic and political impact of migration. Tribal migration currently in India, is propelled by the complex interplay of push and pull factors. The proposed paper intends to conduct a comprehensive analysis of tribal migration with the help of literary narratives written in regional literature translated to English. The study situates the selected texts in the framework of migration studies to examine the dynamics of tribal migration in India. While the existing studies problematize the event of tribal migration, the current examination endeavours to broaden its scope by analyzing both the challenges and benefits of migration for the tribal population in India. The study underscores that migration for education empowers the younger generation of tribal population from their disempowerment and marginalisation, owing to the fact that it would enable intercultural transactions and social exposure. Further, it foregrounds the tribal actuality of forced migration that ultimately accentuate their existing deprivation. An understanding of the aforementioned dual dynamics of tribal migration would enhance the contemporary social policies aiming at tribal empowerment.

**Keywords:** Migration, tribal migration, tribal literature, forced migration, educational migration

## 1. Introduction

Migration is a universal phenomenon, exceptionally materialized in the current scenario of technological advancement and globalization. Migration, although not a new phenomenon, received extensive attention from scholars and academicians from the twentieth century onwards. As R. Lusome and R.B. Bhagat notes “Migration has become a universal phenomenon in modern times. Due to the expansion of transport and communication, it has become a part of worldwide process of urbanization and industrialization” (Lusome and Bhagat, 2020, p.1125). It is also an economic and political activity in which economic factors could hardly be segregated from the reasons of migration. Apart being an economic and political phenomenon, migration is also examined as a socio-cultural event by recent studies on migration. Ivan Koshel and Marina Yakovenko states that “Migration is the most important tool not only for economic modernization, but also for social and cultural modernization as well” (Koshel and Yakovenko, 2020, p.2). Migration is a very complex phenomenon owing to the diverse implications and varied motivating factors included in it. Homogenizing the concept of migration to one single entity would undoubtedly be an inaccurate and erroneous act because, “the individuals who migrate are not easy to classify due to the fact that they come under different circumstances, from different environments and with different individual characteristics” (Tataru, 2020, p.11).

Migration could be categorised into various typologies based on different reasons. Migration can mainly be divided into international migration and internal migration. Internal migration refers to an individual’s change in settlement permanently or temporality within a national boundary due to various factors. International migration refers to the movement of an individual across the national boundary. As the proposed paper mainly focus on internal migration, the features related to internal migration are explained in the paper. Indian history contains a long narrative of migration that took place at various time period with various reasons. Among the migrations that happened in the history of India, internal migrations are really low when compared to international migrations. Till 1990s, mobility of the population showed a decline, which suggest that internal migration was comparatively (Mishra, 2016). The factors like caste system, low level of literacy and joint family systems have retarded the growth rate of migration in India. However, there has been more mobility recently due to the recent acceleration of Indian economy, the expansion of transport communication infrastructure, rising educational standards, and the corresponding rise in aspirations of people (Mishra, 2016). Among the various factors influencing internal migration, economic aspiration is a notable factor that influence individuals to undergo internal migration. Internal migration is an important and pervasive feature of the Indian economy and society. “According to The Economic Survey of India 2017, “an average of 5–6 million Indians migrated annually between 2001 and 2011, leading to an inter-state migrant population of “about 60 million” and an inter-district migrant population “as high as 80 million” (Kaur and Jain, 2023).

The current study intends to analyze the factors that instigate tribal migration and examine its impact on life and culture of the tribal population. The study focuses on both forced migration and educational migration of tribals to ensure a comprehensive analysis of tribal migration in India. A comprehensive analysis provides a better understanding of the problems and prospects involved in tribal migration. Further, the study intends to address how literary narratives in translation contribute to our understanding of tribal migration and what insights do they provide in the multifaceted aspects of this phenomenon.

## 2. An Overview of Literature

Everett S. Lee (1966) in the work *A Theory of Migration* defines migration as “permanent or semi-permanent change of residence. No restriction is placed upon the distance of the move or upon the voluntary or involuntary nature of the act, and no distinction is made between external and internal migration” (Lee, 1966, p. 49). Srivastava and Sasikumar states migration, from one area to another, as a key feature of human history for improved livelihoods. Migration as a movement, according to Kosinski and Prothero, might be of short to long distance as well as short to long duration (People on the Move: Studies on Internal Migration, 1975). E. G. Ravenstein in the year 1885 attempted a theoretical study of migration through the work *Laws of Migration*, which essentially dealt with the British population. *Theories of Migration* by Robin Cohen offers a theoretical study to migration that includes observations pertaining to migration by various scholars and academicians of migration. Cohen in the introductory pages of the work mentions various antinomies associated with the construction of theories in migration, what he addresses as dyads. Similar study on the typology of migration is carried out by William Peterson in the essay *A General Typology of Migration* in which Peterson classifies migration into primitive migration, forced migration, free migration, and mass migration. Since the article was written during the early period of the second half of twentieth century, it provides a general understanding on the various types of migration based on the available resources, which later works have subjected to an in-depth examination. Among the dyads proposed by Robin Cohen, internal and international migration is a significant division proposed by him (Cohen, 1996).

Internal migration is an important and significant feature of Indian society and economy. From the data available from the 2011 census, it mentions 450 million people or 37 percent of the total population as internal migrants based on their residence. Ivan Etzo mentions internal migration as the reallocation of people within the national boundaries. It has been identified that migration among tribal people has increased over time and as “internal migration has greater potential for poverty reduction, achieving social equity and contributing to economic growth in developing countries than international migration”, it could be stated that tribal migration in India is “mainly for the purpose of better employment opportunities and livelihood” (Borhade & et.al, 2020, p.314). Even though there are several other factors that motivate migration, tribal migration is mainly viewed through the lens labour migration. To elucidate the statement an observation on S. N. Tripathy’s work would be sufficient. *Tribal Migration and Dynamics of Tribal Migration* are two narratives authored by Tripathy in which he attempts to study labour migration of tribal population in India. The works attempt an empirical study of tribal labour migration that happened across India. *Dynamics of Tribal Migration in India* by Ranjit Toppo is an empirical study that encapsulates the tribal migration and its consequences among the Oraon tribes of Ranchi District in the state of Jharkhand. Dolly Kikon and Bengt G. Karlsson attempts a study of indigenous migration from the North-Eastern states in India through the work *Leaving the Land: Indigenous Migration and Affective Labour* in India. “In the last decade, the migration of indigenous youths from the uplands of Northeast India to metropolitan cities across India has become one of the most significant social and economic transformations of the region” (Kikon and Karlsson, 2019, p.1). There are varying perspectives regarding the effects of migration, with some studies indicating an enhancement of socio-economic conditions, while others suggest an exacerbation of distress among the tribal migrants. A study conducted in state of Kerala in India informs that a significant proportion of tribal migrants experienced a substantial improvement in their livelihood capital index post-migration, particularly in terms of physical capital, although they have experienced a reduction in their natural capital (Sandesh et al., 2020). In contrast, a recent quantitative study conducted in the state of Odisha, India, underscores that tribal migration often arises from compulsion, with migrants confronting a range of challenges and human rights violations (Kujur and Minz, 2021). To substantiate the information, another quantitative study highlights that, family migration of tribal results in malnourishment of tribal children with no accessibility to primary education, where the tribal migrant women lack social security, privacy and healthcare facility (Behera, 2019). Additionally, scholars critique the lack of proper record of tribal migration in India and the propensity of studies in India toward the neo-classical economic approach of migration (Mistri and Sardar, 2023). It is in this context that an interdisciplinary exploration of tribal migration in India becomes much relevant that the current study is a comprehensive examination of tribal migration, examining its adversities as well as possibilities.

## 3. Methodology

The ongoing discussion pertaining to tribal migration is primarily based on select literary narratives belonging to three various literary tradition in India, that are translated to English. Undoubtedly, region specific literature has been keen in its depiction of human actuality amidst the diversities existing in India. The narratives enable a comprehensive analysis of tribal migration, featuring its merits as well as demerits. The select narratives are placed in the theoretical framework of migration, in which the instigating factors are identified based on the typology followed by the analysis of the impact of migration.

## 4. Theory of Migration

Migration has always remained a crucial feature of human civilization, qualifying it as an independent field of social enquiry. Scholars such as Everett Lee (1966), Mabogunje (1970) and Zelinsky (1971) have made significant contribution to the field of migration studies

(Haas, 2021), thus establishing a theoretical foundation for the discipline. Among the theories of migration, the 'push and pull factors of migration' is a dominant theory that helps to identify the factors influencing migration. In the case of push factor migration, individuals are forced to leave their homes, owing to negative conditions that can be classified into social, economic and political factors (Urbanski, 2022). In contrast, pull factor migration is instigated by positive aspects such as aspirations, employment, education and lifestyle (Zanabazar & et al, 2021), wherein an individual voluntarily decides to migrate. The theoretical foundation of the push and pull factor of migration is adopted in the ongoing discussion to identify the factors of tribal migration in the select literary narratives. The migration depicted by the authors in the narratives are either temporary or permanent, instigated by both push and pull factors. While the push factors of migration in the works are categorized as forced migration, the pull factors are represented as voluntary migration in the current study.

### 5. The Dual Dynamics of Tribal Migration in India

According to R.C. Verma, tribals in India "are the autochthonous people of the land who are believed to be the earliest settlers in Indian peninsula. In India, they are generally called 'Adivasis' as they are believed to be the original inhabitants of this land who continue to maintain their distinct territorial and cultural identity" (Verma, 1990, p.1). But tribal society of India is in a phase of transition currently. The link between non-tribals and the mainstream society has brought transition in their social and cultural life. Change in the socio-cultural life has altered the sensibilities of the younger generation tribals that they embrace modernity and remain unhostile towards development now.

Among the factors of influence that motivate tribal transition, migration has imperative significance. While analysing the Pre-Independent and the Post-Independent history of the margins, records of large-scale tribal migration to the remote areas of India demands special attention. For instance, the Chota Nagpuri tribes namely the Munda, Oraon, Santali, Kaharia community were taken to the Andaman Islands as contract labourers for clearing the forest and other infrastructural development (Thota, 2019). Later the labourers were joined by friends and family leading to "family and community migrations" (Thota, 2019, p.28). The instance demonstrates the various trends involved in tribal migration particularly in the ambit of socio-economic discourse.

A recent study that analysed the migration among the tribals of Madhya Pradesh mentions that "tribal migration is emerging as a dominant form in both rural and urban India. Many studies reported that large numbers of labourers migrated from one state to another searching for work every year. It has been reported high levels of out-migration takes place among the tribals of hilly, densely forest and remote drought prone regions of Madhya Pradesh" (Behera, 2019, p.73). Migration in the context of tribal social life is both a boon and a bane based on the reason that prompts tribals to migrate. Numerous reasons that include natural or environmental factors, developmental activities, poverty, education and modernity causes tribal migration in India. The subsequent effect of tribal migration is linked to the former life-style and social life of the individual who has migrated. Crispin Bates and Maria Carter demonstrates "tribals did not always migrate from their village because of unemployment. For many, migration was a means of escaping social exploitation or physical coercion at home (Bates and Carter, 1992, p.225).

### 6. Literary Maps of Tribal Migration in India

The proposed study aims to analyse the aspects of migration in three novels that could be categorised under tribal literature. Both the positive and negative features of migration are investigated through the select novels. Migration in the novel is exercised by individuals rather than the community. In the select works, individual interest is of vital significance, that it determines the type and factors associated with the migration employed by the various characters in the select narratives. *When the Kurinji Blooms* by Rajam Krishnan, *Kocharethi* by Narayan and *Softly Dies a Lake* by Akkineni Kutumba Rao are the work chosen for the study of migration trends among the tribal population of India. The authors exhibit the socio-economic phenomenon of the period among which migration is of greater significance. From the lowest strata of the society to the highest, we see the process of migration that "characterise contemporary life" (Ahmad, 2019, p.1).

Among the works that represent tribal deprivation, narratives mentioning forced migration could be traced from a few works. Gopinath Mohanty, well known for his tribal narratives in Odia includes the theme of forced migration in his remarkable work *Paraja*. Two women characters in the novel are subjected to forced migration due to their economic deprivation. Jili and Bili, women characters depicted by Gopinath Mohanty are representatives of tribal migrant workers who are forced to migrate from their habitat due to the lack of financial security. Mamang Dai poet and novelist from Arunachal Pradesh depicts migration of north-eastern tribes. Dhimon Chakraborty notes that "in the novels of Mamang Dai we see the true conditions of migrations which is the real cause of the issue here. Although the characters are imaginary, the arguments they provide are genuine under the situations in which one may suffer after the Independence and the consequent migrations" (Chakraborty, 2021, p.64).

The "push and pull" factors of migration proposed by Everette Lee in 1966 provides various factors that are associated with migration. Not all tribal migration happens by force. There exist several "pull" factors that attract tribal population to urban areas. Factors such as education, employment and improved lifestyle leads to tribal migration. The reason why people decide to move from one region to another one, according to Ivan Etzo "may be related not only to economic factors but environmental factors "that can affect internal migration flows is quite broad and is related with the quality of life" (Etzo, 2008, p.10). Education is one prime factor that prompts the migration of tribal youth in India. Lack of access to higher level education in tribal area creates an aspiration towards it among tribal youth. The aspiration results in migration to urban areas for higher level education, that includes a plenty of higher education institutes. A

recent study among the tribal population of Andhra Pradesh stated that in most of the villages, education is available till fourth standard and the children have to migrate for higher education. Similar studies could be traced in other states that mentions the migration of tribal youth for education.

The aforementioned lack of adequate narratives in tribal literature has influenced the representation of voluntary migration or migration due to natural reasons. The element of force couldn't be isolated as it is the lack of facilities to pursue higher education that forces tribal youth to migrate. Be that as it may, it could be justified with the possibilities and development that is acquired through migration. "Migration has historically been a source of opportunities for people to improve their lives and those of their families. Today, the large differences in income between places—particularly countries—continue to motivate individuals to escape poverty through migration" (Murrugarra, Larrison & Sasin, 2011, p. 2). Migration in contemporary scenario could be viewed as an advantageous phenomenon that enhances the livelihood strategies of tribal population. The situation could be well exemplified with the help of the autobiography *The Rise of a Tribal: An Autobiography*, written by Prof. D Swaminadhan, an educationist and a scientist from the tribal community of Andhra Pradesh. The migrations in pursuit of education that brought possibilities and prospects are demonstrated in the narrative by Swaminadhan. Kaveri Nambisan's *The Scent of Pepper* delineates the migration of the younger generation for education among the Kodavas of Karnataka. Kodavas are the tribal population from Kodagu district of Karnataka. The work deals with the story of a feudal family in which the younger generation migrates to England and Madras for education. Later the family also moves from the original settlement to relatively better place. The discussed tendency of migration in search of better lifestyle is dealt by a few other tribal narratives in Indian literature which forms the core element of the proposed study.

### 6.1 The Literary Landscape of Forced Migration

"Not all persons who migrate reach that decision themselves" (Lee, 1966, p.18). William Peterson classifies involuntary migration into two classes. He argues to divide it into "impelled migration, when the migrants retain some power to decide whether or not to leave and forced migration, when they do not have this power" (Petersen, 1958, p.261). *When the Kurinji Blooms*, unparalleled for the representation of the Nilgiri tribal population by Rajam Krishnan typifies the life, culture and condition of the "earliest inhabitants" known as the Badagas. Three generation of individuals having diverse outlook and varied approaches towards migration occupies the narrative. The very act of migration is embedded in the history of Badaga, as they are the people supposed to have migrated from Mysore and made village settlements or known among them as *hatti* in the Nilgiri mountains. But the theory of Badaga migration from Karnataka still lacks a theoretical and factual authenticity apart from the oral legends followed by the members of the tribe. However, the author describes the above-mentioned migration as "Legend has it that the Badagas had migrated from Mysore to the Nilgiris seven hundred years earlier through the dense jungles at Bandipur" (Krishnan, 1963/2002, p.9). If the legend be true, categorising the migration would definitely be a complex task, as the concept of nation-state was absent like today and the boundary demarcations of the then existing princely states of the subcontinent were different.

Many agencies activate forced migration which according to Peterson "is the state or some functionally equivalent social institution" (Petersen, 1958, p.261). The state involvement in tribal migration in India is remarkably high as the tribal population lacks proper documents to prove their traditional existence and ownership of the land in which they inhabit.

The acquisition of land and other resources from often marginal populations, when undertaken for purposes of "national development," involves processes that are largely remote from those most affected. People and communities who are expected and legally required to hand over their assets to the state are likely to be from the fringes rather than from the mainstream of society (Benett and McDowell, 2012, p. 2).

A peep into the history of post-independent India would prove that "50 million people displaced by development projects between 1947 and 1997; 16 million dispossessed by large dams alone; 8 million of them adivasis, among the poorest and most vulnerable sections of Indian society" (Baviskar, 2019, p. 29). The forced eviction for developmental activities results in migration, where the migrants experience, borrowing the title from V.S. Naipul "the enigma of arrival". *When the Kurinji Blooms* depicts a similar community that faces the threat of migration or displacement by the construction of a hydro-electric project. The concern over the threat of migration is expressed through the characters of Lingayya, Jogi, and Paru by the author. Lingayya at midst of his financial and physical adversities, was suggested by his wife Madhi to shift from the place, to which he retorts saying "I cannot leave this place" (Krishnan, 1963/2002, p.54). Lingayya in the novel is characterised as "a true son of soil" (17) whose "life had always been bound up with his lands and cattle" (Krishnan, 1963/2002, p.45). It is to be read along with the assertion that:

Land is the only tangible asset of a tribal family, other possessions being meagre at the present stage of their economy. Land also occupies a pivotal place in the tribal psyche. There are a number of social factors and religious rituals connected with land, which establish emotional ties between the tribal and his land. Thus, land is much more than merely a source of livelihood to the tribes (Munshi, 2012).

Jogi, son of Lingayya maintains the similar attitude like his father and initiates to defend the land against the developmental project. Jogi's verbal confrontation with Nanjan regarding the construction of the hydro-electric project is elucidative of Jogi's sense of belonging towards the land. "I ran away from a far-away place and came here, crossing mountains. Why are they snatching away my land" (Krishnan, 1963/2002, p.250)? The expression 'my land' denotes the tribal affection to the land and environment they belong to as "they maintain a unique relationship with the forests, like a relationship between mother and child or fish and water, or like two inseparable

sides of the same coin” (Dungdung, 2019, p.14). Jogi and Paru had already undergone an internal migration due to the “groups, quarrels and animosity” (Krishnan, 2002, p.203) that emerged out of the land transfer for the infrastructural development of the school (Krishnan, 1963/2002). The development activity of the school could be interpreted as the fundamental cause of migration made by Jogi and Paru from Margathamalai to Mookkumalai. The authorities utilize the ‘ideological apparatus’ that “this is a good opportunity for your children to study, for your children to progress” (Krishnan, 2002, p.185), which persuades Paru to submit the land, her world and her only possession (Krishnan, 1963/2002, p.184). The threat of migration suffered by Jogi, as the government would be acquiring the land for the construction of road and godowns to house important materials for the project (Krishnan, 1963/2002, p.249) could be explicated through Ramachandra Guha. Guha in *Democrats and Dissenters* writes: Adivasis were displaced from their lands and villages when the state occupied the commanding heights of the economy. And they continue to be displaced under the auspices of liberalization and globalization (Guha, 2016). The Dhebar Committee (Report of the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission, 1960-1961) identifies that due to dams constructed, the tribal people were forcefully displaced from their customary places of residence and means of subsistence. They ran out of money and land, ultimately making them landless labourers lacking skills necessary for many urban works (Guha, 2016). Similar observations were made by later committees and commissions that were constituted to study and examine the socio-economic condition of the tribal population in India.

*Kocharethi: The Araya Woman*, authored by Narayan, the first Malayalam novel to be written by a tribal about his community and its experience (Narayan, 1998/2011, p.ix) illustrates other mode of state intervention into Mala Araya tribal life, that results in migration. Alike the Badaga myth of migration, Mala Arayas also believes in myths and stories regarding their present habitat. Arayas who served in the army were cunningly removed through a war by the *Pillas* who were brought from Venad by the *Kaarikottu* kings. After the war, “those Arayar who survived fled to the hills and forests. After a while they came to be called Mala Arayar- Arayar or king of the hills” (Narayan, 1998/2011, p.118). The narrative which includes this story of migration or forced displacement also represents various other concerns of migration among the Mala Araya tribal population. The sudden alienation positing the threat of migration among the tribals is dealt by the author. When the government machineries approach to cut the trees without considering the Araya settlement, the existence of them be questioned. To elucidate further: “This is government business. No one told us there were dwellings and settlements here” (Narayan, 1998/2011, p.123). The statement “this is government land. It’s not yours” (Narayan, 1998/2011, p.123) echoes the historical marginalisation encountered by the Adivasis from the state. Furthermore, the work mentions that “a road was built where the boundary had been marked. The Arayar looked at the road and said-they want to bring big vehicles here. They won’t allow any of us to live in these hills.... They climbed the hills, their hearts heavy with awareness that the land they stood on was not theirs” (Narayan, 1998/2011, p.126). Invoking Velayutham Saravanan’s historical study of forestry in South India, “development of infrastructure such as roads, though very limited, in the hills during the colonial period facilitated the extraction of forest products” (Saravanan, 2018, p.81) Despite the creation of the Madras Forest Act, the exploitation of the forest resources for profit persisted. The initiatives were driven more by commercial interests instead of conservation goals. The main aim was to curtail the access of tribal population to these resources, rather than to preserve them (Saravanan, 2018). The various forest acts restricted tribal rights over forest and the state institution such as Forest, Revenue and Police department further aggravated the tribal situation of alienation that resulted in the flight of tribals from their lands. *Kocharethi* details the intrusion of state machineries like revenue (Narayan, 1998/2011, p. 85), forest officials (Narayan, 1998/2011, p. 121), and police (Narayan, 1998/2011, p.133) in Araya life and the resultant oppression from the state they encounter. This is indicative of Althusser’s idea of ‘repressive state apparatus’ that makes use of physical and mental coercion along with direct and indirect form of violence. “Migration theory therefore entails an analysis not only of individual decision making, but also the behavior of social groups, institutions, and policy makers whose actions impel large numbers of people to move” (Weiner, 2003, p. 281).

“Historically viewed, the environmental change and natural disaster have always been a push factor of migration” (Sebastian and Bhagat, 2017, p.3). The migration driven by environmental reasons could be temporal or permanent. *Softly Dies a Lake* by Akkineni Kutumbarao, set around the geographical space of *Kolleru* lake details the symbiotic relation of man and nature. A community whose social and economic life being propelled by a lake is depicted by the author. The population depicted in the work also believes the story of migration where “long ago their ancestors had settled here, migrating from Bobbarilanka, Nagayalanka, Chautupalli and Kalavapudi” (Kutumbarao, 2014/ 2020, p.156). But the annual flood disrupts their peaceful existence causing threat to the social and economic life. The repeated floods force them to undergo short term migrations and also of thinking about migration from the village. The conversations among the villagers “We can’t stay on in Kolleru” (Kutumbarao, 2014/ 2020, p.157) indicates their hapless situation. But Rangayya resists the idea of migration and motivates them to fight for survival. “Social scientists and demographers classify the environmental migration process in three different categories. First, in places affected by a gradual environmental degradation process, people may have time to make a decision to either cope with these environmental changes with some external assistance or move away. Those who move away from the affected area could be addressed as “environmentally motivated migrants”. Over long periods of time, increase in drought or floods would be the prime motivations for semi-arid and low-lying coastal communities to migrate. Such migration is considered as regional migration and difficult to predict” (Ahsan, Kellett & Karuppannan, 2014, p. 5).

## 6.2 The Literary Echoes of Voluntary Migration

The discourse of economy is a major factor of migration owing to the fact that “it is the desire inherent in most men to better themselves in material aspect that induces them to migrate” (Khan, 2017, p.1). Rural to urban migration has always been a key factor in the process of urbanization. It still continues to be a major factor in the quick development of cities, and the conversion of rural areas into urban

centres (Bhagat, 2016). With regard to tribal migration, it is usually assumed that development leads to migration which is often decried by scholars and social activists. However, the fact that migration leads to the socio-economic development of tribal population is neither adequately represented nor recognised in academic and scholastic circle. The select works depict migration of tribal youths with regard to various 'pull factors' of migration. Education, employment and aspiration for upward social mobility has been factors of tribal migration to urban areas.

The characters of Krishnan, Nanjan, and Vijaya in *When the Kurinji Blooms* are representatives of educational migrants. Their movement away from the village or *hatti* for education elucidates the tribal aspiration for social mobility and better life. Despite the fact that the lack of educational facility is a driving factor, the characters undergo migration with a choice. Later they exhibit interest in living outside their original settlement and a few manifests the objective of settling outside their native village. "Education is considered to be the most potent instrument of social transformation and means of national development. It helps to achieve individual well-being, economic independence and empowerment" (Hembrom, 2020, p. 27). An anthropological study conducted recently in Andhra Pradesh concludes that "in most of the study villages the education is available till 4th standard. So, for higher studies they migrate. For further studies children have to migrate to nearby town. Many children also go to the adjacent mandal called Jhari. Parents send their children to the school with the thought that they would get employment" (Kulkarni, Das & Pardeshi, 2010, p.5). Similar aspiration for education is displayed by the characters of Rajam Krishnan that they move in pursuit of education. Krishan, "finishing his schooling at Othai...had obtained his degree from Madras" and "had returned to the hills" "bringing honour to his family, clan and soil" (Krishnan, 1963/2002, p.59). The return migration of Krishnan revitalizes the outlook of the community towards progress. The satisfaction felt by the community towards their existing situation is considered as a barrier to progress according to Krishnan, after his return from Madras. Many of the people in the community after Krishnan's arrival started considering exposure to the outside world to be a chief advantage of migration (Williams-Oerberg, 2016). Educated Krishnan becomes a role model to the young generation and they also aspire for migration. The conversation between Paru and Nanjan proves the influence of Krishnan among the *hatti* people. Paru asks Nanjan: "Will you study and become greater than Krishna Gowder and buy large tea estates and a car? Nanjan in the following conversation replies that: I'm going to join the Engineering section in fourth form. I'll go to college at Coimbatore, Amma" (Krishnan, 1963/2002, p.187). "Many other educated young men of his community also were like him" (Krishnan, 1963/2002, p.236) who migrated to other places for education. Vijaya also represents the educational migrants who returns to the community after her higher education. Krishan's achievements were pivotal in the development of the community that the function of education to "work as an agent of social change or as a cooperative force of social change" becomes fulfilled here (Shah, 1979, p. 26). Return migration of Krishan is "an integral and significant element in the cycle of migration that connects between the places of origin and places of destination" (Dhar and Bhagat, 2020, p.12). Krishnan channels the educational aspiration of the community. "There was not a single person in Margathamalahatti who was not consumed by a desire for riches; and education was a prime requisite for earning money. Frustrated by the fact that they were not educated, all parents sent their children to school" (Krishnan, 1963/2002, p.180). The return migration of Krishnan is temporary as he aims for remigration from the village. Krishan moves to Othai, a town and permanently settles their owning a house with his family (Krishnan, 1963/2002, p.118). A very recent study on return migration in India by concludes that return migration increases with increasing level of education and many are waiting to remigrate as they considered their nature of return is temporary (Dhar and Bhagat, 2020, p.12).

Similar to the migration depicted in *When the Kurinji Blooms* migration for education could be traced in *Softly Dies a Lake*. Alike Krishnan, in *Softly Dies a Lake* Atluri Pitcheshwar Rao is the very first one to get a degree in Pulaparru (Kutumbarao, 2014/2020, p.160). He moves to Bandar for his higher studies and get resorted to the urban life continuing with his social activism. The return of Pitcheshwar Rao motivates the villagers, eventually the aspiration for education pops up among them. The younger generation that includes Madhusudhan Rao, Jhansi, and Srinivasa Rao migrates to urban centres for education after Pitcheshwar Rao from the village. Following the migration, Srinivasa Rao settles in Hyderabad to earn a living and it took fifty years to come back to Pulaparru. All the people who left the village to study were the same ((Kutumbarao, 2014/2020, p.196). Tribal attitude towards education is based on the idea of economic returns. "The practical and utilitarian aspects of education seem to appeal to them more. They look at it as means for getting more work and different kinds of work, means bettering their living conditions, means for a more secure future" (Shah, 1979, p.33). It should be noted that "migration has historically been a source of opportunities for people to improve their lives and those of their families (Murrugarra Larrison, & Sasin, 2011, p.2).

Parvati and Padmanabhan in *Kocharethi*, understanding the opportunities opened up by migration, shifts to the urban area for the purpose of education as well as employment. Author Narayan portrays his life situations through the character depiction of Parvati and Padmanabhan based on the fact that Narayan after passing the school final examination, settled down at Kochi where he was posted (Narayan, 1998/2011, p. 213). Narayan further elaborates it to be a positive aspect which enables exchange of culture without changing their ethos and values. However, Parvati is depicted to as a character who undergoes an acculturation process. It becomes overt when Narayan mentions that "Parvati talked to them with English accent and urban mannerisms" (Narayan, 2011, p.188). The influence migration creates among the rural people is made visible when: "Some women came to see Parvati who carried the tag of being a woman employed in a town. They wanted to know about life in the town-the living conditions, office, job, the glamour of urban life (Narayan, 1998/2011, p.188). Narayan attempts to demonstrate the consequences that migration may create among the Adivasi community, which ultimately develops from the fascination towards modernity. Hence through the characterization of Parvati Narayan, opens up a debate on the impact of migration, not only among the younger generation of Adivasi community but the impact in general.

The three literary works currently in discussion are pivotal in its depiction of migration, owing to the fact that they comprehensively portray the social, economic and political discourse of migration trend among the tribal population of India. The works open up a new debate in the field of migration studies, positing both the problematics as well as constructive benefits involved in tribal migration. *When the Kurinji Blooms* while dealing with forced displacement and the subsequent threat of migration, represents the benefits of educational migration. Similarly, *Kocharethi: The Araya Woman* contextualizes the threat of migration emerging out of authoritarian discourse of development as well as conservation. However, Narayan depicts migration for the purpose of education and employment as a positive aspect of modernity, through which the socio-economic deprivation of the tribal population could be solved. Kutumbarao depicting the forced migration due to flood, situates the narrative in the wider canvas of literature that depicts migrants generated due to natural disasters. Through the depiction of an indigenous population living around a lake named *Kolleru*, Kutumbarao, similar to Narayan and Rajam Krishnan notes that educational migration is a positive aspect of modernity.

A study of tribal migration within the theoretical framework of push and pull factors of migration would enable a better understanding of the tribal actuality in India. Many a time, social policies concerning indigenous population lack consciousness of their world view and philosophy. Crafting policies with a genuine comprehension of indigenous world view and life philosophies would lead to more effective outcomes. Migration for education acts as a resolution to the existing deprivation of tribal situation in India, while at the same time forced migration accentuate their deprivation. The select texts invites our attention to the factors instigating migration and the impacts of migration, guiding the social policies pertaining to the tribal population in India. A similar study of interdisciplinary nature is possible through literary narratives from north-east India, owing to the fact that push and pull factors of migration from the region is prominent. Further, it can be expanded to other marginalized social groups to seek resolutions to their disempowerment. The study has been confined to the representation of migration in three regional texts due to the lack of tribal literary narratives from other regions in India.

## 7. Conclusion

Migration is a universal phenomenon, inescapable in the ongoing situation of globalisation. Tribal migration is always considered to be a disadvantageous and exploitative practice. However, from the ongoing discussion, it becomes evident that migration of the tribal community involves both advantageous and disadvantageous, unlike the existing unilateral approaches. The authors jointly raise concerns over the threat of forced migration irrespective of the agencies involved, and confluence in their opinion regarding migration for education and employment. Howbeit, forced migration of the Adivasi community due to various perpetuating factors is a matter of absolute condemn, whereas the process of voluntary migration requires a close scrutiny depending on the reason for migration as well as its after-effects. In both the scenarios, cultural identity of the indigenous population is a crucial matter of concern. As observed “that aboriginals, indigenes and tribal cultures have a strong connection with the land” (Nayar, 2014, p.291), the culture of the communities depicted in the select literary narratives are rooted in the territorial landscape, which makes migration a problematic phenomenon. Voluntary migration should not pave way to exploitation due to lack of skill and alienation of Adivasi from their cultural identity. The select narratives in its representation of educational migration shows a return of characters, particularly Krishnan in *When the Kurinji Blooms*, Parvati in *Kocharethi: The Araya Woman* and Pitcheshwar Rao in *Softly Dies a Lake*. The incidents of return are suggestive of the return to their own culture and identity, thus offering resolution to the cultural alienation that may emerge from the migration. Migration should enable emancipation from their socio-economic deprivation, while at the same time it should be considered as an opportunity to assert and popularise the cultural identity of the Adivasi, instead of acculturation and imitation of other cultures.

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Mr. Roshan Varughese has conducted the study and designed the manuscript. Dr. Soumen Mukherjee, the corresponding author has proofread and edited the manuscript.

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