

# Tirupur As Employment Destination For Rural-Out Migrants

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## Introduction

Tiruppur is one of the largest knitwear garment manufacturing and exporting clusters in South Asia. The exports from Tiruppur had led to a substantial demand for labour, giving it an image of a region where jobs are plenty. The increase in demand for labour has been met through three main sources. One, agricultural workers and workers engaged in other informal activities in the neighbouring villages, two, migrants from other regions of the state and third, from other parts of the country.

Continuous growth of business in Tiruppur is creating employment opportunities for the people from all walks of life who are skilled, unskilled, educated and uneducated, all through the year. There are several wholesale and large retail shops of cloth and garment units, employ a good number of clerks, sales assistants, etc. Some persons with middle and secondary levels of education are employed in these trade establishments. As a result of this people from the southern districts of Tamil Nadu, where rain is scanty and water is scarce are coming to Tiruppur in search of employment. People from neighboring State of Kerala are also migrating to the town, in search of employment. Tiruppur provides equal opportunities for employment as well as for investment, from all over the country. In addition to workers who are natives commuting by buses and trains from various villages around Tiruppur at a radius of nearly 50 kms, large number of migrants from distant villages stay in the neighbouring villages and commute to work.

The latest statistical data (2011) reveals that in Tiruppur, there are about 4.5 lakh migrant workers. The direct garment workers in Tiruppur are more than 4,00,000 and the indirect workers constitute more than 2,00,000. The floating population in Tiruppur is around 50,000 people, who migrate to the region as daily labourers/commuters from nearby towns. The concentration of migrants from southern parts of Tamil Nadu is high and they constitute 62.0 per cent. The workers coming for the jobs provided in the garment industry are helpers, ironers, cutters, singar tailors,

flatlocks, chockers, overlocks. Migrant workers play an important role in the Tiruppur's economy. They have become an important source of labour to many garment units that earn foreign exchange for government of India through export garments. This paper explores the factors responsible for getting employment in Tiruppur and how it is a source of employment based on the primary data collected from 200 migrant households of Tiruppur by using stratified random sampling technique. The structured interview schedule was used to collect the information from the selected households and Garrett Ranking Technique was used to analyse the push and pull factors.

## CAUSES FOR MIGRATION

In order to assess the push factors that forces the migrants to move to Tiruppur and pull factors that attract migrants to Tiruppur the data collected from respondents were treated with Henry Garrett Ranking Technique. This technique helps to find out the most significant factors of migration more scientifically. The respondents were asked to assign rank to all factors and the outcome of such ranking was converted into score value using the formula as follows.

$$\text{Percent Position} = 100 (R_{ij} - 0.5) / N_j$$

Where  $R_{ij}$  = Rank given for  $i^{\text{th}}$  factor by  $j^{\text{th}}$  individual

$N_j$  = Number of factors ranked by  $j^{\text{th}}$  individual

The percentage position of each rank thus obtained is converted into scores by referring to the table given by Henry E. Garret. Then for each factor the scores of individual respondents are added together and divided by the total number of respondents as prescribed in the technique.

## Push Factors

The data computed using Garrett Ranking Technique on the push factors, that is the forcing or compelling, reasons for migrating from village to Tiruppur are shown in Table 1. The table shows 15 important reasons assigned by respondents. Among all the reasons unemployment tops and poverty is ranked second important reason. Lack of continuous employment, landlessness, indebtedness, family commitment, inadequate income to maintain family, low income from agriculture, failure of crop, low wage, failure of own business, not willing to be an agricultural labourer, family problem and religious/social/political conflicts are the reason in order of importance for the migration from rural areas to Tiruppur.

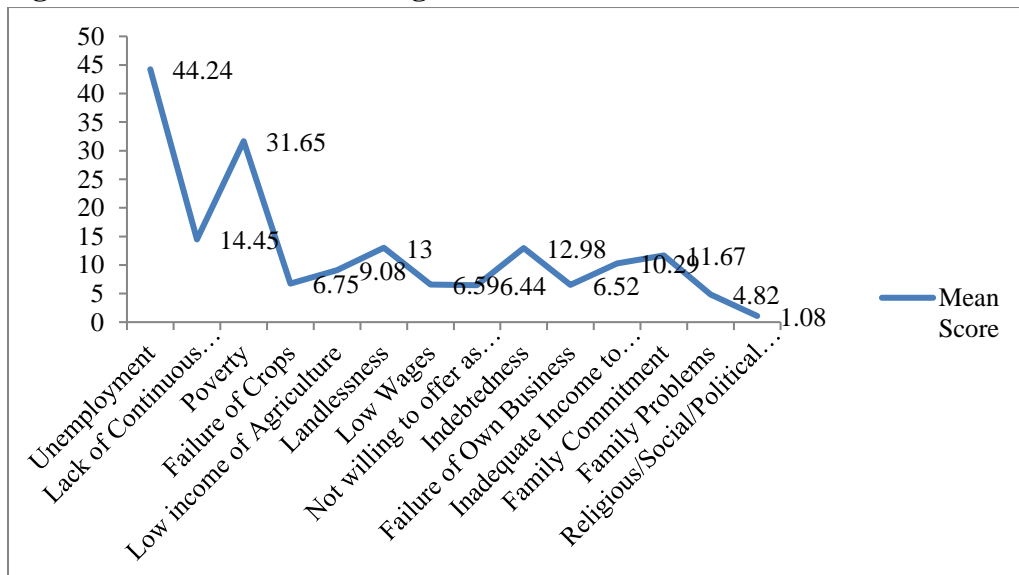
In the villages agriculture growth shows a declining trend in the sending regions of migrants which results in decrease in employment opportunity, and unemployment increases which leads to poverty. As agriculture does not provide adequate employment landless people tend to migrate to Tiruppur. Thus, the main reasons for migration are unemployment, poverty, less employment opportunity and landlessness. There are other notable reasons such as indebtedness and inability to run family. All these push factors cannot be seen in isolation as these factors are inter related. The unemployment and other problems mostly arise due to decline in crop cultivation in the sending regions. The rural people in rural Tamil Nadu face several difficulties and so are

forced to migrate from villages to Tiruppur for their livelihood, family commitment and welfare of children.

**Table 1: Push Factors for Migration**

S.No	Factors	Total Score	Mean Score	Rank
1	Unemployment	8848	44.24	I
2	Lack of Continuous Employment	2891	14.45	III
3	Poverty	6331	31.65	II
4	Failure of Crops	1350	6.75	IX
5	Low income of Agriculture	1817	9.08	VIII
6	Landlessness	2600	13.00	IV
7	Low Wages	1318	6.59	X
8	Not willing to offer as Agricultural labour	1288	6.44	XII
9	Indebtedness	2597	12.98	V
10	Failure of Own Business	1305	6.52	XI
11	Inadequate Income to Maintain Family	2059	10.29	VII
12	Family Commitment	2335	11.67	VI
13	Family Problems	965	4.82	XIV
14	Religious/Social/Political Conflicts	217	1.08	XV
15	Others	1236	6.18	XIII

**Figure 1: Push Factors for Migration**



**Pull Factors**

The pull factors for migration from villages to Tiruppur as reported by the respondents are high income opportunities, continuous employment, suiting their skill and education with work

requirement, friends/ relatives already working, opportunity for self and professional development, attraction to urban life, availability of health and educational facilities, availability of recreation facilities and increasing social status. All the factors develop hope for migration from villages to Tiruppur (Table 2). The ranking of pull factors on the basis of Garrett Ranking shows that continuous employment is the most important pull factor. This is followed by high income opportunity (II rank), friends/relatives already working in Tiruppur (III rank). The fourth ranked pull factor is opportunity for self and professional development, the fifth ranked factor is attraction to urban life and sixth is suitable work against their skill and education. The pull factors that are ranked after the above factors are increasing social status, availability of health and educational facility and availability of recreation facilities.

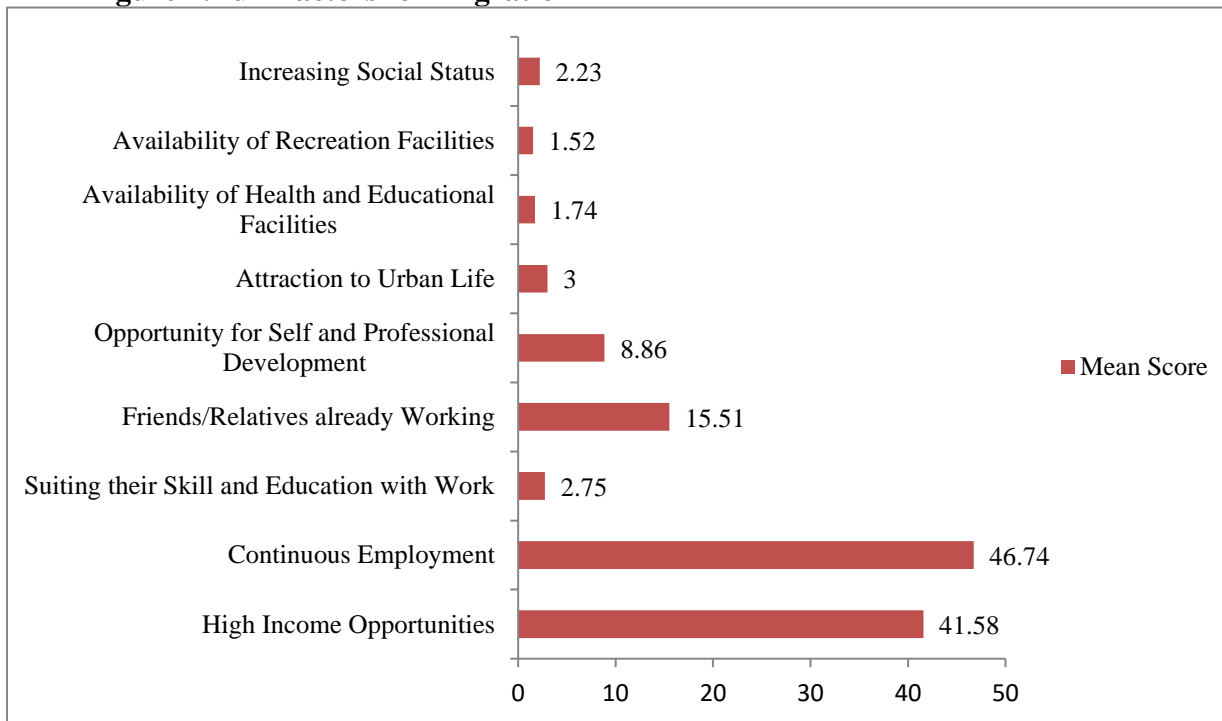
The hopes of getting continuous employment and high income opportunity in Tiruppur which are less in rural area make the migrants decide to migrate to Tiruppur. Youngsters after seeing their friends and relatives already working in Tiruppur, are attracted to Tiruppur. This is ranked third among the motivating factors for migration. Attracted by the changes in behavior and outlook of friends and relatives who had already migrated from their village to Tiruppur, youngsters tend to migrate to Tiruppur. The fourth ranked factor is opportunity for self and professional development. The persons who know sewing work and lack self or professional development opportunity migrate to Tiruppur hoping more of such opportunities. The other pull factors which have obtained less mean score are attraction to urban life, suiting their skills education with work, increasing social status, availability of health and educational facilities and availability of recreational facilities.

**Table 2: Pull Factors for Migration**

S.No	Factors	Total Score	Mean Score	Rank
1	High Income Opportunities	8316	41.58	II
2	Continuous Employment	9348	46.74	I
3	Suiting their skill and Education with work requirement	551	2.75	VI
4	Friends/Relatives already working (attraction)	3102	15.51	III
5	Opportunity for Self and Professional Development	1772	8.86	IV
6	Attraction to urban life	600	3.00	V
7	Availability of health and educational facilities	348	1.74	VIII
8	Availability of Recreation facilities	304	1.52	IX
9	Increasing Social Status	446	2.23	VII

In sum, the main pull factors of migration to Tiruppur include continuous employment and high income opportunity. People from villages move to Tiruppur because of higher income opportunities (income differential as compared to sending region) are available in Tiruppur. The other notable pull factors are friends and relatives already working (attraction) and an opportunity for self and professional development.

**Figure 2: Pull Factors for Migration**



**Source of Information about Employment in Tiruppur**

Migrants were enquired on how they came to know about the employment opportunity available in garment industry. Their responses are presented in Table 3. Self efforts, friends, relatives, neighbours, villagers, broker/middle person and advertisement are reported to be the sources of information about the employment opportunity. Relatives are the main source of information (51 per cent) when compared to other sources. Next source is friends (28 per cent) from whom migrants got information. Next to this is those who came to know (13.5 per cent) about the employment opportunity themselves in Tiruppur. Migrants those came to know about employment from their own villagers (other than friends and relatives) form 4.5 per cent of respondents. Neighbours (2 per cent), brokers/Middle persons (0.5 per cent) and advertisement (0.5 per cent) are other very less frequently reported sources of information among migrants. It is found that relatives and friends are the important source of information for more migrants followed by self efforts. The data confirms the view of Brown that migrants know about the details on ‘migration receiving place’, approaches and means of getting job through social network of relatives and friends. Moreover when relatives and friends already migrated visiting the villages, observation of

change in their dress and actions stimulated prospective migrants to migrate to other places (Brown, 2002). The results of this study are in conformity with the ones of Brown. Alongside, the social network plays an important role in migration decisions is also accepted.

The table 3 shows that majority (56.5 per cent) of migrants migrated after getting the assurance of employment. Among them relatives are the foremost source of assurance (60.2 per cent) and the next source is friends (38.9 per cent). Broker is the third source reported by only one respondent. Relatives and friends are the major sources of assurance of employment that seem to have played a major role for the migration of respondents under the study. By and large, the analysis reveals that social networks, especially friends and relatives serve as a source of information, influence and assurance about employment and based on this migrants move to Tiruppur

**Table 3: Source and Assurance about Employment**

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
<b>Sources of Information about Employment</b>		
Self Efforts	27	13.5
Friends	56	28.0
Relatives	102	51.0
Neighbours	4	2.0
Villagers	9	4.5
Brokers/Middle Person	1	0.5
Advertisements	1	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Got Assurance for Employment</b>		
Yes	113	56.5
No	87	43.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Source of Assurance</b>		
Relatives	68	60.2
Friends	44	38.9
Broker	1	0.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### Conclusion

The study reveals that migration to Tiruppur started indentifying since early nineties. People from villages of many districts of Tamil Nadu migrate to Tiruppur in search of employment and income in garment industry as agriculture has become an unviable option to them in terms of employment and income. Social networks play an important role in migration. Analysis of causes shows that while unemployment and underemployment in agriculture cause migration as pull factors continuous employment and income differentials are the main pull factors of migration to Tiruppur

garment industry. In fact, the migrants earn relatively more stable employment and income from jobs in garment industry of Tiruppur.

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