"A Comparison of the Welfare Gains to Households of South Indians Migrating for Jobs Domestically versus Internationally"

Dr. Ganesh Seshan
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ABSTRACT:
This study compares the welfare gains to households in Kerala, India from two types of labor migration: moving overseas versus moving within India for employment. It draws on panel data from two waves of a survey conducted in Kerala in 1998 and 2003. Migrant households as a whole experienced higher asset gains than non-migrant families over this five-year period. Yet against theoretical expectations, welfare gains were similar for households with an overseas migrant and those with a domestic migrant. Although less educated individuals tend to go overseas, a wage premium enables them to earn as much in low-skill jobs abroad as more highly educated workers relocating within India can.

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