

An Exploration of Rural – Urban Migration and Development in India.

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Abstract

Migration is the barometer of changing socio- economic and political condition at the national and international levels. The history of migration is the history of people's struggle to survive and to prosper, to escape insecurity and poverty, and to move in response to opportunity. The problem to Rural to urban migration is a response to diverse economic opportunities across space. Migration has been significantly reshaping the traditional social and economic structures of rural communities of the country.

Key Words: Migration, Economic Structures, Development, Urban, Rural

Migration is the barometer of changing socio- economic and political condition at the national and international levels. There has been much debate on the negative impact of migration on development and vice versa on the one hand, it is argued that under development is a cause of migration and on the other hand prosperity also leads to migration. The history of migration is the history of people's struggle to survive and to prosper, to escape insecurity and poverty, and to move in response to opportunity, in developing countries like India migration mostly takes place not due to the so called pull forces of the destination place not due to the so called pull forces of the destination place as usually happens in case of developed countries but because of poverty unemployment natural and underdevelopment at the origin place. Migration is a natural outcome of inequality in the distribution of resources. If we managed migration can ensure a better living for the rural poor in terms of the impact of migration it can be concluded that migration generally seems involved and migration has the potentials to contribute to poverty reduction with

widespread and generally beneficial impact. Migration between urban and rural areas has fundamentally changed interactions between rural and urban settlements and the way in which we perceive the country side.

The problem to Rural to urban migration is a response to diverse economic opportunities across space. Common household livelihood strategic in rural areas includes agricultural intensification i.e. increasing farm yields and extensification i.e. increasing farm size: income diversification through engaging in arranges of off farm economic activities; and migration either temporary' or permanent partial or with whole household. In rural areas, sluggish agricultural growth and limited development of the rural non-farm sector raises the incidence of rural poverty unemployment and underemployment. Given the fact that most of the high productivity activities are located in the urban areas the rural urban income differentials, particularly for the poor and employed is enormous. Thus, many of them migrate to the urban areas in search of jobs. Initiatives can be taken to develop

managed migration policies that aim to reduce the risks and enhance the benefits of internal migration for the poor.

Many advanced and dynamic economies need migrant workers to fill jobs that cannot be outsourced and that do not find local workers willing to take them at going wages. Population ageing also underlies this growing demand, as it gives rise to deficits of workers relative to dependants. And as younger generations become better educated fewer in their ranks are content with low-paid and physically demanding jobs. Migration may reduce or lead to higher unemployment among low-skilled workers in developed economies, many of whom are themselves migrants who arrived in earlier waves. How do migrants complement the work of domestic workers instead of competing with them. By performing tasks that either would go unperformed or cost more, migrants allow countries to perform other, more productive and better-paid jobs, also maintain viable economic activities that, in their absence, would be outsourced. By enlarging labour force and the pool of workers and by contributing entrepreneurial capacities, migration might boost economic growth in recent countries.

This fact is further authentic by the recently released data world Migration Report. It adds credibility to the basic fundamental premise that migration if used with correct approach can provide a win-win migration for both emigrant and host nation. Delving deeper the WMR that estimates that number of international migrants will swell from 214 million in 2005 to about 405 million by 2050, is important and inter-related. Despite a current slowdown due to the global economic crisis international movement of people will continue. Consequently, migration needs to be a focus on but also on building capacities across states to sustainable

migration. One undercurrent directing the flow of international migration is the expected slower growth in labour force in about a billion until 2050) compared to the less developed countries where it is expected to increase from 2.4 billion in 2005 to 3.4 billion in 2040). It is thus clear the attention of policy should be aimed at putting in structures providing for sustainable international migration.

Migration has been significantly reshaping the traditional social and economic structures of rural communities of this country. The livelihood activities of rural families are no longer confined to farming and are increasingly being diversified through rural-to-urban and international migration. With the development of trade and industry and the awareness produced by the mass media, rural poor are shifting towards the urban areas in order to improve their living standards and to search for better livelihood opportunities. The lack of employment opportunities in the rural areas and better employment prospects and infrastructure facilities in the urban areas motivate people to migrate to urban areas. In the rural areas, sluggish agricultural growth and limited development of the rural non-farm sector raises the incidence of rural poverty, unemployment and underemployment. Given the fact that most of the high productivity activities are located in the urban areas – people from rural areas move towards town or cities with a hope to grab diversified livelihood opportunities as the rural poor still consider migration as one of the significant as well as reliable livelihood coping strategy.

Migration primarily occurs due to disparities in regional development. The causes of migration are usually explained by using two broad categories, namely,

push and pull factors. Studies conducted in the sphere of migration in India – found that poverty, job searching and family influence have been the main push factors for out-migration, while availability of better educational facilities have been identified as the key pull factors behind migration. To be more specific, for rural India, poverty is still considered to be the main push factor for illiterates and moderately educated migrants. The National Sample Survey Office in its 64th round survey which was carried out during July 2007 to June 2008, covering a random sample of 5,72,254 persons, covering 79,091 rural and 46,487 urban households spread over 7921 villages and 4688 urban blocks of the country, explored some significant trends of rural migration in India which has been reflected through the following table.

As per the economists and development experts migration is essential for development and it is a desirable phenomenon; but what is not desirable is the distressed migration found across the nation resulting in over-crowding of cities and mushrooming of slums. Some states which have higher investment and resources for development experience high in-migration; at the same time, the backward states like U.P., Bihar, M.P. etc are experiencing heavy out-migration. The rural poor from the downtrodden and backward communities and backward regions such as Bihar, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh travel to far distances seeking employment at the lowest rungs in construction of roads, irrigation projects, commercial and residential complexes etc. Hence, there is a need for balanced regional development. More focus for development and investment should be

given to those states which are lagging behind in development parameters.

During the last ten years, it came into notice through different reports and statistics that the agricultural sector and rural inhabitants in many regions across the country have suffered from continuous neglect and even outright discrimination – brought about by governmental policies and the fact that investments have been dedicated primarily to stimulating growth of the industrial and urban sectors, and more recently the service sector. National and international investments in agriculture and rural development have been decreasing steadily. As far as the issue of policy is concerned, the Indian government has concentrated and has set its investment-priority in cities, neglecting the rural areas.

Rural-Urban Migration: Some Emerging Trends

- The migration rate in the urban areas (35%) was far higher than the migration rate in the rural areas (26%).
- Magnitude of male migration rate was far lower than female migration rate, in both rural and urban areas. In rural areas nearly 48% of the females were migrants while the male migration rate was only 5%, and in the urban areas, the male migration rate was nearly 26% compared to female migration rate of 46%.
- Migration rate in rural areas was lowest among the scheduled tribe (ST), nearly 24% and it was highest among those classified the social group 'others', nearly 28%.
- In urban areas, migration rate was low. Among other backward class (OBC) near 33%, and it was highest

- among those classification the social group 'other', nearly 38%.
- For rural male, migration rate was lower (nearly 4%) among the 'not literates', and was nearly 14% among those with education level 'graduate and above'. For urban male also, it was lowest for among the 'not literati (17%), and 38% for those with education, level 'graduate or above' level.
 - Among the migrants in the rural areas nearly 91% had migrated from the rural areas and 8% had migrated from the urban areas, whereas among the migrants in the urban areas, nearly 59% migrated from the rural areas and 40% from urban areas.

- Nearly 60% of urban male migrants and 59% of urban female migrants had migrated from rural areas.

Conclusion:

So it may be concluded that while addressing the complex issues of migration, it is important to take into consideration the growing incidences of poverty among huge sections of the rural population. It is time the high for the government to tackle the poverty of villages. Villagers cannot get rich so long as villages remain poor, too poor to attract modern industry and commerce. The key is now to ensure and guarantee employment for the rural poor by giving utmost priority to generation of diversified livelihood opportunities in rural India on sustainable manner.

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