

Migration Dynamics of Population Change in India – A Theoretical Investigation Based on NSS Reports

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Abstract—Migration is an age old contentious global issue that has been considered as one of the most decisive components of population change in any region. Each and every nation - be it developed, developing or under developed - has experienced the phenomenon of migration being a part of worldwide process of either industrialization, urbanization or globalisation. This paper is an attempt to analyse the nature of internal migration in India based on NSS 55th round, NSS 64th round reports. The major finding of the above study indicates that percentage of migrants to the total population was higher in urban areas than that in rural areas. In both rural and urban areas, females showed a higher propensity to migrate than males. The rate of migration of rural male is much lower than that of urban male which vindicates the fact that males neither from rural areas nor from urban areas have the tendency to migrate to rural areas.

Keywords—rural migration, urban migration, internal migration, immigration, emigration

I. INTRODUCTION

Migration is an age old contentious global issue that has been considered as one of the most decisive components of population change in any region. According to World Migration Report, 2003 - as at the start of the twenty-first century, one out of every 35 persons worldwide is an international migrant. Each and every nation - be it developed, developing or under developed - has experienced the phenomenon of migration being a part of worldwide process of industrialization, urbanization or globalisation. It is one of the three significant factors affecting population change other than fertility and mortality rate. But whereas both fertility and mortality operate within the biological framework, migration does not. It influences size, composition and distribution of population. More importantly, migration influences the social, political and economic life of the people [3]. It is most volatile component of population growth and most sensitive to economic, political and cultural factors [4].

Migration is being shaped by multiple pull and push factors— primary among them are economic development and its disparities, population trends, the existence of migratory networks, access to information, the ease of travel today, armed conflicts, environmental deterioration and human rights violations. Changes in these factors may be gradual or abrupt and bring corresponding changes in migratory behaviour[8]. Proper understanding of the patterns of migration would help on the estimation of future population redistribution. The reliability and dependability of these estimates depend much

on the consideration of all the temporal factors of birth, death and internal migration on which population grows in its finest precision [2].

Meaning of Migration in Context of Census of India and NSSO

Definitions of migration are highly varied in nature because this phenomenon results from distinct political, social, economic and cultural contexts. This makes comparisons difficult not only because statistical criteria differ, but because these differences reflect real variations in migration's social and economic significance, depending on the particular contexts [1]. For the sake of uniformity, the United Nations has proposed that migrant be defined for statistical purposes as a person who enters a country other than that of which he/she is a citizen for at least 12 months, after having been absent for one year or longer [7].

According to Census of India, migration means the phenomenon of people moving in (immigration) or out (emigration) of a country, place or locality for various reasons like employment, education, business, marriage, after birth, family moved etc.

In India as per NSS surveys, those movements which result in change of the usual place of residence (UPR) of the individuals are treated as migration and a household member whose last usual place of residence is different from the present place of enumeration is considered a migrant.

A member of the sample household was treated as a migrant if he/she had stayed continuously for at least six months or more in a place (village/town) other than the village/town where he/she was enumerated. The village/town where the person had stayed continuously for at least six months or more prior to moving to the place of enumeration (village/town) was referred to as the 'last usual place of residence' of that migrated person. Shifting of residence within village/town was not considered as an event of migration. Historically, information on migration has been collected since 1872. Though census of India is the single largest source of data on migration characteristics for the people of India, various surveys conducted by the NSSO are also equally important sources of studying migration on some critical aspects. To assess the volume and structure of migration in India, starting with the 9th round (May-September, 1955), NSSO conducted a number of surveys to

collect data on migration as part of its employment and unemployment enquiries.

The present study is exclusively based on NSS 55th Round, Report No. 470: *Migration in India: 1999-2000* [5] and NSS 64th Round, Report No. 533: *Migration in India: July 2007 – June 2008* [6].

Internal Migration in India

Although traditionally international migration has always been in the limelight, of late, the focus has been shifted on causes and consequences of internal migration. Internal migration is now recognized as an important factor influencing social and economic development, especially in developing countries [3]. International migration can involve very short distances and culturally very similar populations whereas internal migration can cover vast distances and bring markedly different populations into contact [8].

TABLE I

MIGRATION RATES PER 1000 OF EACH CATEGORY OF PERSONS IN DIFFERENT NSS ROUNDS - ALL-INDIA

Round (year)	Category of persons					
	Rural			Urban		
	Male	Female	Persons	Male	Female	Persons
64 (July 2007 – June 2008)	54	477	261	259	456	354
55 (July 1999 – June 2000)	69	426	244	257	418	334
49 (Jan - June, 1993)	65	401	228	239	382	307
49 (Jan - June, 1993)	74	398	232	268	396	329
38 (Jan - Dec, 1983)	72	351	209	270	366	316

Note: source for the 38th and 43rd rounds: NSS report number 382, for 49th round: NSS report number 430, for 64th round: NSS report number 533

Table 1 presents the internal migration rates per 1000 persons of each category as obtained from various surveys viz. 38th, 43rd, 49th, 55th and the 64th survey of NSSO. At the all-India level, considering all the migrants till the date of survey, the following features are observed from the table: (i) percentage of migrants to the total population was higher in urban areas than that in rural areas; and (ii) in both rural and urban areas, females showed a higher propensity to migrate than males; (iii) the rate of migration of rural male is much lower than that of urban male which indicates that males neither from rural areas nor from urban areas have the tendency to migrate to rural areas.

It is seen from the table 1 that, during the period 1983 to 2000, the percentage of male migrants to the total population ultimately decreased from 7 percent to 5 percent and exhibited a regular variation for rural areas and showed little variation - between 24 to 27 percent - in urban areas. In the case of

females, a rising trend is, however, noticeable in percentage of migrants to the total population over the period 1983 to 2008. For rural females, it increased steadily from 35 per cent in 1983 to about 47 per cent in 2007 – 2008, while for urban females the increase was from 37 per cent in 1983 to 46 per cent over the same period.

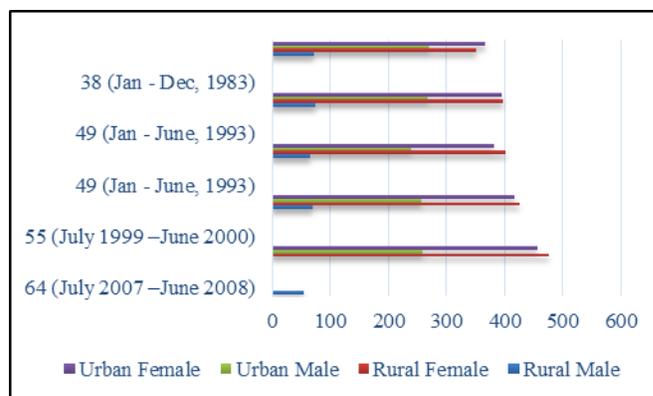


Fig 1. Trends in Migration rates per 1000 of each category of persons in different NSS rounds

It can be observed that in both the rural and urban areas, female migration rates had been gradually increasing whereas male migration rate showed an insignificant change during the period 1983 to 2007-08. The migration rates increased from 21 percent in 1983 to 26 per cent in 2007- 08 in rural areas and from 32 percent in 1983 to 35 percent in 2007-08 in urban areas. However, this increase in migration rate is observed to be primarily due to the increase in migration rates for females. It is observed that the male migration rates have shown a downward trend. In the rural areas, the male migration rate has decreased by 2 percentage points from 7 percent in 1983 to 5 percent in 2007-08, while the migration rate for females has increased by 13 percentage points from 35 percent in 1983 to 48 per cent in 2007-08. The similar trend has been observed in the urban areas, where the male migration rate has decreased by 1 percentage point from 27 percent in 1983 to 26 percent in 2007-08 while female migration rate has increased by 9 percentage points from 37 percent in 1983 to 46 percent in 2007-08. Fig. 1 reveals the same trends with the help of line diagram.

Migration Rate for Different Social Groups

Migration rates for each of the social groups in India for NSS 55th and NSS 64th rounds are presented in Table 2. The migration rates in 1999-2000 and 2007-08, among the different social groups in rural India display similar pattern - the migration rate in the rural areas was the lowest among the scheduled tribe (ST) and it was the highest among those classified in the social group as ‘others’. In 2007-08, in case of urban areas, the migration rate was lowest among other backward class (OBC) nearly 33 percent, and it was highest among those classified in the social group ‘others’, nearly 38 percent. Considerable gender differential was found to exist in the migration rates across all the social groups in both the

rural and urban areas, with male migration rate far lower than female migration rate. It is seen, in rural areas, male and female migration rates were lowest among the ST: it was nearly 5 percent for males and 44 percent for the females. On the other hand, migration rates, for both males and females, in rural areas, were highest among the ‘others’ category: it was 7 percent for males and 51 percent for females. In the urban areas, male migration rate was lowest among the other backward class, nearly 23 percent, and it was highest among the ST and ‘others’ (29 percent each). On the other hand, female migration rate was lowest among the ST (43 percent) and it was highest among the ‘others’ (48 percent).

Table 2

TABLE 2
NUMBER OF MIGRANTS PER 1000 PERSONS OF EACH SOCIAL GROUP FOR EACH CATEGORY OF PERSONS DURING 55TH ROUND (1999-00) AND 64TH ROUND (2007-08)

Social group	Category of persons					
	Rural			Urban		
	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female	Person
	55th round (1999-2000)					
ST	56	357	204	282	411	345
SC	64	434	244	225	393	305
OBC	65	428	242	237	417	323
Others	81	443	259	276	426	347
All (incl. n.r.)	69	426	244	257	418	334
	64th round (2007-08)					
ST	47	440	238	288	430	356
SC	49	482	260	235	447	337
OBC	51	468	255	230	437	331
Others	68	506	281	290	477	379
All (incl. n.r.)	54	477	261	259	456	354

Source: NSS report 533: Migration in India: July 2007-June 2008, pp 24

In 1999-2000, the migration rate of males in rural areas was lowest among ST, nearly 6 per cent and it was highest among the ‘others’, (8 percent). On the other hand, the migration rate among females, in rural areas, was lowest among ST (36 percent) and it was highest among ‘others’ (44 percent). In urban areas, some changes in the pattern of migration rate were observed during 1999-2000 and 2007-08. It is seen that migration rate was lowest among SC in 1999-2000 (31 percent) but was lowest among OBC in 2007-08 (33 percent), while it was highest among ‘others’, in both the periods (35 percent in 1999-2000 and 38 percent in 2007-08). In 1999-2000 the migration rate among urban males was lowest for SC (23 percent), while in 2007-08 it was lowest for OBC (23 percent). However for urban males in these two time periods, the migration rate was highest among ST and others (28 percent each in 1999-2000 and 29 percent each in 2007-08).

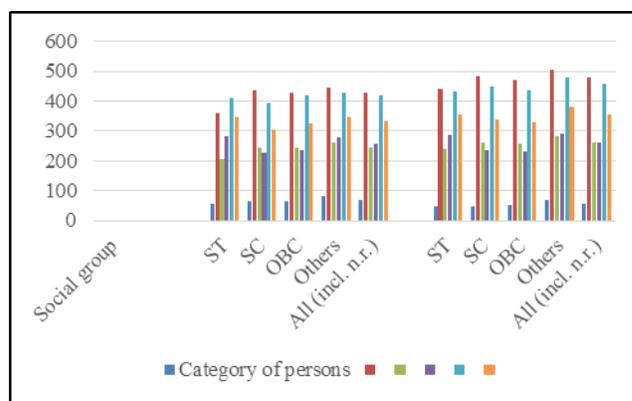


Fig. 2 Chart 2: Number of migrants per 1000 persons of each social group for each category of persons during 55th round (1999-00) and 64th round (2007-08)

For females in urban areas, the migration rate was lowest among SC in 1999-2000 (39 percent), while in 2007-08 it was lowest for ST (43 percent). The migration rate for urban females for ‘others’ was highest in both the periods (48 percent in 2007-08 and 43 percent in 1999-2000). Fig. 2 depicts the graphical representation of same phenomenon with the help of bar diagram.

Four Types of Migration Streams

Table 3 presents the distribution of internal migrants, at the all-India level, by four types of migration streams, namely, rural-to-rural, rural-to-urban, urban-to-rural and urban-to-urban for NSS 55th round and NSS 64th round. During NSS 64th and 55th rounds, rural-to-rural migration was the most dominant migration stream accounting for nearly 62 percent of the total migration, while urban-to-rural migration shared merely 6 percent of total migrants. However, the pattern displayed by male migrants are distinct from that of female migrants. For male migrants, rural-to-urban migration stream was the most dominant one which shared nearly 34 percent and 39 percent of total male internal migrants respectively, while for female rural-to-rural migration stream shared nearly 70 per cent of the total internal female migrants as observed in both surveys.

The variation in the shares of the four types of migration streams, for males and females combined, in NSS 64th compared to those in NSS 55th round (1999-2000) is insignificant. However, some changes in the shares of the migrations streams for male migrants have been observed in 2007-08 compared to that in 1999-2000. It may be seen that the shares of rural-to-rural migration for males has decreased and the shares of rural-to-urban migration has increased in 2007-08 from those of 1999-2000. In NSS 64th round, the share of rural-to-rural migration for males has decreased by nearly 5 percentage points from 32 percent in 1999-2000 and the shares of rural-to-urban migration has increased by nearly 5 percentage points in 2007-08 from 34 percent in 1999-2000.

TABLE 3
DISTRIBUTION (PER 1000) OF INTERNAL MIGRANTS OVER THE FOUR TYPES OF RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION STREAMS AS PER NSS 55TH ROUND AND NSS 64TH ROUND

Category of migrants	Migration stream				
	Rural-rural	Rural-urban	Urban-rural	Urban-urban	All
55th round (1999-2000)					
Male	323	344	107	226	1000
Female	703	144	52	101	1000
Person	618	188	64	129	1000
64th round (2007-08)					
Male	272	390	89	248	1000
Female	700	148	49	103	1000
Person	617	195	57	131	1000

Source: NSS report 533: Migration in India: July 2007-June 2008. pp 30

Migration in Urban Areas from Rural Areas

Having observed the shares of the four types of migration streams, it would be of interest to study the pattern of migration to urban areas from rural areas. In the above table, the shares of migration from rural areas in the total urban migrants have been presented for 1999-2000 and 2007-08 for all-India. It is seen that as per the estimates obtained from NSS 64th round survey, nearly 60 percent of urban male migrants and 59 percent of urban female migrants had migrated from rural areas. The dominance of migrants from rural areas to the urban areas was also observed from the survey results of NSS 55th round and the magnitude of the share of migrants in urban areas from rural areas as estimated in NSS 64th round was almost of the same order though marginally higher than those estimated from NSS 55th round.

TABLE 4

NUMBER OF PERSONS MIGRATED FROM RURAL AREAS TO URBAN AREAS PER 1000 MIGRANTS IN URBAN AREAS AS PER NSS 55TH ROUND AND NSS 64TH ROUND

Category of migrants	55 th round (1999-2000)	64 th round (2007-08)
Male	592	603
Female	581	585
Person	586	592

Source: NSS report 533: Migration in India: July 2007-June 2008. pp30

Inter-district and inter-state migration for different migration streams:

For a better understanding of mobility behaviour of the population it is necessary to study various components of migration streams by intra-district, inter-district and inter-State movement of population. In Table 5 for different categories of migration streams, the proportion who migrated from the same district or from other districts, within same state or from other states have been presented for both NSS 55th and NSS 64th round survey for all-India.

TABLE 5

DISTRIBUTION (PER 1000) OF INTERNAL MIGRANTS BY LAST USUAL PLACE OF RESIDENCE FOR EACH COMPONENT OF (LIKE INTRA-DISTRICT, INTER-DISTRICT AND INTER-STATE) RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION STREAMS DURING 1999-2000 AND 2007-08

Migration stream	Last usual place of residence			
	Intra-district	Inter-district	Inter-state	All
55th round (1999-2000)				
Rural-rural	753	201	46	1000
Rural-urban	438	365	196	1000
Urban-rural	465	335	200	1000
Urban-urban	366	435	199	1000
64th round (2007-08)				
Rural-rural	724	232	44	1000
Rural-urban	412	336	252	1000
Urban-rural	488	338	175	1000
Urban-urban	279	492	229	1000

Source: NSS report 533: Migration in India: July 2007-June 2008. pp 31

Survey results of NSS 64th round show that at the all-India level, the rural-to-rural migration stream was dominated by intra-district migration (72 percent) and nearly 96 percent in the rural-to-rural migration was through intra-State migration. For other categories of migration streams too, the share of intra-State migrants was dominant though lower compared to rural-to-rural migration stream: 75 percent for rural-to-urban, 83 percent for urban-to-rural and 77 percent for urban-to-urban migration streams. The pattern observed in NSS 55th round is also broadly similar to that observed in NSS 64th round with some minor increase in rural-to-urban and urban to urban migration through inter-State migration in 2007- 08. The increase was 5 percentage points for rural-to-urban migration stream and 3 percentagepoints for urban-to-urban migration stream in NSS 64th round from the corresponding shares observed in 55th round. On the other hand, in case of inter-state migration, the share of rural-rural migration and urban-rural migration had declined by 2 percentage and the share of rural-urban and urban –urban migration increased by 5 percent and 3 percent respectively from 55th round to 64th round of NSS.

Reason for Migration for Different Categories of Migrants

There are various reasons because of which people migrate from one place to other. In this study few important reasons are considered. For each migrant, the reason for migration was ascertained and recorded in terms of five different reason codes. In Table 6, per 1000 distribution of migrants by reasons for migration has been presented for all-India level. It is seen from NSS 64th round that the reasons for migration for males and females showed distinct pattern. For females in both rural and urban areas, the reason for the bulk of the migrants was marriage: for 91 percent of rural female migrants and 61 percent of the urban female migrants the

reason was marriage. For urban females, movement of parent/earning member of the family, was the next major reason for migration after marriage, accounting for nearly 29 per cent of total urban female migrants. The reason for migration for the male migrant, on the other hand, was dominated by employment related reasons, in both the rural and urban areas. Nearly 29 percent of rural male migrants and 56 percent of urban male migrants had migrated due to employment related reasons. The movement of parent/earning member of the family also significantly induced male migration in both the rural and urban areas: for, nearly 22 percent of rural male migrants and 25 percent of urban male migrants, movement of parent/earning member of the family was the reason for migration. Study as a reason for migration also accounted for nearly 11 percent of rural male migrants and 7 percent of urban male migrants.

TABLE VI
DISTRIBUTION (PER 1000) OF MIGRANTS BY REASON FOR
MIGRATION DURING 1999-2000 AND 2007-08

Reason for migration	Migrated in rural areas		Migrated in urban areas	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
55th round (1999-2000)				
Employment related reason	303	10	519	30
Studies	53	4	62	13
Marriage	94	888	16	585
Movement of parents/earning member of the family	260	63	270	310
Other reasons (incl. n.r.)	290	35	133	62
All	1000	1000	1000	1000
64th round (2007-08)				

TABLE 7
DISTRIBUTION (PER 1000) OF INTERNAL MIGRANTS BY REASONS FOR MIGRATION FOR EACH OF THE MIGRATION STREAMS AT ALL-INDIA LEVEL DURING 1999-2000 AND 2007-08

Reason for migration	64 th round (2007-08)								55 th round (1999-2000)							
	Male				Female				Male				Female			
	R-R	R-U	U-R	U-U	R-R	R-U	U-R	U-U	R-R	R-U	U-R	U-U	R-R	R-U	U-R	U-U
Employment related reason	291	609	288	482	5	26	20	27	314	570	300	448	9	28	30	28
Studies	105	78	125	53	5	25	12	19	69	80	20	44	4	16	6	10
Marriage	122	16	21	12	926	628	742	585	121	17	23	14	906	614	642	550
Movement of parents/earning member	237	228	184	289	36	282	154	311	268	244	225	315	51	292	215	337
Other reasons (incl. n.r.)	244	69	382	164	29	40	73	57	228	90	432	179	31	50	106	75
All	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000

Source: Compiled from NSS 55th round and 64th round reports

In case of male migrants of rural and urban areas the reasons for migration obtained during 55th round and 64th round have shown distinct characteristics. It revealed the reduced importance of employment related reasons for rural male migration and increasing importance of employment related reasons for urban male migrants. The share of employment

Employment related reason	286	7	557	27
Studies	107	5	68	22
Marriage	94	912	14	608
Movement of parents/earning member of the family	221	44	252	294
Other reasons (incl. n.r.)	292	32	109	49
All	1000	1000	1000	1000

It is observed from the last two NSS rounds (as shown in Table 6) that for females, the prominent reason for migration was marriage and the estimates obtained in these two periods hinted at increasing share of the reason, marriage in total female migrants: in 1999-00, it was estimated that nearly 89 percent of the rural female migrants had migrated for marriage, the share had increased to 91 percent in 64th round while for urban female migrants the shares during these two time periods were 59 percent and 61 percent respectively. Such substantial increase (nearly 30 percentage points) of the reason marriage in the share of female migrants is found to be in tandem with a corresponding reduction in the share of the reason movement of parents/earning member during these periods. It is seen that the share of the reason movement of parents/earning member in total female migrant in rural areas has reduced from 6 per cent in 55th round to 4 percentage points in 2007-08 and for the urban females the share reduced from 31 percent during 55th round to 29 percent in NSS 64th round. The reduction of the share of employment related reasons in total female migration is also visible during this two NSS rounds. For urban females the share of employment related reasons for migration has remained almost same (about 3 percent) in both 55th and 64th rounds.

related reasons in total rural male migration had slightly reduced from 30 percent in NSS 55th round to 29 percent in NSS 64th round, while for urban male migrants the trend reversed, with the share of employment related reasons increased from 52 percent in NSS 55th round to 56 percent in NSS 64th round.

Reason for Migration Separately for Each of The Migration Streams

For each of the migration streams, viz, rural-to-rural, rural-to-urban, urban-to-rural and urban-to-urban, the reasons for migration have been studied here. The Statement 4.14 gives the per 1000 distribution of internal migrants by reason for migration for each of the migration streams at the all-India level.

In Table 7 the data on reasons for migrations in both NSS 64th round and NSS 55th round reveal almost similar pattern for both male and female in respect of different streams of migration. In case of male migrants, the two migration streams, viz., rural-to-urban and urban-to-urban were basically driven by employment related reasons (61 percent of the migrants from rural-to-urban and 48 per cent of the urban-to-urban migrants during 2007-08 whereas 57 percent of the migrants from rural-to-urban and 45 per cent of the urban-to-urban migrants in 1999-00 are for employment related reasons) and even between these two migration streams, rural-to-urban migrations were prominently for employment related reasons. Though, employment related reasons were also dominating factors for males in rural-to-rural and urban-to-rural migration, the shares of employment related reasons were of moderate order. It may be noted that for the male migrants in the four types of migration streams, the movement of parents/earning member was also one of the significant contributing factors for migration.

The pattern observed in the reason for migration, in the four types of migration streams for females were quite different from that in case of male migrants. Nearly 93 percent and 91 percent of the females in rural-to-rural migration had migrated for marriage respectively in 2007-08 and 1999-00. It is observed that, for females, marriage too remained the prime factor for migration for the other three migration streams in both 55th and 64th round survey of NSS. After marriage the second highest contributing factor of female migration was the movement of parents/earning member of the family as observed before in case of male migration in all the four streams of migration in both rounds.

II. CONCLUSIONS

The major finding of the above study indicates that percentage of migrants to the total population was higher in urban areas than that in rural areas. In both rural and urban areas, females showed a higher propensity to migrate than males. The rate of migration of rural male is much lower than that of urban male which vindicates the fact that males neither from rural areas nor from urban areas have the tendency to migrate to rural areas. That is why government should frame out proper

policies to restrict people movement from rural to urban areas so that unplanned urbanization can be controlled.

Rural migration among different social groups in India displayed almost similar pattern for both male and female category of persons where as in urban areas some changes in the pattern of migration rate were observed in both the NSSOs surveys under study. In other words, considerable gender differential was found to exist in the migration rates across all the social groups in both the rural and urban areas with male migration rate far lower than female migration rate. Another notable finding is observed in case of reasons of migration. Marriage was the principal reason of migration among females in both rural and urban areas whereas employment criteria is a major cause of migration among males in rural as well as in urban areas.

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