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## Social Impact of Migration in India: A Review

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### Keywords

Migration,  
Rural-Urban,  
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### ABSTRACT

Migration has become a global phenomenon with the movement of population within districts, states, nations and across borders. It has become an important aspect in the history of human progress. Migration is known as the movement of people from one permanent residence to another either permanent or temporary residence for a substantial period of time by breaking social and cultural ties. Rural-urban migration has been very evident in global population changes in recent decades, especially in India, where migration growth rates are among the highest in the world. Rural-urban migration in India is a dynamic and complex phenomenon, driven by a myriad of socioeconomic factors. This article explores the multifaceted nature of rural-urban migration, focusing on its drivers, socioeconomic implications, and coping strategies employed by migrants. Economic disparities between rural and urban areas stand out as a primary driver, drawing individuals and families to urban centers in pursuit of higher wages and improved employment prospects. Education, infrastructure deficiencies, and the promise of better living conditions further fuel this migration. The socioeconomic implications of rural-urban migration are profound and multifaceted. Income disparities persist, as migrants often find themselves in low-skilled, informal sector jobs with limited job security.

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**Introduction:** Migration can be classified, based on its direction and duration. Based on the direction, migration may be rural to rural, rural to urban, urban to urban, and urban to rural. Also, the movement of migrants may be restricted to inter-district, intra-district, inter-state or intra-state patterns. It is often argued that migrants from rural areas form only a small part of current developing countries' urban population growth. Still, they constitute a significant group for the cities' economies, and, possibly, for poverty reduction policies. And urbanisation is expected to accelerate in countries like India and China, and migration is likely to increase. Moreover, the total number of migrants is much larger than urbanisation and net migration figures suggest. In many developing countries, migration has a 'circular character'; rural-urban

migrants do not settle permanently in cities but continue to maintain close links with their areas of origin. They return regularly and after retiring, and remit substantial parts of their income.

Human migration has become a key issue for developing and developed countries in recent years. People have always been moving from one place to another. In recent times, however, global changes have affected migration considerably, swelling the numbers of migrants. Rapid urbanization and industrialization have generated additional employment opportunities. For many people, moving away from their hometowns or villages to urban habitats in search of satisfactory employment opportunities offers them a chance to better their lives. Migration can be highly effective in terms of securing improved socio-economic conditions, access to higher education, and giving the family and children a chance to better their future prospects. Landless poor from the poorest communities, the most backward castes, and those from economically backward regions constitute the majority of migrant labourers. Trends in migration are in constant and differ from state to state in India. Migration has become so rampant that its impact is felt in every aspect of life. It has become a way of life for hordes of semi-skilled and unskilled rural people who have difficulty finding a decent job in their hometowns. Large numbers of the poor migrate to towns and cities for daily, or contract wage employment, or self-employment. Migration is one of the significant factors, which can influence the economic development of a nation. Migration has been increasing as the aspirations for improving living conditions has increased. Labour migrants constitute the fastest growing group of migrants in the world (UNFPA 2004). In the past, military operations and political oppressions were considered to be the major causes of migration (Rahman 2001). But, in the modern era, migration is being shaped by multiple push and pull factors. The factors such as population trends, economic development and its disparities, poverty, unemployment and underemployment, the existence of migratory networks, access to information, and the socio-economic characteristics of the household can induce people to migrate (Mehta 1991, Appleyard, 1998, IOM 2003, Hao 2003, Srivastava 2008).

Women constitute a central part of the socio-economic life and they actively participate in socio-economic development of India. Work participation of women has increased overtime. The spread of education, training and technology, increased cost of living, changing norms of measuring one's status in terms of income and the changes in men's attitude induce more and more women to come out and accept jobs outside their homes (Singhal 1995, Philip 2002). Sometimes, the need for supplementing the family income has been considered as the chief motivating factor encouraging women for aspiring jobs (Mittal, 1994). Women are engaged in almost all type of skilled and unskilled jobs. Therefore, the traditional role of housewife has gradually changed into working women and house wife (Reddy 1986, Anand 2003). Their increased participation in economically productive work, particularly outside the four walls of the houses in many cases had made them self-dependent (Philip 2002). In India, labour migration of women is an important aspect in the context of globalization. Although pattern of migration in India shows the dominance of males, females also constitute a significant segment especially in the working age. Women migration in India has been characterized as exclusively family or marriage migration induced by the movement of other family members in the household (Thadani and Todaro 1984, Premi 1998). Thus, in the past, the role of women in labour migration in India was ignored since women's migration was considered as somewhat 'associational', occurring purely as a passive addition to the real decision making by males. But, recently the situation has changed; more and more women are migrating for work related reasons.

**The specific objectives are as follows:**

1. To examine the levels, patterns and differentials in migration of women.
2. To understand the process of women's migration.
3. To study the working and living conditions and experiences of migrants at the place of destination

4. To understand the reasons for return migration, their present status and future plans.
5. To study the pattern of remittances, its utilization and the economic impact on migrants' families.
6. To study the migrant women's autonomy and the effect of migration on the social status of their Families.

#### **Methodology of the study:**

The study is based on secondary data. In this regard various libraries were visited and some on-line journals were also reviewed in this direction.

#### **Review of Literature:**

Ankrah Kwaku Twumasi (1995) Rural Urban Migration & Socioeconomic Development in Ghana: This article discusses the case of Ghana, where rural urban migration creates major change in social and behavioural pattern of migrant people when these migrants decide to shift their base due to availability of better education, healthcare facilities and entertainment and then this force them to resocialize their behaviours which ultimately leads to change in behavioural pattern. 1 Afsar Rita (2003) Internal Migration & development Nexus – The Case of Bangladesh: The paper focuses on the core concept of rural – urban migration, which explains, that people move for better employment options as they are less dependent on agricultural sector. These migrants normally face job insecurity, poor working condition & discrimination in the urban work place. The paper also challenges the very basic fact that rural urban migration brings rural poverty to urban areas. The actual fact is that due to increase in remittances, savings rate as well as standard of living has improved remarkably.. And this becomes possible due to movement of people from less developed rural areas to well developed urban areas. 2 Kennan John, Walker R. James (2003) The Effect of Expected Income on Individual Migration Decisions: The paper tries to develop a model on the basis of a factor, i.e. the role of expected income that influences the migration decision. The analysis of the paper indicates that the link between expected income and decision of migration depends on the geographic differences of mean wage and technology to move in search of a better Locational match when the income differences exist in present location. 3 Dubey Amaresh, Jones Palmer Richard, Sen Kunal (2004) Surplus Labour, Social Structure & Rural to Urban Migration – Evidence from Indian Data: This paper mainly focuses on surplus labour, social structure and rural to urban migration. The empirical analysis on India's rural urban migration suggests that the key prediction of Lewis Model is that the rural urban migration is influenced by the existence of surplus labour. States with high labour – land ratios and low agricultural productivity are likely to see more out the migration. The other major findings of the paper is that unlike Lewis model the rural urban migration phenomenon is complex in nature and basically depends on socio economic conditions as well as possessions of skills. This suggests that an individual, whose level of education is low, is less likely to move to urban areas. This also indicates that they failed to acquire higher education because they are poor. The major policy implication is that the policy makers should not conclude that because of rural urban migration, rural poverty decreases in the surplus labour regions as poor people are less likely to move. Sultana Zelina (2010) Impact of Monga on Rural Urban Migration – Its Socio Economic Consequences: The paper pointed out the socio economic consequences of migration during 'monga' season in Northern Bangladesh. As during 'monga' or 'famine' the poorest do not have the access to livelihood and work, people tend to migrate for the fear of hunger. The paper also pointed out that these socio economic consequences can be resolved by developing an agro based industrialization process as well as non agricultural productive activities in the selected study region, so that the socio economic impact arising as a consequence of famine, can be minimized. 19 Shonchoy S. Abu (2011) Seasonal Migration & Micro Credit in the Lean Period – Evidence from Northwest Bangladesh: The paper investigates the relationship between access to micro credit and its impact on rural urban seasonal migration. As seasonal migration is not a permanent migration, people love to migrate during lean period when agricultural

productivities are low. It is often highlighted on the fact that poor people migrate, because they are suffering from lack of finance during lean period and micro credit can minimize the financial shortfall. But the author concluded that due to strict weekly repayment rule, it reduces the ability of borrowers to react to shocks. Thus, they prefer to migrate instead of depending on micro credit during lean period. Sometimes, even if they are accessing microcredit, the purpose remains as a cost of arranging movement from rural areas to urban areas. Thus, it can be said that although, the purpose of microcredit is to provide some alternative livelihood opportunities, but its real impact is questionable. Hazra Anupam (2012) Rural India – Still Floating towards Cities: The paper mainly focuses on the push and pulls factors of migration. Out of the different factors, poverty is considered as the main push factor for rural urban migration, the author also pointed out that migration primarily occurs due to disparities in regional development. So, instead of alleviating the poverty of people, govt. should work on the policies to reduce the poverty in that region.<sup>22</sup> Jahan Momtaz (2012) Impact of Rural Urban Migration on Physical & Social Environment – The Case of Dhaka City: The paper mainly focuses on the impact of rural urban migration on physical and social environment in Dhaka city of Bangladesh. The migration process created equal socio economic impact in both urban cities as well as rural areas. The main reason for migration as highlighted in this paper is due to gross socio economic disparities between urban as well as rural areas.<sup>23</sup> Imran Faisal, Nawaz Yasir, Asim Muhammad & Hashmi H. Arshad (2013) Socio Economic Determinants of Rural Migrants in Urban Setting – A Study Conducted at City Sargodha, Pakistan: The study is designed to identify the socio economic determinants of rural urban migration. The paper observed that poor educational facilities, health, entertainment and limited income opportunities create the rural urban migration. On the other hand, this migration leads to poor sanitation, environmental pollution, crowded housing and over population in urban areas.

After reviewing the relevant literature, a conceptual framework outlining the factors related to migration of women, and impact of migration and return migration on migrant and their families was developed. The reasons of migration were grouped into individual level factors and family level factors at the place of origin and also the factors related to place of destination. It was conceptualized that the background characteristics of the migrant women may have an influence on the decision regarding migration and thereafter the process of migration. Migration might influence the life situation of both migrants in the place of destination and their family. The decision regarding return migration may depend on the type of work they were engaged at the destination, whether they have migrated with a formal contract, the working and living conditions and general experience of migrants in the destination and whether the migration has helped to improve the economic and social status of the family. The stay of women migrant's at destination might increase the women's autonomy, while the irregular inflow of remittances might affect the household negatively. Return migration can affect the economic status of the family. The status of migrants after return may affect their decision regarding future migration.

### **Impacts of rural to urban migration**

Rural to urban migration impacts both on the rural area which loses people and the urban area which gains people.

#### **Rural area**

##### **Positives**

- fewer people to feed
- more land per person

- more resources per person
- money may be sent home by migrants

#### **Negatives**

- population structure upset by loss of young people
- fewer economically-active men left in the rural community
- families are split up
- the elderly remain and the death rate in the community may increase

#### **Urban area**

##### **Positives**

- increased economically-active elements of the community
- increase in the cultural wealth
- more knowledge and skills in the city community

##### **Negatives**

- pressure on places to live
- tensions between older and newer residents
- pressure on services such as education and healthcare provision

#### **Settlement in Informal Settlements:**

Due to the limited availability of affordable housing options in urban areas, many migrants settle in informal settlements, often referred to as slums or shantytowns. These areas, while lacking basic amenities, offer low cost housing alternatives. Migrants may choose this option due to its affordability, proximity to employment opportunities, and the presence of a Community of fellow migrants.

#### **Skill Development:**

To enhance their employability and access better job opportunities, some migrants invest in skill development and education. Acquiring new skills or upgrading existing ones can open doors to a wider range of employment options. Some choose to attend vocational training programs or enrol in evening courses while working during the day.

#### **Accessing Government Schemes:**

Government welfare and development schemes designed to support urban poor populations can be an essential resource for migrants. These programs may provide food subsidies, Health care services, housing assistance, and access to education. Migrants often seek to avail themselves of these benefits to mitigate the challenges they face in urban areas.

### **Entrepreneurship and Informal Sector Participation:**

Some migrants opt for entrepreneurship or participation in the informal sector as a coping strategy. This approach allows them to leverage their existing skills or engage in small businesses, street vending, or freelance work. While informal sector employment may lack job security, it offers a degree of autonomy and income flexibility.

**Conclusion:** Migration has been significantly changing the social and economic structure of rural communities. Livelihood activities of rural families are no longer restricted to farming and agriculture. The development of trade and industry, coupled with a rapid increase in awareness brought on by mass media, has culminated in people shifting from rural to urban areas. The lack of employment opportunities in rural areas and enormous employment prospects, as well as infrastructure in urban areas, has spurred people to migrate to different areas. Rural urban migration in India is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon with significant socio-economic implications. While it offers the potential for improved living standards and opportunities, it also presents numerous challenges, including income disparities, housing. Efforts to improve the living conditions and opportunities for rural - urban migrants can contribute to a more equitable and inclusive urbanization process in India. This requires a comprehensive approach that addresses economic, social, and infrastructural aspects to ensure that migration leads to positive outcomes for both migrants and the urban areas they settle in, ultimately contributing to the nation's development.

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