

Volume XIX ■ Issue 1 ■ January 2022

ISSN:0975-4016

Published in July 2022

SOCIAL CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT

Journal of OKD Institute of Social Change and Development

Migration Tales from Indian Census

Indraneel Bhowmik¹

Abstract

The paper stems with the objective to explore the extent and causes of migration in India based on the Census 2011 data. In India there are two types of migrants- by birth and by place of last residence. The data analysis shows that the extent of migration in India is on the rise. The migrants are mostly females and are concentrated in the rural areas owing to marriage as the most prominent cause of migration. However, economic factors of migration are more important for males. Moreover, it is seen that urbanisation and migration are concomitant India is no different. The agrarian belt of Eastern and Central India witness higher outflow while the western region and certain parts of Northern India are the major destinations. The trend in Census data also gives an indication to the nature of return migration during the current COVID pandemic.

1. Introduction

Migration is an old age phenomena. People moving from one area to another in search of improved livelihoods have been a key feature of human history. The temporary or permanent movement of people from one geographic location to another owing to a variety of reasons ranging from better employment to religious persecution is called migration (Hagen-Zanker, 2008). Again, migration along with fertility and mortality are the three pillars determining the size, composition and distribution of human population (Bhagat, 2005). Literatures, nonetheless, indicate that migration is influenced by social, cultural and economic factors and its outcome has differential manifestations owing to gender, spatial and temporal variations. It may be noted that theoretical expositions on migration generally attempt to focus on two orientations- the origin of the process and the perpetuation of the system. Economic decision making under the neo-classical school of thought had obtained the prime position in explaining the causes of sustenance of migration traditionally over the years; however, the new economics of labour migration (NELM) indicates this process as not just an individual phenomenon but often a family, and at times, a community decision. Further, the use of social, demographic, financial, environmental variables

¹ Department of Economics, Tripura University, Email: eyebees@gmail.com/ indraneel@tripurauniv.ac.in

along with standard economic variables in the recent years widened the dimension of migration literature and system. There is an argument of considering migration from the aspect of behavioural economics and five types of migrants having- physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, esteem needs and self-actualization needs, are considered (Žičkutė & Kumpikaitė-Valiūnienė, 2015). It is thus obvious that the impact of migration is numerous and scattered. It varies between the source and the destination and has immense cultural linkage. The present study stemmed out in this backdrop to understand and discuss the dimensions of migration in India.

Migration is important and it is said that in certain parts of India, for every four households, at-least three migrants are found and the dynamics of migration on the individuals, households and regions has a strong and significant impact on the national economy and society. The recent pandemic witnessed an unprecedented movement of people returning home amidst severe distress; however, no data is available regarding the extent of such migration. Nonetheless, to generate a fair idea, we undertake the present study with the broad objective of studying the nature and causes of migration in India. The study is exploratory in nature and attempts to - a) *examine the volume of migrants in India including its gender and spatial considerations* & b) *discuss out the reasons behind such migration*.

The study is based exclusively on secondary data. The D- Series of Census 2011 on Migration in India is used for the study as it was published in late 2019 and extremely exhaustive. The secondary data was tabulated and processed for deriving the desired objectives using standard analytical and statistical tools. Tables and Charts were used for easier comprehension.

For analytical purpose and we have classified the Indian states/ UTs into six zones as has been the practice by several institutions including NITI Aayog. These are – 1) Northern Zone: Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Rajasthan, Delhi & Chandigarh; 2) North-Eastern zone: Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Tripura, Mizoram, Meghalaya & Nagaland; 3) Central Zone: Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh; 4) Eastern Zone: Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa, Sikkim and West Bengal; 5) Western Zone: Goa, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Daman& Diu and Dadra & Nagar Haveli; 6) Southern Zone: Andhra Pradesh, Andaman& Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry. The inter-regional variations were studied on this specification.

This paper is structured into five sections including the present Introduction. Section 2 provides a brief note on the concepts and terms of migration in India. In Section 3, data analysis is undertaken while the fourth section provides a discussion. Concluding remarks are provided in the final section.

2. Migration in Census: Notes and Concepts

The office of the Registrar General of India publishes migration data based on its inter-decadal enumeration exercise, known as Census. The data is published as the D-Series and records migrants of two forms- by birth and by place of residence. It may be noted that the Census of India has been recording the place of birth, rather the district of birth, right from 1881. Thus it was possible to identify inter-district and inter-state migration. Since 1961, the town and village of birth was recorded, thus, intra-district migration data was also possible. The information on the place of last residence has been collected since 1971 census and from 1981; the reasons of migration based on the place of last residence are being recorded. It may be recalled that movement of population within the boundary of a district is defined as intra-district migration, whereas the movement outside the district but within the state is known as inter-district migration, while the movement beyond the states/ UTs but within the country is termed as inter-state migration.

Migrants by Place of Birth: If a person is enumerated in the village or town where he/she was born, then he/she is not a migrant. Others are. Enumerators note the birthplace in such situation and the status of the person is determined accordingly. Similar is the case for person born in other state of India or in any foreign country and their respective classification. A person born on the high seas is recorded as 'born at sea'; while for those born in train, boat, bus or aircraft, the administrative and territorial status of the actual place of birth was recorded.

However, for people who moves from his/her place of birth but returns back before the enumeration, such migration cannot be recorded. In other words, the place of birth criterion is unable to capture return migrants.

Migrants Defined by Place of Last Residence: The place of last residence is the most commonly used measure to determine the migrant status of a person. The place of birth can also be the place of last residence if the enumeration is being done at a different place. However, there is no minimum time-duration for ascertaining the status of migrants by last residence. Discretionary decisions, if needed, are made. A government official transferred to a different place over a new posting will be a migrant by last residence in case of stay during enumeration. However, temporary movement like women moving into hospital for delivery or a person moving into a hospital for treatment are not examples of migrants by place of last residence.

In other words, we say that the Census of India considers two types of migrants. The first category is known as the Migrants by place of birth (MPB) and the second category is migrants by place of last residence (MLR). MPB are those who are enumerated at a village/town at the time of census other than their place of birth, whereas, a person is considered as MLR, if the place in which he/she is enumerated during the census is other than his place of immediate last residence

Causes of Migration

Marriage is the most prominent of the reasons accounted by Census owing to the social custom of women migrating to the husband's place on marriage. Employment and business are two separate causes for migration as per Census classification. A person moving out in search of a job or for joining a job is migrant for employment; and that includes the transfer of government servants as well as others of the organised sectors. On the other hand, if a person moves on account of joining a business or setting up or running a business; the cause is business. The distinction between work/ employment and business is based on the nature of payment/ earning. The former receives wages/ salary as remuneration for human labour; while in the latter earning is for risk-taking and entrepreneurship efforts.

Education is a reason of migration under census. A person moving to join a school/ college/ or any other educational institute falls under this category. However, dependent children or young adults being enrolled for education at a different place following the movement of the guardian or earning member is categorised as moved with household. The reason moved after birth caters to the cultural practice of the expecting mothers moving to their parental house for childbirth. The baby born at his maternal place becomes a migrant at his paternal place thereof. This is also applicable to births occurring at hospitals and nursing homes located at a different place.

'Others' as a cause in India acts as an envelope. It includes all those persons who moved due to partition; takes into fold all those who have been internally displaced following developmental interventions like construction of highways, large irrigation projects and industrial establishments; accounts for those unfortunates who are fall out of manmade disasters like riots, social unrest and ethnic disturbances. Last but not the least, people moving out due to environmental impacts and disasters like droughts and floods are also considered under the umbrella of others.

3. Data Analysis

Extent of Migration

The number of MPB in India increased from 30.71 crores in 2001 to 44.73 crores in 2011 as seen in Table 1, which also shows that the number of such migrants in 1991 was 22.98 crores. Majority of these migrants have been of intra-district category suggesting migration within shorter distance. However, the number and share of international migrants by birth have reduced over the years. Interestingly, the number of migrants increased by almost 34% during 1991-2001; on the other hand, the growth in the number of migrants is more than 45% during 2001 to 2011. Table 3.1 also shows that the number of inter-state migrants has increased from 2.72 crores to 5.63 crores but their share has remained in the range of 12-13% over the years. Similarly, the number of inter-district migrants by birth has more than doubled from 5.91 crores to 12.12

crores in the twenty year period from 1991, yet its share remained in the vicinity of 25-26% of the total migrants

Table 1: Type of Migrants by Birth in India (in Crores)

	2011	2001	1991
Total Persons	44.73 [100]	30.71 [100]	22.98 [100]
Intra-district	26.41 [59.04]	18.17 [59.17]	13.62 [59.27]
Inter-district	12.12 [27.10]	7.68 [25.00]	5.91 [25.72]
Inter-state	5.63 [12.59]	4.23 [13.77]	2.72 [11.84]
International	0.536 [1.20]	0.61 [1.99]	0.69 [3.00]
Unclassifiable	0.03 [0.07]	0.02 [0.06]	0.04 [0.17]

Source: Computed from various Census Reports

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentage;

The total population of India is 121.08 crores and numbers of MLR are 45.57 crores which amounts to 37.64% of the total. The number of male migrants is 14.61 crores while the majority is female, 30.96 crores. In other words, females constitute 67.94% of the migrant population and the rest 32.06% are male. On the other hand, the number of rural migrants is 27.82 crores, whereas the rest, 17.75 crores stay in urban areas, i.e., majority of the migrants, 61.04% stay in rural areas and the remaining 38.96% resides in urban areas.

From Table 2, it can be observed that the share of migrants in the total population is highest in Goa, 78.21% and least in Jammu & Kashmir, 22.40%. The share of migrants among the population is higher in smaller units like the union territories Chandigarh, Puducherry, etc, whereas among the larger states, Kerala and Maharashtra indicate mark more than 50% of their population as migrants by last residence. As seen earlier, the average of India in terms of share of migrants by last residence is 37.64%, and only one north-eastern state Arunachal Pradesh indicates a higher ratio. Rather, most of the other remaining NER states are in the lower spectrum of the spread with Manipur and Meghalaya being just ahead of Jammu & Kashmir. Large states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh share the commonality of lower proportion of migrants.

Table 2 further indicate that males as migrants are higher in smaller places like- Daman & Diu (66.31%), Lakshadweep (58.32%), Dadra & Nagar Haveli (54.95). Among the states, Meghalaya leads with 53.37% share of males among the migrants followed by Nagaland (51.15%). On the other extreme, the shares of males are less in states like Bihar (14.08%), Uttar Pradesh (19.83%) and Jharkhand (20.71%). Interestingly, the share of males among the total migrants is more than the national average (32.06%) in all the NER states with Assam having the lowest ratio (34.50%).

Table 2: Migrants in India (By Last Residence)

States and UT	Population	Migrant (%)	Male Migrants (%)	Rural Migrants (%)
A & N Islands	380581	56.84	50.96	64.10
Andhra Pradesh	84580777	45.35	38.05	58.99
Arunachal Pradesh	1383727	45.59	47.69	64.45
Assam	31205576	34.11	34.50	79.44
Bihar	104099452	26.17	14.08	85.40
Chandigarh	1055450	64.26	53.42	2.90
Chhattisgarh	25545198	34.79	26.07	67.90
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	343709	54.71	54.90	33.33
Daman & Diu	243247	61.09	66.31	14.70
Delhi	16787941	43.03	51.93	2.42
Goa	1458545	78.21	47.10	38.12
Gujarat	60439692	44.50	37.16	48.70
Haryana	25351462	41.75	30.19	51.90
Himachal Pradesh	6864602	38.56	25.20	84.10
Jammu & Kashmir	12541302	22.40	29.62	65.05
Jharkhand	32988134	29.28	20.71	67.57
Karnataka	61095297	43.31	38.56	56.21
Kerala	33406061	53.47	40.94	55.04
Lakshadweep	64473	31.64	58.32	20.85
Madhya Pradesh	72626809	34.06	25.93	66.10
Maharashtra	112374333	51.06	42.15	51.12
Manipur	2855794	24.05	35.12	64.22
Meghalaya	2966889	25.60	53.37	72.18
Mizoram	1097206	35.31	49.92	34.81
Nagaland	1978502	27.78	51.15	50.00
Odisha	41974218	36.74	27.41	77.41
Puducherry	1247953	57.09	44.87	32.98
Punjab	27743338	49.51	36.99	57.31
Rajasthan	68548437	32.20	20.85	71.75
Sikkim	610577	40.46	44.15	62.85
Tamil Nadu	72147030	43.35	40.88	46.56
Tripura	3673917	35.37	37.27	67.43
Uttar Pradesh	199812341	28.25	19.83	70.97
Uttarakhand	10086292	42.81	34.31	62.64
West Bengal	91276115	36.65	30.62	63.83
Total	1210854977	37.64	32.06	61.04

Source: Census of India 2011

The rural urban divide of the migrants indicate Bihar having 85.4% of its migrant residing in rural areas followed by Himachal Pradesh (84.1%) and Assam (79.44%). The proportion of rural migrants expectedly will be less in urbanised areas and the data attest to it with Delhi and Chandigarh showing an incidence of 2-3%. Among the states, Mizoram has the least rural migrant share, 34.81%. Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra also indicate comparatively lesser share of rural migrants.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Extent of Migrants

Region		TMS	FMS	RMS
North East	Mean	32.54	55.85	61.79
	Std. Deviation	7.43	8.18	14.90
Northern	Mean	41.67	64.54	47.92
	Std. Deviation	13.19	12.76	32.59
Western	Mean	57.91	50.47	37.19
	Std. Deviation	12.84	11.44	14.56
Central	Mean	34.98	73.46	66.90
	Std. Deviation	5.99	5.94	3.48
Southern	Mean	47.29	55.35	47.82
	Std. Deviation	9.18	7.48	14.56
Eastern	Mean	33.86	72.61	71.41
	Std. Deviation	5.91	11.33	9.71

Source: Computed from Census of India 2011

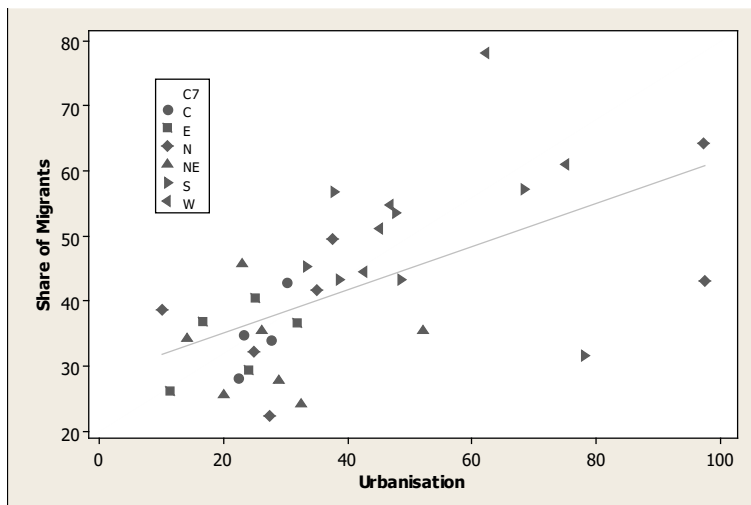
Notes: TMS- Share of Migrants in Total Population; FMS- Share of Females in Total Migrants; RMS- Share of Rural Migrants among Total Migrants

Table 3 indicate that the proportion of migrants in total population is highest in Western region (57.91%) and least in North-eastern region (32.54%); the standard deviation is however maximum for the Northern region (13.19) followed by that of western region (12.84). The spread is low in Eastern (5.91) and Central Region (5.99). We had seen earlier that incidence of migrants are highest in Goa and least in Jammu & Kashmir. In terms of the female share among migrants, it is the Central and the Eastern region at the top with an average of 73.46% and 72.61% respectively., The least average rates, 50.47% are in the Western region while Southern and North-eastern are almost at par with around 55%. The dispersion for this classification is highest for the Northern region (12.76) alike the previous indicator and the least values are seen for the Central region (5.94). It may be noted that the female share in total migrants is maximum in Bihar (85.92%) and minimum in Daman & Diu (33.69%).

The rural: urban divide in the migration domain of the country also provides unique spectrum. Most of the unitary Union Territories of India are almost thoroughly urbanised as a result, the share of rural population in such areas are negligible. Thus,

it is no surprise that we find the lowest share of rural migrants among the 35 considered units is found in Delhi (2.42%) and Chandigarh (2.9%). On the other hand, the shares of rural settlers among the migrants are among the highest in Bihar (85.40%) and Himachal Pradesh (84.10%). Nonetheless, from Table 3, we find that the average is highest for the Eastern region (71.41%) and least for Southern (47.82%) and Northern region (47.9%). The standard deviation is least in the Central Region (3.48) and highest in Northern region (32.59).

Fig 1 Migration and Urbanisation



Source: Computed from Census 2011

In this context, we may note that migration and urbanisation are often considered concomitant to each other. The correlation coefficient between the rate of urbanisation and rate of migration is 0.585 which is statistically significant at 1% level of significance. Fig 1 shows that most of the states and UTs belonging to the central, eastern and north-eastern region flock towards the origin indicating low extent of both urbanisation as well as the rate of migration. A close look at the figure shows that the two extremes at the right vertical axis are Delhi and Chandigarh, both highly urbanised and having a significant proportion of migrant population. The upward slope of the fitted line indicates the positive relationship of these two factors.

Reasons of Migration

Census of India as we know classified seven (7) reasons for migration. Among these work/ employment, business and education can be considered as economic factors while marriage, moved after birth, moved with household are purely social factors influencing migration. Others include factors like natural hazards and various types of issues which causes movement of people from one place to another. Others also include displacement or forced migration which is often an offshoot of development

interventions and inclusive of economic, social and even political causes. Table 4 provides a snapshot on the reasons of migration of Indian people as an aggregate. Considering males and females together as persons, it is observed that marriage is the most prominent reason for migration in India, 46.33%, and it is particularly because of the system of the bride moving to the groom's residence as customary in most of the country. The second most definite cause of migration in India is moved with household indicating the movement of dependent family members along with the head of the household. Among the economic factors, movement for work or employment accounts for 9.09 % of the total.

Business and education factors accounts for 0.79% and 1.20 % of the country's total migration. Others as a reason of migration account for 20.69% of the total migration in the country. The reasons of domestic migration indicate similar trend, save marginal variation, from the country's aggregate. However considering rural migrants we observe that marriage as a factor becomes even more dominant- accounting for 59.89% of the total, while others as a cause has the least share, 10.42% among all the considered levels. Others as a factor are responsible for 10.42% of the migration. The case for urban migration is quite different from the rural scenario. The economic factors become a bit important- work/employment account for 12.58%. Even though the social causes account for almost 64% of the urban migration, the share of marriage is much lower, 26.33%, while moved with household accounts for 23.45% and moved after birth shares 13.35%. For the intra-district and inter-district migration, the social factors dominate undoubtedly, but it is interesting to note that work/employment contribute to more than 12% of the inter-district migration, while for intra-district migration the share is 5.0%. The share of others as a reason also vary between inter-district and intra-district level with the former recording 24.60% share while the later accounts for 14.13% share.

However, the inter-state migration, suggest a different scenario. The relative importance of economic factors is visible with work/employment emerging as a cause of movement for 23.13% of such migrants. Marriage, on the other hand, accounts for 31.13 % while, moved with household suggest 24.05% occurrence. Further, it is seen that among the migrants from other countries, the reasons are somewhat differently attributed. Moved with household is the most prominent cause followed by others. Marriage is placed at the third position with 22.83% share, whereas, education is less than 1% and moved after birth is less than 3%. Among the unclassifiable migrants, others are the most prominent factor for migration followed by moved with household and marriage.

Table 4 also shows the wide difference in the reasons of migration across the gender dimension. Work/ Employment account for 23.96% of the male migrants in the country while for the females, only 2.07% ascribe work/employment as a cause for movement. Work/Employment as a cause for male migration is least, 13.67%, for the within district classification among those referred here. The rate for the females in the same category is 1.41% which is also the lowest. While work/ employment are the cause

for 47.17% of inter-state male migration, for females it is 4.26%. Marriage, on the other hand, is the predominant reason for migration of females across the country and beyond-either rural or urban; intra- state or inter-state; intra-district or inter-district. Among the rural female migrants, marriage is the reason for 77.65% incidence. However, migration among males for marriage is certainly in practice but with much lesser dimensions. 5.84% of male migrants in rural India have cited marriage as the cause for their enlistment here. Incidence of migration for business and education is higher among males as compared to females. These two reasons do not account for even 1% of the female migration. Social factors of migration like moved after birth and moved with household are also higher for males across various spatial dimensions. Others as a reason account for 44.57% of male migration within the district while it is 17.84% for inter-state male migration. For females, others as a cause for migration are accountable for only 7.26% of the rural incidence.

Among these seven reasons listed for migration, three causes, namely- Work/ Employment, Business and Education are considered as economic factors, while three more, namely Marriage, Moved after Birth and Moved with Household are considered as social factors. The seventh reason *Others* as the name suggest may include both economic and social reasons as well as political, cultural, natural and miscellaneous issues.

4. Discussion

The total number of migrants in the country varies by around 0.85 crores over the two types of measures used by the Census classification. The number of MPB in 2011 was around 44.73 crores, while the count of MLR was 45.58 crores. Interestingly, the composition of MLR in terms of spatial distribution is marginally different than that of MPB. Intra-district migrants are more for MLR while the incidence of inter-district and inter-state migration is more for MPB. However, considering the situation with 2001, it is observed that during the 10 year period till 2011, the number of migrants increased by around 45% in both counts of MPB and MLR. Further, the increase was highest among the inter-district category, around 58% followed by the intra-district segment, which had a growth of almost 45%. The relative importance of inter-state migration among the total migrants in the country has declined marginally as in 2001, both counts showed a share of around 13% for them, while in 2011, the share for inter-state migrants was 12% following a relatively slower increase of around 32% in the inter-census period. Also, interesting to note is the numerical decline in terms of international MPBs, which is understandable because of age related death of a number of people who have migrant because of India's partition and subsequent independence. Obviously, an issue which emerges here is whether the increased incidence of within state migration can be considered as an indicator of lesser tendency to move towards a few particular regions as well as a possibility of increased opportunities in some of the states which accounted for outflow in the earlier periods.

Table 4: Causes of Migration by last residence (In %)

			Work/ Emp	Business	Education	Marriage	After Birth	Moved with HH	Others
Person	Total	Total	9.09	0.79	1.20	46.33	7.43	14.47	20.69
	Within India	Total	9.07	0.78	1.20	46.64	7.49	14.23	20.58
	Within India	Rural	9.05	0.68	1.16	59.89	6.26	12.55	10.42
	Within India	Urban	12.58	1.35	1.68	26.23	13.35	23.45	21.37
	Within state	Total	7.15	0.67	1.18	48.77	7.88	12.89	21.47
	Within district	Total	5.08	0.53	1.05	49.44	8.21	11.10	24.60
	Other districts	Total	12.01	1.00	1.48	47.20	7.10	17.09	14.13
	Other States	Total	23.13	1.60	1.37	31.13	4.62	24.05	14.09
	Outside India	Total	10.06	1.16	0.89	22.83	2.83	33.09	29.14
Unclassifiable	Total	11.04	1.32	1.67	22.31	5.94	27.50	30.21	
Male	Total	Total	23.96	1.84	2.26	3.66	13.74	20.31	34.24
	Within India	Total	24.06	1.83	2.27	3.70	13.92	20.02	34.20
	Within India	Rural	31.03	2.04	2.83	5.84	15.43	22.78	20.05
	Within India	Urban	24.78	2.36	2.34	1.92	17.68	24.11	26.80
	Within state	Total	19.44	1.60	2.30	4.07	15.47	19.65	37.46
	Within district	Total	13.67	1.24	2.00	4.22	16.34	17.95	44.57
	Other districts	Total	32.50	2.41	2.99	3.73	13.48	23.51	21.37
	Other States	Total	47.17	3.00	2.12	1.83	6.18	21.86	17.84
	Outside India	Total	18.69	2.02	1.29	1.42	3.67	36.28	36.62
Female	Total	Total	2.07	0.29	0.70	66.48	4.45	11.72	14.30
	Within India	Total	2.06	0.29	0.70	66.74	4.47	11.52	14.21
	Within India	Rural	1.83	0.23	0.61	77.65	3.25	9.18	7.26
	Within India	Urban	3.32	0.58	1.17	44.68	10.06	22.94	17.25
	Within state	Total	1.82	0.27	0.69	68.13	4.59	9.96	14.55
	Within district	Total	1.41	0.23	0.64	68.71	4.74	8.18	16.08
	Other districts	Total	2.79	0.37	0.80	66.74	4.22	14.20	10.87
	Other States	Total	4.26	0.50	0.78	54.15	3.40	25.77	11.14
	Outside India	Total	2.78	0.43	0.55	40.90	2.12	30.40	22.81

Source: Census of India 2011

Nonetheless, the gender differential in the accounting of migrants had remained quite similar over the inter-census period with the females having an overwhelming dominance as migrants even though the share of males has increased from 29.68% to 32.06%, particularly for MLR. The incidence of higher migration for the males is visible in the North-eastern, southern and western region while incidence of female centric migration is visible in eastern central and northern regions. On the other

hand, the rural-urban divide has also changed during the period with the share of urban migrants increasing from 33.11% to 38.96% with all the states of Central and Eastern region and larger states of Northern region indicating rural based migration. Such a phenomenon can be considered in the background that these states as primarily agrarian and less urbanised. However, this conjecture needs further analysis yet we cannot deny the fact that the extent of rural incidence of migration in the western and the southern region are less than the national average. Further, we observe a strong negative correlation ($r=-0.742$, $p= 0.000$) between the share of rural migrant and share of male migrants among the different states/UTs of India. The socio-economic character of the region is often manifested in the rates of migration and thus we find differences at the extent of migration over the six regions of the country. The average share of migrants in the population are almost similar in the Central, Eastern and North-eastern regions which are also considered to be economically backward than other parts of the country.

Looking into the reasons of migration, it is observed that the causes have its gender-specific as well as spatial considerations. The relative importance of the economic or social factors vary according to places often, yet it is obvious that in India sociological factors emerge as the most dominant reasons of migration as per Census data. Also to note here is that *others* include factors/reasons which are not listed and may have both social and economic character and at times may have political underpinnings too. Others also include natural causes and forced migration, which are basically displacement. At the total aggregate level, others emerge as the second most prominent cause after marriage, but moves down to fourth place for out-migration to other states as moved with household and work/employment takes the second and third spot respectively. It may be noted that when a household or person migrates for development induced displacement, they generally move to a nearer place which is often provided as rehabilitation or resettlement by the government; as a result, in most cases it is within the boundaries of the same jurisdiction, often within the district or at the most within the state. Further, when the movement is for security or threat perception, moving beyond the state is not a very common phenomenon.

In this context, we may note that based on the data for outmigration across the states of India we find sizeable difference in the average rates for the various reasons on the basis of gender differential. Males out-migrate significantly more for all the economic factors like work/employment, business, and education as well as for moved after birth and others, while females lead for marriage as a reason. Similarly, examining the difference of the reasons based on rural-urban divide, it was seen that the average rates for rural areas and urban areas were significantly different for five of the seven reasons. Others and work/employment have similar rates of incidence across urban and rural areas. People migrate in search of industrial and non-farm work to urban areas, while agricultural labourers are the migrants for work in rural areas. Further, among the remaining five reasons marriage is the only cause with higher rate of incidence in the rural areas.

5. Conclusion

The present paper shows that the extent of migration has been sizeable across the country, though the dimensions have been different. It is also seen that the migration is increasing as the share of migrants in the country's population has increased by around 7% in the inter census period of 2001 to 2011. The data analysis indicates that migration is more a phenomenon for the females as an overwhelming proportion of migrants are females. Further, such female migrants are concentrated more in rural areas as compared to urban areas. Migration due to marriage is also a permanent migration unlike migration for work/employment and education where the possibility of the migrants return to the origin at the end of the purpose of migration is much higher. The large scale migration during the COVID times are by economic migrants, who are back to their origin owing to the emergence of unfavourable environment at the destination.

The preceding sections indicate that larger proportion of migrants in India have moved due to social factors and are females in the rural areas. However, the number of economic migrants have been rising over the years and the pandemic has been a curse to them as the cause behind their movement got adversely effected. Census data indicate outflow of people from the eastern and central parts of the country and inflow of migrants occurring more in the Western part of India and some specific urban areas. Moreover, the relationship between urbanisation and rate of migration also explains the recent experience of flight of labour from the industrial and manufacturing regions. To sum up, we may say that migration has been concomitant with development and intricately embedded with urbanisation. It is a phenomenon which has a two way impact- at the place of origin and at the destination. The Census data indicated the prominent origins and prominent destinations and the return migration during the pandemic is a just reflection of the data.

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Manuscript received May 7, 2022; final version accepted June 30, 2022