

# PATTERN, STREAM AND TYPE OF MIGRATION IN INDIA: AN ANALYSIS BASED ON 55TH ROUND OF NATIONAL SAMPLE SURVEY DATA

Ashok Kumar\*

*The paper attempts to study the level, stream and type of migration by background characteristics and explores the reasons of migration by sex and by stream of migration for the country as a whole by using the data from the 55th round of National Sample survey, conducted during 1999-2000. It is found that, the migration among females is substantially higher than the males. Migration among general caste is more as compared to SC, ST and OBC. Migration also varies by place of residence, urban people tend to migrate more as compared to their rural counterparts. With respect to the stream of migration, three-fifth of migrants move from rural to rural areas as compared to about one-fifth move from rural to urban areas and very negligible proportion of women move from urban to urban areas (13.1 percent) and urban to rural areas (7.0 percent). The result of type of migration shows that intra-district movement is the dominant movement (62.0) as compared to inter-district (26.5), inter-state (10.5) and international (immigrants) (1.0). Male migration is mostly due to in search of employment or better employment opportunities while in case of females this is mostly influenced by marriage. Rural to urban migration is mainly due to in search or to take up better employment opportunities while urban to urban migration is due to transfer of service or acquisition of own house/flat. Rural to rural migration takes place mostly due to marriage or due to housing, social or political problems while substantial proportion of urban to rural migration takes place due to health reasons.*

**Keyword:** Migration, NSS

## INTRODUCTION

Fertility, mortality and migration are the three components by which the growth of population of any society is determined. The growth of population due to the difference between birth and death over a specified time period is called “natural increase” in the population. After fertility and mortality, migration is considered as the third component in bringing changes in the size and structure of the population of any given area. Migration is considered a shift of people from one place of residence to another. Migrants move out from areas where employment opportunities are stagnant, where income is low and where the rate of population growth is high and attracted to areas of new industrial development and areas of higher per capita income. Therefore, one continuing thread is the migration from one place to another in search of the highest rewards and greener pastures (Dharmaraj, 1993). Several factors are responsible for the movement of people from one region to another, for instance, age, sex, place of residence, educational level, marital status and so on. Concerning age, people belonging to working age group move largely because of economic motives and their greater adaptability to new conditions. A large number of males move from rural areas to urban areas leaving their families behind in the native village.

The stream of migration originates from the area of subsistence level of agriculture. Migrants move from areas of low productivity to areas of high productivity (Rao, 2000). In some states in India such as Punjab, Kerala and Tamil Nadu, the number of unmarried female migrants are almost equal to those of married female migrants. In Kerala, unmarried women exceed the number of married women migration to urban areas (Singh, 1984). According to Mukherjee (1979) the more an individual is poor, landless and socio-economically deprived, the greater the chance of his migration from rural to urban areas. According

\* *Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist, Intrahealth International Inc. (Vistaar) Ranchi, Jharkhand, India*

to Ogotu (1993) landlessness, due to inequalities in land distribution, chronic poverty, declining crop yield, shortage of food and fuel wood was mainly responsible for shifting of population from rural areas. Migration from one area to another in search of better opportunities is a key feature of human history. While some regions fall behind in their capacity to support populations, others move ahead and people migrate to access these opportunities. Therefore the study of stream, type and determinants of migration as well as the specific reasons behind migration are of important for the purposes of effective policy interventions.

## OBJECTIVE

The specific **objectives** of the paper are:

- 1) To examine the levels of migration by selected background characteristics and by sex
- 2) to study the stream (Rural to Rural, Rural to Urban, Urban to Urban and Urban to Rural) as well as the type of migration (Intra-district, Inter-district, Inter-state and International) by background characteristics and also by duration of residence.
- 3) To explore the reasons of migration by sex and by stream of migration for the country as a whole.

## DATA AND METHODS

The data for the study have drawn from 55<sup>th</sup> round of National Sample survey conducted as a part of employment and unemployment survey in India, during 1999-2000. The variable such as whether place of enumeration differ from last usual place of residence have been taken as the key variable. Variables like; social group, religion, age, sex, sector, educational status, marital status, have been considered as background variables in the analysis. Both univariate and bi-variate techniques have been used in due course of analysis.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Levels of Migration

Table 1 highlights that about 27 percent of the Indian population are migrants and female migrants outnumber their male counterparts in India. This trend may be due to marriage and also the cultural practice that women will have to move her husband's place after marriage. Migration among general caste is more as compared to SC, ST and OBC. The rate of migration increases with the increase of ethnic status. With respect to religious group it is found that Muslim are less migratory than Hindu. The proportion of migrants in the total population is larger in urban (33 percent) than rural areas (24 percent). A comparison of rural female migrants with urban female migrants indicates that the former is greater (42.6%) than the later (41.8%) by one percentage point. However, rural female migration rate of 42.6% is nearly six times above the figure for rural male migration rate (7.0%). Among the male members the rate of migration increases with the increase of educational level. With respect to the marital status, 6% of females who have never married been migrated compared to 7.8% males.

### STREAM OF MIGRATION

Percent distribution of migrants by stream of migration, according to their background characteristics have been presented in table 2. It is evident that the flow of migration is substantially higher from rural to rural areas in India, compared to all other possibilities. Three-fifth of migrants move from rural to rural areas as compared to about one-fifth move from rural to urban areas and very negligible proportion move from urban to urban areas (13.1 percent) and urban to rural areas (7.0 percent). There is a positive relationship between the ethnic status of migrants and the movement from rural to urban areas. As is evident that only

11% of scheduled tribe migrants have migrated from total to urban areas compared to 22% who belong to other caste. Similar trend also found with respect to the educational level and age group of migrants. Female (70%) are more migratory from rural to rural areas compared to their male (32%) counterparts. Given the predominance of movement from rural to rural areas, it may be inferred that majority of migrants in India are short distance migrants and secondly the proportion of short distance migration is much higher among females than among males.

**Table 1: Level of Migration by Sex and Background Characteristics**

<b>Background Characteristics</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Caste</b>			
Scheduled tribe	8.1	36.3	22.0
Scheduled caste	9.5	42.7	25.6
Other backward class	10.4	42.6	26.1
Others	15.3	43.7	29.1
<b>Religion</b>			
Hindu	12.0	44.0	27.5
Muslim	8.7	32.1	20.2
Others	15.5	42.7	28.8
<b>Place of Residence</b>			
Rural	7.0	42.6	24.4
Urban	25.7	41.8	33.4
<b>Educational Level</b>			
Illiterate	6.7	47.1	30.4
Primary	10.2	29.8	18.7
Secondary	16.8	45.6	27.5
Higher	27.6	51.0	35.4
<b>Age Group</b>			
0-14	5.4	4.8	5.1
15-44	14.8	60.4	37.2
45-59	18.4	70.8	43.6
60+	16.5	67.1	42.0
<b>Marital Status</b>			
Never Married	7.8	6.0	7.0
Currently Married	16.8	73.8	45.9
W/D/S	14.9	60.7	50.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>11.8</b>	<b>42.5</b>	<b>26.7</b>

**Table 2: Percent Distribution of Migrants by Stream of Migration, According to their Background Characteristics**

	Stream of Migration			
	R-R	R-U	U-U	U-R
<b>Social Group</b>				
Scheduled tribe	77.9	11.4	6.0	4.8
Scheduled caste	70.0	15.4	7.1	7.5
Other backward class	65.4	18.2	9.5	7.0
Others	49.8	22.1	20.9	7.2
<b>Religion</b>				
Hindu	62.3	18.4	12.5	6.8
Muslim	54.6	21.8	16.5	7.2
Others	55.0	18.4	17.8	8.8
<b>Educational Level</b>				
Illiterate	78.5	12.4	4.4	4.7
Primary	54.6	22.6	13.6	9.2
Secondary	40.8	26.9	22.4	9.9
Higher	18.4	28.1	44.3	9.1
<b>Age Group</b>				
0-14	40.3	27.4	21.5	10.7
15-44	62.2	18.5	12.6	6.8
45-59	63.1	17.5	13.0	6.5
60+	65.9	15.6	11.7	6.9
<b>Sex</b>				
Male	32.0	33.3	22.8	11.9
Female	69.9	14.3	10.3	5.6
<b>Marital Status</b>				
Never Married	34.0	30.6	24.4	11.1
Currently Married	64.8	16.9	11.7	6.6
W/D/S	70.0	15.5	9.4	5.2
<b>Duration of Residence</b>				
0-4	50.6	20.7	18.2	10.5
5-9	56.6	20.6	15.5	7.2
10+	66.9	17.2	10.4	5.5
Total	61.3	18.6	13.1	7.0

## TYPE OF MIGRATION

The phenomenon of migration has often been classified into movement within the district (intra-district), outside the district but within the state (inter-district), outside the state but within the country (inter-state), persons from outside the country (international) and the results cross-classified by background characteristics have been presented in **table 3**. Of the total migrants enumerated in India in 1999-2000, about 62% had moved within the same district (intra-district), 26.5% between districts of the state (inter-district) and 10.5% from other states of the country (inter-state).

The migrants from abroad constituted only 1% of the total migrants in the country. For all the categories of background characteristics, intra-district migration is greater than all other forms of migration. With respect to place of residence, in rural areas the distribution of migrants across various migration streams reveals that 72% of the movement is within the same state district, 21% between districts and 6% between states. In urban areas there is no significant difference in intra-district and inter-district migration is found, which are 40.1% and 38.9% respectively. As the educational level increase the movement within the district likely to decrease, which is just reverse in case of inter-district and inter-state migration. This may be due to the fact that educational level promotes people for long distance migration rather than to move for a short distance. Similar trend is found in case of marital status of the migrants. However, female migrants outnumber male migrants substantially in intra-district migration. Period since leaving the last usual place of residence (duration of residence) shows that, there is an increasing trend of migratory movement to inter-district or inter-state rather than within the district in recent days.

## REASONS FOR MIGRATION

The reasons for migration in NSS rounds have been elaborated by taking the economic reasons such as search for employment, better employment, transfer of job, proximity to work place, for pursuing study, after marriage, movement of parents or earning members, social or political problems, health, housing and other reasons. It is found that economic reasons among males and social reasons for females have been the most dominant reasons for migration (**table 4**).

More than 81% of female migration in India is owing to marriage. Family migration (12.4%) formed the second important reason for migration among females. Very few women migrants have moved for reasons of employment and education (1% and 0.6% respectively), compared to their male counterparts (33.8% and 6% respectively). However for male migrants employment (33.8%) was the principal factor behind migration. Family migration (26.4%) was the second main reason for migration. The movement of males for reasons of education was 5.9%. Contrary to female migration, only an insignificant proportion of male migration was due to marriage (5%).

Rural to urban migration is mainly due to in search or to take up better employment opportunities while urban to urban migration is due to transfer of service or acquisition of own house/flat. Rural to rural migration takes place mostly due to marriage or due to housing, social or political problems while substantial proportion of urban to rural migration takes place due to health reasons (**table 5**).

**Table 3: Percent Distribution of Migrants by Type of Migration, According to their Background Characteristics**

Background Characteristics	Intra-district	Inter-district	Inter-state	Inter-national
<b>Caste</b>				
Scheduled tribe	74.2	19.0	6.5	0.3
Scheduled caste	67.4	23.5	7.6	1.5
Other backward class	64.6	27.0	7.8	0.6
Others	54.3	29.9	14.8	1.1
<b>Religion</b>				
Hindu	62.2	27.0	9.9	0.9
Muslim	64.1	23.9	11.2	0.8
Others	53.3	30.1	14.8	1.7
<b>Place of Residence</b>				
Rural	72.1	20.8	6.1	0.9
Urban	40.1	38.9	19.8	1.2
<b>Educational Level</b>				
Illiterate	70.4	21.8	7.2	0.6
Primary	58.6	27.5	12.4	1.5
Secondary	52.1	32.2	14.3	1.3
Higher	41.0	40.7	17.3	0.9
<b>Age Group</b>				
0-14	54.6	29.5	15.1	0.8
15-44	62.4	26.6	10.4	0.6
45-59	62.4	26.4	9.9	1.3
60+	63.5	25.0	9.0	2.5
<b>Sex</b>				
Male	44.2	32.8	20.5	2.4
Female	67.2	24.7	7.5	0.6
<b>Marital Status</b>				
Never Married	50.4	31.7	16.8	1.1
Currently Married	63.1	26.2	9.9	0.9
W/D/S	69.1	22.8	6.6	1.5
<b>Duration of Residence</b>				
0-4years	58.0	27.6	13.6	0.8
5-9 years	60.2	27.6	11.5	0.6
10+ years	64.1	25.9	8.9	1.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>62.0</b>	<b>26.5</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>1.0</b>

**Table 4: Percent Distribution of Migrants by their Main Reason of Migration, According to Sex, 1999-2000**

	NSS Estimates, 1999-2000		
	Male	Female	Total
In search of employment	12.5	0.3	3.1
In search of better employment	13.4	0.5	3.4
To take up employment/better employment	7.9	0.2	2.0
Transfer of service/contract	7.6	0.4	2.0
Proximity to place of work	1.0	0.0	0.3
Studies	5.9	0.6	1.8
Acquisition of own house/flat	3.9	0.6	1.3
Housing problems	2.7	0.5	1.0
Social/ political problems	2.6	0.6	1.0
Health	0.6	0.1	0.2
Marriage	5.0	81.2	63.8
Migration of parent/earning member of the family	26.4	12.4	15.6
Others	10.5	2.6	4.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 5: Percent Distribution of Migrants by their Main Reason of Migration, According to their Stream, 1999-2000**

Reasons	R-R	R-U	U-U	U-R
In search of employment	20.5	59.5	14.5	5.5
In search of better employment	30.5	46.6	15.6	7.3
To take up employment/better employment	28.2	35.9	26.2	9.7
Transfer of service/contract	22.1	19.3	46.0	12.5
Proximity to place of work	34.6	26.8	25.1	13.6
Studies	37.5	42.7	15.6	4.2
Acquisition of own house/flat	27.5	15.5	40.2	16.9
Housing problems	42.6	11.5	30.6	15.2
Social/ political problems	37.5	16.1	16.9	29.5
Health	24.2	12.3	20.9	42.5
Marriage	77.9	10.9	6.9	4.3
Migration of parent/earning member of the family	30.2	32.3	27.7	9.9
Others	47.7	16.4	13.7	22.2

## CONCLUSION

The paper has made an attempt to provide information about the stream and type of migration in India using National Sample Survey data collected during 1999-2000. From the foregoing analysis, it is inferred that the characteristics of migrants, such as, their age, educational level, marital status, social group show the selectivity of migrants. Women are more migratory than men and again urban women are less migratory than rural women. The movement of males is dominant in the rural to urban areas while female movements is mostly from rural to rural areas. In rural areas the distribution of migrants across various migration streams reveals that 72% of the movement is within the same state district, 21% between districts and 6% between states. In urban areas there is no significant difference in intra-district and inter-district migration is found, which are 40.1% and 38.9% respectively. Most of the movement takes place due to the practice of marriage. It is found that economic reasons among males and social reasons for females have been the most dominant reasons for migration in India.

## References

- Dharamraj, S. 1993. '*Migration and Development*', Emerald Publisher, Madras.
- Mkherjee, S. 1979. 'Understanding canonical analysis and its application through human mobility research', *Geographical Review of India*, 41(3).
- Ogotu, Z.A. 1993. 'Responding to population pressure in the rural Kenya', *Geojournal*, 30(4): 409-419.
- Rao, M.J. 2000. 'Migration of labour and school drop out', *Social Welfare*, 47(6): 26-31.
- Singh, A.M. 1984. 'Rural to Urban Migration of women in India: patterns and implications', in J.T. Fawcett *et al.* (eds.), *Women in the Cities of Asia: Migration and Urban Adaptation*, West view press, Colorado.