



**National Conference on Emerging Trends in Engineering,
Science, Arts & Humanities (NCETESAH – 2022)**

27th February, 2022

CERTIFICATE NO : NCETESAH/2022/C0222302

**OVERVIEW ON MIGRANT, MIGRANT LABOUR, LABOUR MIGRATION
IN KOLKATA CONTEXT**

Barnali Mani ¹, Dr. Kanchan Shrivastav ², Dr. Sagar O. Manjare ³

¹ Research Scholar, Department of Economics, Sri Satya Sai University of Technology & Medical Sciences, Sehore, Madhya Pradesh, India.

² Dr. Kanchan Shrivastav, Research Guide, Department of Economics, Sri Satya Sai University of Technology & Medical Sciences, Sehore, Madhya Pradesh, India

³ Principal, Siddhant College of Management Studies, Sudumbare, Tal. Mavel, Pune, India

ABSTRACT

A migrant is typically defined as someone who relocates from one location to another. In other words, a migrant is a person who moves with the goal of establishing a new domicile and finding work in a distant place. A cross-border movement for the purpose of employment in a foreign country is generally referred to as labour migration. There is, however, no commonly agreed-upon definition of labour migration. In this article, overview on migrant, migrant labour, labour migration in Kolkata context has been highlighted.

Keywords: Migrant, Labour, Migration, Kolkata

INTRODUCTION

There is no commonly agreed definition of migrant, according to the International Organization for Migration. The term migrant was traditionally understood to refer to people who moved to another country or region for better material or social conditions, or to better the prospects for themselves or their families, for reasons of "personal convenience" and without the intervention of an external compelling factor; it thus applied to people and family members who moved for reasons of "personal convenience" and without the intervention of an external compelling factor. The United Nations



National Conference on Emerging Trends in Engineering, Science, Arts & Humanities (NCETESAH – 2022)

27th February, 2022

defines a migrant as a person who has lived in a foreign nation for more than one year, regardless of the reasons for migration (voluntary or involuntary) or the methods (regular or irregular). Those who travel for shorter periods of time as tourists or businesspeople would not be considered migrants under such a criterion. However, certain types of shorter-term migrants, such as seasonal farmworkers who travel for brief periods of time to plant or harvest farm products, are commonly included.

According to *S.C. Joshi*, a migrant is someone who moves permanently from one place to another. Due to the pressure of relatives or friends to find work, a person's domicile may be changed for the sake of employment.'

'A migrant is a person who has changed his customary place of residence from one migration defining area to another (or has moved some specified minimum distance) at least once during the migration interval,' according to *Bhende and Kanitkar*.

'Migrants do not reflect a random cross-section of the population of the area of origin,' according to *Oberai and Singh*. It is not by chance that some people opt to migrate while others prefer to stay in any given situation. Those who migrate differ from those who stay in terms of their traits and how they view the reasons for going or staying.

'Migrants go from locations with limited work possibilities to areas with high wage opportunities,' according to *Revenstein*. The choice of destination is influenced by work possibilities and distance, with migrants from rural areas frequently moving first to adjacent towns and later to large cities.

MIGRANT LABOUR

Migrant worker is defined as follows by the United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families:

A person who is involved or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a State of which he or she is not a national is referred to as a "migrant worker."

Migrant workers, according to the International Labour Organization (*ILO*), are persons who leave their hometown or native country in search of work. 'Domestic' or 'internal' migrant workers are those who relocate for work within their own country. 'Foreign' or 'international' migrant workers are people who relocate for work in another country.



National Conference on Emerging Trends in Engineering, Science, Arts & Humanities (NCETESAH – 2022)

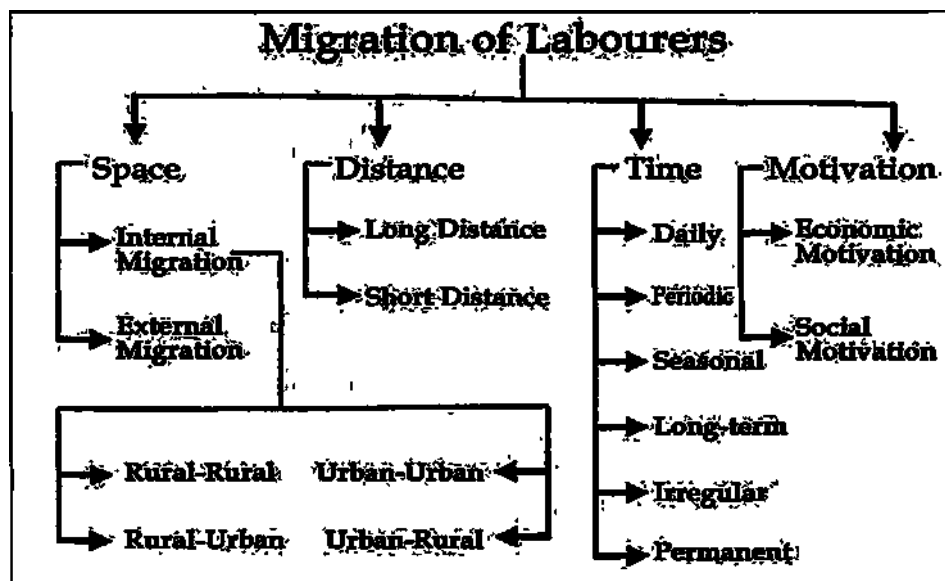
27th February, 2022

LABOUR MIGRATION

Persons moving for the purpose of employment from one state to another or inside their own nation of residence. The phrase "economic migrant" is often used interchangeably with "labour migrant" or "migrant worker." The two terms, however, may refer to different categories. The word "labour migrant" can be used narrowly to refer to solely migration for the purpose of employment, but "economic migrant" can be used broadly to refer to those who enter a country for reasons other than employment, such as investors or business travellers.

TYPES OF LABOUR MIGRATION

Any number of people or workers can go in any direction. They may go to different states, countries, or regions. Their migration can take place over short or vast distances. They can also stay at the place permanently or for a limited time. Rural to rural, rural to urban, urban to urban, urban to rural, and so on are all examples of labour migration. As a result, labour migration can be classified in the following ways based on the movements of workers.



Source: Anil Kumar Verma, *Labour Migration in Agriculture Sector: A Soda Economic Analysis*. Discovery Publishing House, New Delhi



National Conference on Emerging Trends in Engineering, Science, Arts & Humanities (NCETESAH – 2022)

27th February, 2022

For starters, migration can be divided into two categories based on the space element: internal and exterior migration. Internal migration occurs within India's boundaries, whereas external migration occurs outside of the country. Internal labour movement can be divided into four categories: rural to rural, rural to urban, urban to urban, and urban to rural migration. In emerging countries, labour movement from rural to urban is more pronounced. People's migratory tendencies in emerging countries are influenced by both push and pull influences. Poverty, intolerable unemployment, low and uncertain salaries, poor educational and health facilities, and so on are all push factors. The pull forces are the availability of employment possibilities in urban and industrial locations.

Laborers may be relocated to a destination that is far or near their original location, depending on the distance factor. Short-distance migration may occur within a district, while long-distance migration may occur between two states or regions.

The duration of labour movement, whether permanent or seasonal, is determined by the passage of time. Workers may migrate on a regular basis or for an extended amount of time. It is possible that migration will occur on a daily or periodic basis. Some labourers may stay at their destination for a few years before returning home. They may migrate again, which is referred to as irregular migration.

The majority of labourers migrate in order to make money and improve their living conditions. Some workers may migrate in order to improve their social standing. As a result, economic and social factors play a role in migration motivation.

LABOUR MIGRATION IN KOLKATA CONTEXT

In every given region, urbanisation and migration are inextricably linked. The role of migration in urbanisation is determined by the type and pattern of mobility (Bhagat and Mohanty 2009). The percentage of people living in cities climbed from 28 to 31 percent between 2001 and 2011, according to the 2011 Census. Kundu (2003) estimated that net rural-urban migration contributed 21% to the urbanisation process between 1991 and 2001. Using actual migration data from Census 2001 and controlling for the natural rise in inter-censal migratory population, Bhagat and Mohanty (2009) came to the same conclusion. However, they claim that if the unclassified decennial migratory population in urban areas is classed as rural-urban migrants, migration's contribution will rise to 22%. Using 2011 data, Bhagat (2011) divided the component of urbanisation into three categories: natural increase, net



National Conference on Emerging Trends in Engineering, Science, Arts & Humanities (NCETESAH – 2022)

27th February, 2022

rural-urban classification, and rural-urban migration. He has demonstrated that the natural rise in the urban population has decreased from 62 to 44 percent from 1981 to 1991 to 2001-2011; consequently, a significant increase in the urban population appears to be due to rural-urban (re)classification and net rural-urban migration (Bhagat 2011). However, Kundu (2011b) relates the increase in urban population to the vast number of new towns rather than migration from rural areas.

In the absence of fresh migration data from Census 2011, it is impossible to make a definitive conclusion in this regard. As a result, the current study is based on data from the most recent round of the National Sample Survey Organization, which took place in 2007-08. In contrast to Census data, which show that the rate of urban migration varies over time, NSSO data show that the rate of urban migration has been steadily increasing across India since 1993. Surprisingly, in urban West Bengal, where the migration rate was higher than India in the first year, it has declined and is now lower than urban India in 2007-08. In comparison to urban West Bengal and India, Kolkata has a lower migration rate. According to studies, the expansion of other metropolitan centres in the state, such as Asansol, Durgapur, and Siliguri, absorbs a huge number of local workers. Furthermore, as Kolkata's relevance declines and other megacities in the country, such as Delhi and Mumbai, expand in importance, the state attracts less inter-state urban migrants (Roy 1994; Kundu and Gupta 2000).

Men's rural-urban migration, which is generally connected to a livelihood plan, has been steadily declining over time. For instance, it decreased from 32% in 1999-2000 to 31% in 2007-2008. This trend can be traced back to the progress of urbanisation as part of globalisation, which has made cities less cheap to the poor, as well as slum clearances, which have made migrant life in cities more difficult. At the same time, the urban elite's seizure of land, continued urban missions' infrastructural development, pricing and non-affordability of basic facilities by the poor, and characteristics of elite capture in governance are all factors for the slow rural-urban change. Even though there are limited livelihood opportunities in rural areas, this type of urban development demonstrates the country's exclusionary urbanisation, preventing or discouraging in-migration of people from lower social and economic classes from gaining a foothold in cities, and suffocating development dynamics at the lowest level of urban hierarchy (Kundu 2011a and 2011b; Mahadevia 2011). This shows that, despite numerous investments, urban regions are rapidly becoming locations of estrangement for the rural poor, despite an increase in seasonal and circulatory labour mobility (Srivastava and Bhattacharya



National Conference on Emerging Trends in Engineering, Science, Arts & Humanities (NCETESAH – 2022)

27th February, 2022

2003; Srivastava 2011).

In contrast to the wealthy classes, poorer individuals have a lower rate of urban migration at all levels, which is fully supported in the previous portion of the study. However, the rate of poor men migrating to Kolkata is slightly higher than the rest of India and West Bengal. Such statistics strongly show that Kolkata provides disadvantaged individuals with some possibilities. In this context, the main question is: where do these individuals go, or where do they find refuge and job in the city?

According to several studies, slums and pavements provide shelter to a huge number of destitute migrants. For example, Narayanan et al. (2008) found that 92 percent of people in a Mumbai slum were migrants. Mukhopadhyay (1993) found that the bulk of the households in Kolkata slums are made up of rural migrants who typically speak Hindi. That is, the city of Kolkata provides housing and job chances to people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. They live in slums and work in a variety of fields, including vans, rickshaw pullers, small-scale manufacturing, and other services such as metal, textile, lumber, food, and other products, as well as small-scale trading of goods. Within the slums, there are sometimes commercial and manufacturing businesses, and even slum dwellers are employed as sweepers and in other menial tasks outside their residential neighbourhoods (Roy 1994; Dey and Dasgupta 2010).

In this context, the study attempts to examine how migration and slum development are intertwined in Kolkata. The city of Kolkata, which dates back over 300 years, was founded by the British as a port city in 1690, primarily to facilitate passage to their country, but also to serve as a handy route to import completed goods and raw materials. Kolkata was designated as the capital of British India in 1772 and remained so until 1912, when the British government relocated the capital to Delhi.

CONCLUSION

With the city's expanding importance, the communication infrastructure was well developed, and docks were erected for further improvement. It should be mentioned that the port of Kolkata had a relatively tiny hinterland up to 1866, consisting only of Howrah, Hooghly, 24 Parganas, and a small area of eastern Bengal, but by 1900, Calcutta's port served the entire Bengal, Bihar, Assam, and a portion of the north-western provinces (Bayly 1985; Tan 2007). The rise in trade, as well as the expansion of ports and business, drew the rural poor to Kolkata in quest of work. Because their



National Conference on Emerging Trends in Engineering, Science, Arts & Humanities (NCETESAH – 2022)

27th February, 2022

communication system prevented people from commuting on a regular basis, they were forced to dwell in the city itself, in filthy and inhumane conditions, giving rise to so-called slums. The slum and Kolkata were born as identical twins. The city began to draw inhabitants from its local hinterland during the days of corporate domination. As a result, degraded human communities have sprung up in various locales (Kundu 2007).

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