

MIGRATION : AN OVERVIEW AND RELEVANT ISSUES,

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ABSTRACT

The paper discusses how migration is continuing in different parts of India and how it is becoming more and more crucial towards improving livelihood status. In 2004-05, Indian labour force consisted of about 430 million persons, growing annually at about 2% (Economic Survey, 2007). Slightly less than 3/5th of it is employed in agriculture, mostly residing in rural areas and producing a little over 1/5th of the domestic product. Cultivators form about 2/3rd of the rural workforce, the remaining are agriculture workers. Industry (mining, manufacturing, construction and utilities) employs around 18% of the workforce, producing about 27% of the domestic output. Despite NREGS implementation in all districts, Migration of unskilled and skilled labourers has not stopped yet; it is continuing in parts and pieces. Labourers and farmers whose income is not enough that they can have a respected life, they are opting for some other options. They are migrating towards cities to work in factories and construction projects etc. As it has been discussed frequently that major migration is due to failure of Agriculture as mainstream livelihood activity; policy makers should explore ways and means to reestablish the importance of Agriculture in terms of livelihood. One important fact about migration is that it never can be totally stopped as it is under the process of development. Faulty implementation of several welfare legislations and schemes has led towards more and more migration of rural poor. To the extent, it seems necessary for marginalized and vulnerable class of the society to migrate and have some respectable livelihood options.

INTRODUCTION

Our 70% population lives in the rural areas and their main source of livelihood is agriculture. Labour is the single most important factor in determining national income. Poverty is the main obstacle for the development of any country, but it is a very grave phenomenon where a section of society is unable to fulfill the basic necessities of life like bread, cloth, house and education. In rural areas people don't get an employment, their main livelihood is mostly agriculture and in some cases seasonal employment in agriculture, that's why workers face a lot of problems.

The landless poor who mostly belong to lower castes, indigenous communities and economically backward regions constitute the major portion of Migrants. In the very large Tribal Regions of India intrusion of outsiders, settlements by the outsiders displacing the local tribal people and deforestation also played a major role in Migration. The Indian daily Hindustan Times on 14th October

2007, revealed that according to a study by a Government Institute, 77% of the population i.e. nearly 840 million Indians live on less than Rs.20 a day. Indian agriculture became non remunerative, taking the lives of 100,000 peasants during the period from 1996 to 2003, i.e. a suicide of an Indian peasant every 45 minutes. Hence, the rural people from the downtrodden and backward communities and backward regions such as Bihar, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh travel to far distances seeking employment at the lowest rungs in construction of roads, irrigation projects, commercial and residential complexes, in short, building the "Shining" India.

MIGRANTS CONTRIBUTION IN TERMS OF REMITTANCE IN INDIA

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reported that Indians living abroad transferred \$24.6 billion to India in the fiscal year 2005-2006. India, thus, continues to retain its position as the leading recipient of remittances in the world. The World Bank estimates for 2005 put India in the lead at \$23.5

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billion, with China and Mexico close behind at \$22.4 billion and \$21.7 billion, respectively. Yet India's dominant position in remittance receipts is a relatively recent one. In 1990-1991, for instance, RBI reported that remittances from overseas Indians were a modest \$2.1 billion. They have risen steadily in the last 15 years, and rather dramatically in the last 10 (see Figure 1).

The figures rose to \$12.3 billion in 1996-1997, and then jumped to almost \$22 billion in 2003-2004. Between 2000-2001 and 2003-2004, remittances almost doubled. With a small dip in 2004-2005, the 2005-2006 figures RBI reported suggest that the trend is here to stay. (www.migrationinformation.org)

Interactions between migration and poverty—both at migrant origins and destinations—are among the least researched and understood topics in economics. This is surprising, because the vast majority of the world's migrations originate in rural areas, where most of the world's poverty is also concentrated. How the migration of humans out of rural areas affects those left behind is not only important from a social welfare point of view but in light of the increasing integration of markets, it also may have ramifications for economic growth outside of rural areas (e.g., by affecting food production, agricultural exports, the rural demand for manufactured goods, and future economic surplus in agriculture available for investment anywhere in the economy). Economic welfare of non-migrants certainly influences future migration pressures. At migrant destinations, immigrant labour enters into local production activities, complementing some factors while possibly competing with others (including some types of non-immigrant labour). It influences both the level and distribution of income in migrant-host economies.

TYPES OF MIGRATION

Migration is a both old and new human practice. There is no place or time, in which migration does not occur. However, the scale, type and implications of migration vary greatly between individuals and societies. Due to the vast size of the country and large differences in physical and human dispositions across the country, migration trend in India shows some specific features.

First, among the four types of migration direction-wise, i.e., rural-to-rural, rural-to-urban, urban-to-rural and urban-to-urban migration, rural-to-rural migration has been dominant. In 2001, rural-

to-rural migration (during the last decade, i.e., based on migrants with duration of residence of 0-9 years at the place of enumeration) has accounted for 54.7 percent of total migration within country.

Second, with respect to the distance of migration, intra-state migration is predominant accounting for 82.1 percent of migration duration of 0-9 years). More than a half of migration took place within the district and the incidence of migration decreases as the distance becomes longer.

Third, among intra-state migrants, 60.5 percent moved from rural to rural places (duration 0-9 years) followed by 17.6 percent of rural-to-urban migration while in case of inter-state migrants, the largest portion (37.9 percent) migrated from rural to urban destinations. In inter-state migration, the incidence of rural-to-rural and urban-to-urban movements is almost at the same level, i.e., 26.6 percent and 26.7 percent respectively.

Fourth, migration streams in India have been dominated by females. Women constituted 66.5 percent of total migration flows (duration 0-9 years). Women outnumbered men in intra-district as well as intra-state migration flows, accounting for 73.9 percent and 70.3 percent respectively. With respect to inter-state migration and migration from other country, the share of male migrants surpassed that of female, contributing 50.6 percent and 75.3 percent of total migration. Thus, the longer the distance of migration is, the higher the share of male migration becomes. Of the total female migration, more than 60 percent moved within the district. Therefore, short distance migration is the dominant form for women. In case of male migrants, while migration within the district is also predominant (43 percent), the share of longer distance migration is larger than that among female migrants.

Fifth, it is noted that if we take a look at the rural-to-urban migration during the last 10 years, the number of male and female was almost equal in total rural-to-urban flows. While women outnumber men in intra-state rural-urban flows, the number of male was significantly greater in case of inter-state rural-urban migration.

SEASONAL MIGRATION

Seasonal and circular (also known as cyclical, oscillatory) migration has long been part of the livelihood portfolio of poor people across India. Seasonal migration of labour for employment has become one of the most durable components of the

livelihood strategies of people living in rural areas. Migration is not just by the very poor during times of crisis for survival and coping but has increasingly become an accumulative option for the poor and non-poor alike.

It is now recognized that migration is a part of the normal livelihood strategy of the poor and does not occur only during times of emergency or distress. Migration reduces the poverty. Nevertheless, the dominant perception of migration among policy-makers, academics and officials in India continues to be that migration is only for survival and that migrants remain poor. The image of the migrant continues to be that of a powerless, impoverished and emaciated person who is trapped in poverty. On average 25% of the households had at least one member migrating. Out-migration is greater in the poorly developed agricultural areas, and particularly high amongst the landless farmers. It is concluded that non-migrants had more knowledge and adoption about different agricultural practices and also production and productivity of different crops was higher as compare to migrants.

Only few farmers were growing second crop after rice, therefore a major group of small and marginal farmers were free during rabi and summer and did not have work so they migrated elsewhere for job and this seasonal migration is main cause of lacking of agricultural labourers. Basically, Chhattisgarh is the agrarian state. Most of the farmers earn their livelihood from agriculture. With less mechanization agriculture is totally based on manpower. That is why agricultural activities and production are affected due to migration. So there is need to check this migration and improve their livelihood system and which can be possible through study thoroughly and steadily thinking over the reasons responsible for the same.

Seasonal migrants working in the

1. Rural to Urban Migration: A District Level Analysis for India
www.docstoc.com › Education › Graduate › Urban Planning
2. Seasonal Migration for Livelihoods in India,

construction sector may work freelance or under a contractor. If they work freelance then the men earn roughly Rs 80/day and women earn Rs 60. Although the wages are reasonable, work is not available every day and most average three working days a week. Women may also work as domestic maids in nearby houses. They spend roughly half of the income at the destination and earn roughly Rs 4,000/year through such work. In cases where the contractor travels to the village to round up labourers and take them to jobs in the city, he usually has to bear the travelling expenses (one way not return) and the cost of food. He may give an advance to the labourers to send remittances to their family. He later cuts all of these expenses from their wages. Working under a labour contractor gives migrants more days of work but the contractors take a 15% cut of the wages as their commission.

MIGRATION OF LABOUR IN INDIA:

Table 1: Employment Oriented Migration (in %)

	Total	Rural	Urban
Male	31.1	39.8	36.0
Female	1.9	1.7	3.3
Total	10.4	10.3	17.2

Source: Census 2001

In above mentioned data, it is however clear that migration towards urban areas are still more likely to be associated with employment oriented reasons. It is also seen that the percentage of employment migration for males are quite high, whether it is rural-bound or urban-bound migration. It is interesting to observe that out of the total rural-bound male migration, 40 percent have moved for work related reasons.

The following table is obtained from the NSSO 55th Round on Migration. NSSO collects data on both temporary and long term migrants. However, the paper has considered only the long term migrants for the following analysis. In the following analysis, "employment oriented migrants" are the migrants who had given reasons (a) to (e) for their move. Labor force participants are the migrants who are currently employed or are seeking or available for work.

Table 2: Labour Migration (% of migrants)

	Employment oriented*			Labour force participant		
	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Male	45.5	33.3	51.9	70.0	70.1	70.0
Female	2.2	1.4	3.5	26.0	31.9	15.8
Total	13.6	6.6	22.3	37.5	38.1	36.9

Employment Oriented*: (a) in search of employment (b) in search of better employment (c) to take up Employment/better employment (d) transfer of service/contract (e) proximity to place of work
Source: NSSO

This table 2 gives the percentage of migrants who have given employment related reasons for migration vis-à-vis labour force participation by sex and rural urban status. It shows the percentage of migrants giving employment and related reasons for migration vis-à-vis the labour force participation of the migrants. It is clearly seen from the table that nearly 46 percent of male migrants have reported employment related reasons as their motive behind migration, while it is just above 2 percent of female migrants that have reported employment and work related reason for their move. Comparison with census figure in table 1, it is learnt that the sample survey data (7%) shows a smaller percentage of employment oriented migrants in rural areas than the census (10%). This could be the result of the difference in the definition of migrants in the two data sources. Circular migrants and temporary migrants could not be captured by the present dataset of the NSSO.

If we further compare employment oriented migrants and the labour force participation of the migrants, it is evident that more migrants are in the labour force, be it male or female migrants. Around 38 percent of total migrants are in the labour market with 70 percent of males and 26 percent of females. This is in vast contrast to the stated reasons for migration particularly for females, among which just a meager 3 percent have given employment and work related reasons.

This increase in migration is essentially due to regional differences in the population pressure on land, inequality of infrastructure, industrial development, and modernization of agriculture. In particular, the developed areas have increased

demand for labour during specific seasonal activities, especially sowing and harvesting in the case of agricultural activities. As this demand often supersedes the availability of local labour, these developed regions offer a higher wage rate and/or greater number of days of employment. The agriculturally developed regions are invariably areas which have extensive canal irrigation and HYV (high yielding variety) technology. The demand for labour also exists in seasonally based agro-industries e.g. rice mills, sugar factories, canal construction, road construction, etc.

As per 2001 Census data on inter-state migration, Maharashtra received the largest number of migrants (8 million) from other states and other countries *by place of birth*, followed by Delhi (6 million), and West Bengal (5.5 million). On the basis of net migration during the decade, i.e., the difference between in-migration and out-migration in each state, Maharashtra stood at the top of the list with 2.3 million net migrants, followed by Delhi (1.7 million), Gujarat (0.68 million) and Haryana (0.67 million). Uttar Pradesh (minus 2.6 million) and Bihar (minus 1.7 million) were the two states with the largest number of net out-migration from the state (GOI *Census 2001*).

This pattern of net internal migration has continued from the past, to be one of radiation out from the north central states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar towards West Bengal and Assam in the east, Delhi and Haryana in the west, and Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra towards the south and south-west. Uttar Pradesh and Bihar are the two most populous states in India and both have had higher than average proportions of rural population, 86% and

90% respectively, compared with the all India average of 80% rural. The net migration away from these states has been eastwards to the long established heavy industrial regions in West Bengal, and westwards towards the administrative-bureaucratic hub New Delhi, the capital of the country with recent industrial development in and around it. Towards the north, there has been pronounced net movement from Uttar Pradesh towards Madhya Pradesh with its heavy industries around the state capital Bhopal, and towards Bombay (now Mumbai), another state capital and the great industrial and port city in Maharashtra. In the south of the country, the state of Karnataka, with its recent industrial and IT-related development around Bangalore, again a state capital, is an important target for movement from the densely populated rural areas of three neighbouring states of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh. However, the state of Karnataka has itself been an important source too, for migration northwards to Maharashtra.

The Punjab, in the north-west of the country, with its large number of industrial towns, and high density of agriculturally prosperous rural population experienced both large-scale out-migration and in-migration to and from neighbouring states of Haryana and Uttar Pradesh and therefore did not figure in the net population flows. Thus, there have been three clear foci of net in-migration which correspond to the states in which the three principal metropolitan cities are located, viz., Calcutta (now Kolkata) in West Bengal in the east, Mumbai in Maharashtra in the west, and Delhi as the central capital in the north. Very generally, in the northern states the dominant trend of movement has thus been west to east while in the south it has been east to west and there has been a definite north to south link between the northern and southern patterns of movement.

The problem of seasonality in agro-based industries can be found in a large number of countries. Firstly, we have to define seasonal factory, seasonal factory is one which normally works for more than half the days of the year. The main feature of nearly all the seasonal factories is that the workers are still agriculturists and the great majority live in their village homes. The workers are generally quite unorganized and wages tend to be low.

MIGRATION DUE TO PROBLEMS IN AGRICULTURE

Agriculture has been the base of Indian economy. Agricultural labourers constitute the vital input in the agriculture production. Human resources are very important. Agricultural labourers are migrating to different parts of the country for earning their livelihood and in this way there is in-equilibrium between labour demand and supply. India's top agriculture scientist and one of the architects of India's Green Revolution, Dr. M.S. Swaminathan has warned that the country could face a food crisis if agricultural productivity is not increased and farming is neglected. The future belongs to grains to grains not guns says Dr. Swaminathan.

India has about 45 percent of its total area under cultivation – one of the highest in the world . In China, the net cropped area is only 10% while the world average is 10.7%. Unfortunately, India's per hectare yield compares quite poorly with many countries of the world. Taking the case of rice, it is estimated that India's average yield today is 2.9 tons per hectare. By comparison, China's average rice yield, at 6.3 tons per hectare, is more than double that of India. Increasing productivity and total food grain production is one of the biggest challenges before our planners today. The productivity of grains can be increased by giving attention to seed, soil health, pest management, life saving irrigation and post-harvest technology. The first Green Revolution was a spectacular success in India and became a role model for many developing nations to improve agricultural production and technology in the dry land cultivation.

There is now urgency for a Second Green Revolution in the country. Agriculture is the main source of the population of India. The agriculture on which the bulk of the rural population in our country has to depend for the main source of livelihood is itself largely dependent on the precipitation and distribution of rainfall; failure of rain and consequent failure of agriculture greatly reduce the purchasing power of this large segment of population, recurrence of such situation called as drought.

In India, droughts occur once in every five years in some parts of India viz., West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala, Coastal parts of Andhra Pradesh, some parts of Maharashtra state, like Marathwada, east and west parts of Maharashtra, inferior of south

Karnataka, Bihar, Orissa, Rajasthan and other parts of India. At present, Cultivators, small and marginal farmers, agricultural labourers, landless labourers etc, have to face the problems of natural calamities in India. Drought is not caused by niggardliness of nature, but failure of the system properly planning and use of land and water resources. Water resources of India are colossal but they are seasonal, regionally distributed and very compressed also. Planning is reduced to combat recurrent droughts and raving floods. However, the problem of chronic under employment in rural areas is thus essentially due to the event of a failure of seasons and lack of resources.

POVERTY: A MAJOR FACTOR BEHIND MIGRATION

The problem of poverty is directly related to the existence of unemployment, underemployment and low productivity. Agriculture is a seasonal occupation, which can not open job opportunities round the year to all. In the absence of irrigation facilities permitting multiple cropping, the monsoon agriculture enjoins on a majority of the rural labour force on a extended period of seasonal unemployment. These helplessness dispirited unemployed labour leave their village homes and join to swell the already over populated areas not only in India but also in other parts of the developing and developed countries, whose agricultural labours are shifting to industrial sector, emphasizes the feature of seasonability and disguised nature of unemployment in the agricultural sector. Seasonability arises from the problem of in-elasticity of the time pattern of primary production. We are not short of land quantitatively but we are short of land qualitatively, that is to say, arable lands are not as fertile and productive as we would want, the result is that, people move from these poor soil areas to the urban and agro-based industrial areas and create more problems for the government.

The marginal productivity of the members of the family is negligible or zero from agriculture, their continuance in agriculture would add no food to the total. The majority of the agricultural labourers, small and marginal farmers do not get enough work during the off-season; consequently, they migrate from insufficient food and limited sources of geographical areas to job opportunities areas. Therefore, we can say that agricultural labourers and other workers are migrating from drought prone areas to irrigated and industrially developed areas

for part time work or seasonal types of jobs. Especially, Workers migrate from their native places to urban areas or other places of work due to various reasons.

Most of the farmers are fully dependent on agriculture and after failure the crop by any reason they don't have any other option for their survival and they turn towards suicide. The major reasons for suicide are:

- Family conflicts, domestic violence, academic failures, and unfulfilled needs.
- Voracious appetite for high-end consumer goods spurred by moneylenders and hire-purchase schemes.
- The wide gap between people's aspirations and actual capabilities.
- The disintegration of traditional social support mechanisms as was prevalent in joint families. Emergence of a trend towards nuclear families, alcohol abuse, financial instability and family dysfunction.
- Failure of crops, huge debt burdens, growing costs of cultivation, and shrinking yield

STATUS OF MIGRANT LABOUR IN INDIA:

The problem of seasonal migrant workers in the sugar industry and other agro-based industries is not a new phenomenon in India. There are more than 500 sugar factories in India. The average crushing season of the sugar factories varies from 116 to 165 days. In the country, Agricultural workers migrate from drought prone areas of Maharashtra state to irrigated areas or industrially developed areas of the state for seasonal work in the sugar factories. There are about 12 lakh sugar cane cutters, transporters, sugarcane harvesting seasonal migrant workers in the Maharashtra state. The majority of seasonal workers or poorer live in the rural areas and belong to the categories of landless labourers, small and marginal farmers, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and other backward classes. These people have either no assets with very productivity, a few relevant skills and no regular time or very low paid jobs seasonal. Besides, migrant workers are engaged in different types of jobs such as brick kilns, salt pans, stone quarries, construction (irrigation, canals, dams, road building) in agri-business like harvesting of sugarcane. Large numbers of bonded labourers nowadays are seasonal migrants

State wise data of migrant workers in different sectors of India are- Haryana state provides

employment to a large number of migrant workers from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Some workers migrate to Tea and coffee plantations in Karnataka states, West Bengal and Assam states employ migrant labourers from Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh and Bihar. Besides, and more than 12 lakh inter-state migrant workers work in the agricultural sector. Brick kilns provide temporary employment to around 10 lakh Seasonal migrant workers. Various construction workers, road, railway, buildings, dams canals etc seem to employ nearly 20 lakh inter-state migrants. Around 45 lakh inter-state migrant workers work for temporary periods in different sectors. Besides, large numbers of seasonal migrants work in the urban informal manufacturing, construction services or transport sectors as casual labourers and so on. In Maharashtra state, there are 10 lakh handloom and power loom workers, 8 lakh workers who are engaged in building and construction sectors. In the Western Maharashtra state, sugar factories engage near about six lakh seasonal migrant workers from drought prone areas of the state.

GENDER DISCRIMINATION

Women form more than half of the inter-state migrant workforce. Approximately, 92% of the 20 million domestic workers are women and children and 20% of these females are under 14 years of age. Yet, the division of labour is gendered. Masonry is a male-dominated skill as are carpentry and other skilled jobs. Women carry headloads of brick, sand, stone, cement and water to the masons. Their wages are less compared to men. In the mining sector women do unskilled jobs above the ground. They are not allowed to enter in to the mine due to popular myth that "If, women enter into the mine, it will collapse". They loose wages and also may lose employment for taking leave. They are subjected to sexual harassment. By conservative estimates only 15% of the cases of sexual assault are reported. Women are not provided with any extra facilities to take care of their children while they are on work. Notwithstanding, women migration is the highest in the period from 1991 to 2000 due to Agrarian crisis. 73% of these Migrant Women workers belong to rural areas.

The Migrant Labour Support Programme: A laudable Initiative

The objective of the MLSP is to support poor tribal migrants at both source and destination areas, through migrant support centres or Palayan Seva

Kendras (PSK) established by the programme. PSKs provide a variety of services including informal identity cards which help against official harassment, job information, telephone messaging services, awareness creation on rights and government welfare programmes, communication with families left behind and remittance services. The main objective of MLSP is to establish up a replicable and sustainable model for a migrant support programme for seasonal migrants in Western India. The MLSP has been operational since 2002 and an impact study was conducted by GVT with support from external consultants in mid 2005.

The main objective of the study was to assess the impact of the MLSP on poor tribal communities and make recommendations for greater effectiveness of the programme. The study assessed the impact of the programme in terms of reduced costs of migration; increased economic and social returns to migration; increased awareness on migrants' rights by mukkadams (labour intermediaries who recruit labourers at the village on behalf of the contractor), contractors (these are commissioned by government or the private companies and individuals to undertake a specific job e.g. constructing a road or building), government officials and urban residents; providing assistance to migrants to access basic services; creating a supportive enabling environment; and the extent to which the programme can function as financially and socially independent.

MAIN IMPACTS IDENTIFIED:

- MLSP has successfully increased the returns from migration. There are clear indications that migrants benefit from increased social and economic returns. Impacts on reducing the cost of migration are largely social and flow mainly from the benefits of services provided within the PSKs - such as information on work availability, negotiation of wages, resolution of unpaid wages and providing identity cards.
- Almost 65% of the migrants covered by the programme felt that access to the telephone messaging service provided by the PSKs has helped ease anxiety about family members left behind. Nearly 11% said that they had been able to obtain useful on employment at the PSKs which reduced idle waiting time at the destination and saved the cost of a trip back to the village to find employment. 28% of sampled

HHs who had an Identity (ID) card mentioned respite from police harassment including the payment of a bribe to them; 49% of HHs which report having an ID card said that they provided a sense of security in the event of emergencies or natural disasters that their identity could be secured and their families would be contacted; 33% of the households covered by the project took out life insurance policies with the help of the MLSP.

- As a direct result of the work of MLSP in the project area, there has been an improvement in awareness among migrants about job opportunities and legal rights; access to basic services, MLSP has also helped to increase the returns from migration by training migrants and has helped them to send money home. There has also been an improvement in the recovery of unpaid wages: 70% of unpaid wage cases have been resolved and 53% of the total value of unpaid wages amounting to Rs 82,200 has been recovered. The MLSP has also helped labourers to negotiate better wage rates.
- District Governments are beginning to recognize that migrants have specific needs that have to be addressed, and are willing to collaborate with GVT, who is seen as a credible partner. District Collectors in Jhabua, Ratlam and Banswara have supported a rapid expansion of some parts of the MLSP (e.g., the District Collector in Jhabua has issued over 30,000 ID Cards to seasonal migrants, through Panchayats in the last year.
- Good links with the Labour Commissioner in Vadodara have resulted in careful attention being paid to the issue of partial or non-payment of wages at construction sites.

Future work will concentrate on helping migrants to access government services, lobbying and advocacy by linking up with organizations in destination areas and scaling up the programme to cover more villages and towns. It is hoped that the increased awareness created through the MLSP about migration patterns, their working conditions, the difficulties that they face and the role that civil society organizations can play in supporting them will work towards achieving the Millenium Development Goals for a large section of the

population in India.

CONCLUSION:

Migration in India is mostly influenced by Social Structures and pattern of development. The development policies by all the governments since Independence have accelerated the process of migration. Uneven development is the main cause of Migration. Added to it, are the disparities, Inter regional and amongst different socio-economic classes. There are two important reasons for rural labour migration: (1) migration for survival and (2) migration for subsistence. The first indicates the severe social and economic hardships faced by rural labourers, a situation where migration becomes necessary to stay alive. These communities are generally landless, illiterate and drawn largely from Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other depressed castes. The second reason for migration is also rooted in subsistence and arises because of the need to supplement income in order to fill the gaps of seasonal employment. Such communities often migrate for shorter periods and do not ordinarily travel very far from their homes.

Migration is an expensive and risky process and this occurs mainly due to a combination of migrants being unaware of their rights; poor education and skills; a negative policy environment that aims to keep rural people in rural areas and actively discourages migration; monopolistic behaviour among employers, contractors and labour market intermediaries whereby they play the labour market to their own advantage and discrimination based on caste and gender.

Most serious problem encountered by migrants is a lack of access to basic services such as the public food distribution system which provides subsidized food; health and education. Children who accompany their parents for several months at a time are often not sent to school in the destination either because the schools there cannot accept them or because there is a language problem. Not having enough money to pay for school fees may also be a problem. This perpetuates the inter-generational transmission of poverty: uneducated parents who have to depend on labouring cannot offer their children a better future. Given the enormous magnitude of migration, such deprivation faced by

migrants seriously compromises the prospects of such regions and populations meeting the millennium development goals.

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