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### The effect of migration on rural economy

Netrananda Das<sup>1</sup>, Akhila Badavath<sup>2</sup>, Nimmaka Dinesh Kumar<sup>3</sup> and Chitrasena Padhy<sup>4\*</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>PG Scholar, Department of Agricultural Extension Education, Centurion University of Technology and Management, Odisha, India

<sup>4</sup>Associate Professor, Department of Agricultural Extension Education, Centurion University of Technology and Management, Odisha, India

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Corresponding Author: Chitrasena Padhy

#### Abstract

The global phenomenon of migration has a substantial impact on the economic growth of rural communities. In search of better economic conditions, employment opportunities, and education some people are migrating to the towns in order to secure better living conditions, especially better schooling for their children. Most of the migrations are due to economic conditions, business opportunities, education, and employment. Based on the movement of people from rural to rural, rural to urban, urban to urban, and urban to rural areas, there are several more types of migration. In India, the desire for better living conditions, social mobility, and economic opportunities are among the factors causing rural-to-urban migration. Significant agricultural labour shortages can be caused by migration to rural areas, which presents a serious threat to the foundation of the economies. People leave their communities in search of better prospects elsewhere. Migration's effects on rural economies are intricate and varied, necessitating careful thought and in-depth research. Migration can have a positive impact on rural communities by fostering economic resilience through remittances and knowledge transfer, but it also frequently results in short-term labour shortages and disruptions in the agricultural industry. Particularly impacted is the agriculture industry, as farmers are dealing with issues like diminishing crop sales, decreased profitability, and rising debt levels. In order to address the unique issues that various rural communities face, policymakers must consider the varied effects of migration and customize their policies accordingly. In order to guarantee that rural communities not only survive but flourish in the face of demographic shifts, sustainable development strategies should include tactics to maximise the positive effects of migration while minimizing its negative effects.

**Keywords:** Agricultural labor force, demographic change, economic impact, poverty alleviation, rural-urban migration

#### Introduction

Domestic and international migration have shaped cultures and economies for ages and is one of the defining characteristics of human civilization (Manning and Trimmer 2020) [37]. But the dynamics of migration have changed considerably in the last few decades, particularly when it comes to rural economies. In the past, migrant flows have generally originated and ended in rural areas. Individuals and families are frequently forced to migrate from rural to urban areas or across international borders in quest of improved livelihood chances due to economic inequities, restricted opportunities, and demographic issues (Castles, 2017) [9]. On the other hand, migratory trends towards particular sectors, natural resources, or agricultural prospects may draw people to rural areas. The effects of migration on rural economies are extensive and multifaceted. Outmigration can, on the one hand, result in population loss, generational imbalances, and a reduction in the labor force in rural areas, which can make it difficult to maintain regional businesses, agricultural output, and community vibrancy. Moreover, the relationship between migration and rural development is not limited to economic aspects. Migration patterns alter the social dynamics, cultural exchanges, environmental effects, and governance

systems of rural communities and landscapes.

Considering these factors, it is imperative that scholars, policymakers, and managers understand the multiple implications of migration on rural economies in order to establish solutions that will effectively address poverty, promote sustainable development, and promote inclusive growth in rural regions.

#### Migration - Latin

Migration can be defined as the movement of people from one region to another region of a state or a country by settling temporarily or permanently, for better living conditions. Most of the migrations are due to economic conditions, business opportunities, education, and employment. Based on the movement of people from rural to rural, rural to urban, urban to urban, and urban to rural areas, there are several more types of migration (Jończy *et al.*, 2021) [23].

#### Internal Migration

When a large number of people migrate from one region or state in a country to another region or state in the same country, then it is called internal migration. The migration of a person from a village to an urban area is an example of

internal migration.

### External Migration

When people move from one country to another country, then it is called external migration or international migration (Castelli, 2018)<sup>[8]</sup>.

### External Migration is further divided into two types of migration

1. Intracontinental migration
2. Intercontinental migration.

When Indians migrate to China (within Asia), it is called intracontinental migration but when Indians migrate to the USA (outside Asia), then it is called intercontinental migration. When people move to another country, they are called emigrants by the people of their own country but in the country to which they migrate, they are known as immigrants (Flahaux & De Haas 2016)<sup>[21]</sup>.

### Causes of migration

In search of better economic conditions, employment opportunities, and education some people are migrating to the towns in order to secure better living conditions, especially better schooling for their children. The effects of climate change on people's living situations are widespread and include reduced livable areas, increased scarcity of resources, and increased injustices. A rising number of people being uprooted by market pressures, territorial disputes, and environmental changes, yet people are more globally connected than ever because to mass communication, travel, tourism, and a worldwide market for goods, texts, tastes, styles, and ideologies (Dawson & Rapport 2021)<sup>[13]</sup>.

### Impacts of migration

Migration is becoming a very important subject for the life of cities. Many opportunities and attraction of big cities pull large numbers of people to big cities. Migration can have positive as well as negative effects on the life of the migrants (Buch *et al.*, 2014)<sup>[7]</sup>.

### Positive Impact

Unemployment is reduced and people get better job opportunities. Migration helps in improving the quality of life of people. It helps to improve the social life of people as they learn about new culture, customs, and languages which helps to improve brotherhood among people (Mansilla *et al.*, 2013)<sup>[38]</sup>. Migration of skilled workers leads to a greater economic growth of the region. Children get better opportunities for higher education. The population density is reduced and the birth rate decreases.

### Negative Impact

The influx of workers in urban areas increases competition for the job, houses, school facilities etc. Having a large population puts too much pressure on natural resources, amenities and services (Long *et al.*, 2016)<sup>[36]</sup>. It is difficult for a villager to survive in urban areas because in urban areas there is no natural environment and pure air. They have to pay for each and everything. Migration changes the population of a place; therefore, the distribution of the

population is uneven in India (Dahiya, 2012)<sup>[11]</sup>. Many migrants are completely illiterate and uneducated; therefore, they are not only unfit for most jobs, but also lack basic knowledge and life skills. Poverty makes them unable to live a normal and healthy life. Children growing up in poverty have no access to proper nutrition, education or health (Marmot, 2015)<sup>[39]</sup>.

### Trends in rural migration

The patterns of internal migration in rural areas have changed significantly in the last several years. India's rural areas have seen some intriguing trends in internal migration patterns. The census data indicates that migration from rural to urban areas has a significant impact on the nation's socioeconomic development (Kumar *et al.*, 2022)<sup>[34]</sup>. People are moving from rural to urban areas in large numbers. Maharashtra, Delhi, and West Bengal have the greatest percentage of in-migrants to the overall population (Both in 2001 and 2011) (Bhagat & Keshri, 2020)<sup>[3]</sup>. This trend can be attributed to a number of reasons, including access to better healthcare and educational resources, greater career prospects, and higher living standards. The main drivers of female mobility have been marriage and family-related movement, while male migration has decreased. There is a recent tendency in urban areas of greater female inter-district mobility and decreased male migration in rural areas. Internal migration has both beneficial and bad effects on rural economies, among other complex ramifications. In India, transitory circular migration is more widespread than permanent internal migration, particularly among males (Bhagat, 2016)<sup>[4]</sup>. Remittances from migrants have a dual effect: on the one hand, they help rural households financially, and on the other, they may cause a labour shortage in the agricultural industry. Although the MGNREGA programme was put in place by the government to address out-of-area migration to urban regions, it hasn't yet replaced traditional migration. International migration has a significant effect on community structures, cultural dynamics, and remittance inflows in rural economies (Khadria, 2013)<sup>[30]</sup>.

### Factors driving Rural-to-Urban migration

In India, the desire for better living conditions, social mobility, and economic opportunities are among the factors causing rural-to-urban migration. Rural-to-urban mobility is also influenced by shifting patterns of precipitation and the frequency and intensity of droughts occurring in rural areas (Karutz & Kabisch, 2023)<sup>[27]</sup>. Economic factors that contribute significantly to migration include job possibilities, poverty, low agricultural production, land holding fragmentation, and debt (Kumar *et al.*, 2022)<sup>[34]</sup>. Better educational possibilities, easy access to necessities, and a desire for better lifestyles are additional causes (Tripathi, 2020)<sup>[34]</sup>. Large numbers of people have also been drawn to cities by the growth of the service sector and the establishment of industrial enterprises. The analysis of India's internal migration reveals that the agricultural economy and socioeconomic variables have an impact on rural-to-urban migration.

### Economic impact of migration on rural areas

#### Positive economic effects

India has good economic benefits on rural areas due to migration from rural to urban areas. According to there is a decrease in unemployment as a result, and individuals have improved work prospects. As individuals encounter new cultures and habits, migration also contributes to their social and quality of life improvements (Mitra, 2019) <sup>[41]</sup>. Additionally, migration raises income levels, which helps advance human development and lessen poverty in rural India (Das *et al.*, 2020) <sup>[12]</sup>. According to, migration may also enhance agricultural output by allowing remittances to be reinvested as agricultural inputs. Migration can assist mitigate the decline of conventional economic activity in rural regions by offering alternate sources of income, even in the absence of new economic prospects (Bandyopadhyay, 2017) <sup>[2]</sup>. In general, migration contributes significantly to the improvement of rural India's economic circumstances and standard of living.

### Remittances and financial inflows

Rural areas in India are greatly impacted by remittances and cash inflows as a result of migration. According to studies, remittances have a short-term detrimental impact on financial development but a long-term favourable impact (Deheri, 2022) <sup>[16]</sup>. Furthermore, remittances negatively impact the labour force participation of family members who are left behind, decreasing their involvement in unpaid family labour and casual wage jobs while increasing their self-employment, particularly for female household members (Khan and Baruah, 2021) <sup>[31]</sup>. Furthermore, remittances are a major factor in decreasing household poverty; in Uttar Pradesh, their impact is larger when it comes to international remittances, whereas in Bihar, they are a major factor when it comes to domestic remittances (Dey, 2022) <sup>[17]</sup>. However, labour out-migration can also result in increasing workloads and security issues for migrant wives, as well as negative consequences on the behaviour and education of children left behind (Ali *et al.*, 2019) <sup>[1]</sup>.

### Negative economic effect

Rural migration can have negative economic repercussions that should be carefully considered. Due to the migration the education and behaviour of children left behind suffer when there are no male migrants around, and migrant spouses deal with more work and security issues (Das *et al.*, 2020) <sup>[12]</sup>. Due to high wages and input prices, migration also limits the labour pool and lowers agricultural output (Nagendraiah and Kumar, 2022) <sup>[34]</sup>. Furthermore, push factors that contribute to migration include poverty and a dearth of job prospects in rural areas (Bandyopadhyay, 2017) <sup>[2]</sup>. The decline of established economic sectors in the absence of fresh prospects intensifies the adverse effects of migration on rural communities. Urban poverty, slums, violence, inequality, and exploitation have all increased as a result of the rural-urban migration, whereas rural areas have not been able to improve their standard of living (Chattoraj, 2015) <sup>[10]</sup>. Careful governmental interventions are needed to balance the advantages and disadvantages of migration in rural areas in order to address these detrimental economic effects.

### Agriculture labor shortage

Significant agricultural labour shortages can be caused by

migration to rural areas, which presents a serious threat to the foundation of these economies. People leave their communities in search of better prospects elsewhere (Bhagat and Singh, 2023) <sup>[6]</sup>, and the agricultural industry frequently feels the brunt of this labour migration, losing both skilled and unskilled workers. Planting, harvesting, and other crucial farming operations may be hampered by this shortage, which could result in lower agricultural yield and possible financial losses. Since many rural communities depend heavily on agriculture, the effects of such shortages are exacerbated. This emphasizes the need for deliberate interventions, like mechanization and training programmes, to lessen the negative effects and maintain the vitality of the agricultural sector in the face of persistent migration trends.

### Impact on local business

Due to rising wages and input prices, the lack of migrants may result in a reduction in the labor pool and a decline in agricultural productivity. Nonetheless, reinvesting migrant remittances can eventually boost agricultural productivity. Furthermore, because it gives people the chance to stay in their current location and pursue further education, rural entrepreneurship can lessen the negative effects of migration (Das *et al.*, 2020) <sup>[12]</sup>. Both agriculture-based and non-agricultural entrepreneurial endeavors in rural areas have the potential to boost the local economy and create jobs (Kavitha and Valliammai, 2020) <sup>[28]</sup>. Moreover, migration may result from the regional gap between rural and urban areas, which is fueled by elements like industrialization and investment attractiveness, as individuals migrate in search of better possibilities for a living (Bandyopadhyay, 2017) <sup>[2]</sup>. Overall, there are both good and negative effects of migration on small companies in rural areas.

### Social and demographic change

#### Social services and infrastructure challenges

Rural communities' ability to support both newcomers and current residents is frequently strained by migration, which presents serious obstacles to infrastructure and social services. Problems include a shortage of food, basic necessities, healthcare, transportation, and mental support are common for internal migrants (Bhagat *et al.*, 2020) <sup>[3]</sup>. Furthermore, many urban migrants live in impoverished neighbourhoods with inadequate infrastructure, such as slums and squatter settlements, which can have negative effects on their health and the environment (Roy, 2011) <sup>[3]</sup>. The COVID-19 epidemic has intensified the difficulties encountered by internal migrants, underscoring the necessity of bettering public distribution networks, fortifying public health systems, and integrating migrants with development. The growing population may be challenging for rural healthcare facilities to serve, stretching their resources thin and lowering the standard of service. In a similar vein, educational establishments might find it difficult to take on more pupils, which would lower the standard of instruction generally. Living conditions can be made worse for both newcomers and current residents by a lack of housing and poor infrastructure, such as water and sanitary services. In order to address these issues, extensive planning as well as investments in social and physical infrastructure are needed. This will guarantee that rural towns have the means to maintain or raise the general standard of living while

meeting the needs of a more growing and huge population. Also, the government should take into account decentralization as a tactic to solve these issues by bolstering the database on migration and migrant households, supporting the reintegration of return migrants, and offering health services (Singh *et al.*, 2022) <sup>[34]</sup>. In addition, to offer migrants full care—including healthcare and economic support—an integrated rights-based approach involving multiple stakeholders, including health departments, municipal councils, and non-governmental organizations has to be implemented (Krishna and Raj, 2022) <sup>[23]</sup>. Involving the community and working with stakeholders are crucial to creating lasting solutions that meet the changing demands of rural communities under pressure from migration.

### **Cultural transformation in rural communities**

Significant cultural changes have resulted from migration in India's rural villages. Premature urbanization and the loss of traditional crafts and cultural identity in villages, the migration wave from rural to urban areas has put strain on the urban economy, infrastructure, and environmental resources. Caste, class, kinship, and gender experiences are all included in migration accounts, which put doubt on the sense of trust and community that characterizes village life (Hebbar, 2023) <sup>[22]</sup>. The social structure of rural communities has been impacted by seasonal labor movement, which has an effect on landowner farmers, laborers without land, and production linkages. Traditional institutions in rural India have been impacted by modernization and the institutionalization of democratic principles, creating a complex interplay between dominant, residual, and emergent socio-cultural processes.

### **Policies responses to rural migration**

#### **Government initiatives**

The Indian government has launched a number of measures to lessen the impact of rural migration and encourage sustainable development in rural regions, as the country faces substantial issues related to this phenomenon. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is a significant effort that aims to prevent distress migration by providing rural households with 100 days of wage employment annually. Furthermore, initiatives such as the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana (PMAY) concentrate on supplying cheap homes in rural regions, tackling a primary issue that frequently prompts migration. Another initiative, the Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY), provides skill development training to improve rural youths' employability and income prospects. In order to increase productivity and lessen the economic vulnerabilities that lead to migration, the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) focuses on agricultural development, placing special emphasis on effective water usage and irrigation techniques. By offering job opportunities, bettering living circumstances, and developing skill sets, these government efforts hope to improve the overall climate in rural areas, thereby reducing the push forces that cause migration and promoting sustainable rural development. The governments of Uttar Pradesh have offered a maintenance payment to returning migrants who must remain in quarantine, while the

governments of Bihar, Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh have promised one-time financial transfers for returning migrant workers (Deb, 2022) <sup>[15]</sup>. In order to balance spatial development and lower migration to large cities, the government has also enacted policies to deconcentrate urbanization and support intermediate-sized cities and regional hubs. These programs are intended to address the push and pull factors—such as family conflicts, unemployment, and a shortage of agricultural land—that lead to migration also to guarantee that these efforts are successful in tackling the intricate and varied aspects of rural migration in India, continuous assessment and modification are necessary.

### **Challenges in policy implementation**

One of the major challenges in implementing policies to mitigate migration in rural regions is that poverty reduction initiatives do not give attention to the rural sector (Kutsmus and Kovalchuk, 2020) <sup>[35]</sup>. Because of this, it is difficult to effectively address the systemic causes of poverty and bring about significant reductions in it. Concerns have also been raised about how English language policies are being implemented in isolated and rural locations, which could result in unequal access to English language instruction (Kay, 2011) <sup>[29]</sup>. Further impeding the implementation of English language policy in rural areas include the curriculum variances, inadequate teaching resources, ineffective pedagogy, assessment, and tardy execution. In addition, Joseph (2014) <sup>[24]</sup> emphasises that gender-sensitive rural development policies are critical for both progressive rural growth and the efficient utilisation of women's human capital in rural areas. Rural communities have unique problems due in part to gender disparities in economic activity and educational attainment. Altogether, creative thinking, teamwork, and an emphasis on the main factors contributing to rural poverty are necessary to overcome these obstacles.

### **Future implication and research directions**

#### **Anticipated trends in rural migration**

The agricultural workforce in India is expected to diminish as a result of anticipated trends in rural migration, which point to a move from agriculture to nonfarm employment. This shift is being fueled by elements including mechanisation, rising salaries in rural areas, agricultural distress, and increased rates of school enrollment. It is anticipated that the process of rural-to-urban migration will continue in the next years due to the departure of female labourers from agriculture and their rising involvement in schooling. The paper contends that unequal development and the pursuit of better opportunities are factors in rural-urban migration, leading to the creation of slums and alterations in population dynamics. Maharashtra is the second most common location for out-migration, whilst Haryana has become a prominent destination for immigration. In order to address the social and cultural effects of migration and to support balanced development in both rural and urban areas, it is advised that the focus be on rural development (Kumar *et al.*, 2022) <sup>[34]</sup>.

### **Research gap and areas for further exploration**

Although there has been a significant amount of research on

the effects of migration on rural economies, there is still a significant knowledge gap on the complex dynamics and long-term effects of migration on rural economic structures (de Brauw, 2019)<sup>[14]</sup>. Research on the short-term impacts of outmigration on agricultural labour and productivity has been conducted, but less is known about the long-term economic changes and sustainability of rural communities. Moreover, the extant literature mostly emphasises the adverse effects of migration, including labour shortages, with insufficient attention paid to the favourable outcomes, like knowledge transfer and remittances. It is imperative that scholars and policymakers conduct a thorough analysis of the complex effects of migration on rural economies in order to formulate strategies that effectively foster sustainable development and tackle the issues that rural communities confront in light of evolving migration trends (English & Mayo, 2019)<sup>[20]</sup>.

### Conclusion

Migration's effects on rural economies are intricate and varied, necessitating careful thought and in-depth research. Previous studies have illuminated multiple aspects of this phenomena, emphasising both obstacles and prospects. Migration can have a positive impact on rural communities by fostering economic resilience through remittances and knowledge transfer, but it also frequently results in short-term labour shortages and disruptions in the agricultural industry. Particularly impacted is the agriculture industry, as farmers are dealing with issues like diminishing crop sales, decreased profitability, and rising debt levels (Kaithal, 2016)<sup>[26]</sup> (Khandagale, 2020)<sup>[32]</sup>. Furthermore, there is a crucial study vacuum since the long-term implications of migration on the general economic structure of rural areas are still little understood. It is becoming more and more important to comprehend the dynamic interaction between migration and rural economies as rural populations continue to undergo demographic upheavals. In order to address the unique issues that various rural communities face, policymakers must consider the varied effects of migration and customize their policies accordingly. In order to guarantee that rural communities not only survive but flourish in the face of demographic shifts, sustainable development strategies should include tactics to maximise the positive effects of migration while minimizing its negative effects. To develop robust rural economies that can adjust to the changing dynamics of migration, a thorough and integrated approach is required.

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