

Outmigration From Varanasi (Rural) : Some Results on Differentials

Introduction

"POPULATION movement and its effect on social, economic and demographic characteristics has attracted an increasing attention of administrators, planners, social scientists and researchers for a thorough understanding of the process of migration. In India, where about eighty percent people live in villages, the migration from rural areas has a special significance in the context of rural development. It has been observed that the migrants from rural areas retain attachment to their native place. They continue to maintain links with their families and villages through regular visits and by sending remittances,

The migration of a person from a rural area to an urban place not only involves the transfer of an individual from one area to another but also the exposure of the immigrants to new ideas which may act as an important source of social change. Also, the flow of money from the immigrants may raise the economic status of the family which in turn may lead to a rise in level of aspirations. Some times emigrants play a decisive role in the social and economic activities of the household. Because of these considerations, the outmigration may be thought to be an important factor for a major social and economic change in the rural areas.

It is well known that the propensity to migrate differs significantly among various socio-economic groups of society. Persons belonging to some sections are more mobile than those of other groups and consequently the overall effect of migration is likely to be different for different groups of the society. Thus, it is

important to consider the social background of the migrants from rural areas in order to assess the differential impact of migration on different socio-economic groups.

The objective of the present paper is to estimate the differential migration rate in different socio-economic groups of a rural society. The findings are based on the data collected in a survey entitled 'Rural Development and Population Growth—A Sample Survey 1978', under the auspices of Demographic Research Centre, Banaras Hindu University. A description of the data is given in Section 2, while Section 3 presents the differential migration rates for different socio-economic groups of the society. The discussion of the results and conclusions are given at the end.

The Data

The main objective of the project is to study the existing levels of fertility, mortality and migration in three groups of villages representing different levels of social and economic development. The three types of villages have been termed as 'semi-urban', 'remote*' and 'growth centres'. Taking into consideration the available resources, the first two types of villages are taken from Varanasi tehsil, but the growth centres are located outside this tehsil because there is no major industrial unit in the tehsil situated at a considerable distance from the city which may be considered as a growth centre. The villages of Varanasi tehsil were classified into two groups according to their distance from Varanasi city (boundary of Varanasi Nagar Mahapalika) to form two strata. The villages having a distance of less than 3 kms are in the first stratum known as 'semi-urban', while the rest belong to the second stratum called 'remote' villages. Random selection of 8 and 6 villages was done from these two strata, respectively. In respect of the growth centres stratum, 2 villages were selected where recently sugar mills have been established and 3 villages, from an area where recently a vast network of carpet weaving has been created. The survey included all the households, numbering 3,514 from these 19 villages. Besides other information, the detailed data relating to migration were also obtained in the survey.

The migration record included questions on age, sex, education, occupation, place, push-pull factors, type of family, number of prior migrants etc. for each migrated person of the household. The information on migration could successfully be obtained by adopting a special definition of a household. A household has been defined as a group of persons who normally stay together and take food from a common kitchen inclusive of the persons who usually live outside

the village but claim the household to be their own. Such persons are generally migrated persons who usually go away to earn their livelihood and visit the household at regular intervals of time. Such members are closely knit together with other members of the households. It should be pointed out that the study is concerned with the present residential status of persons and hence it does not include information on return migration.

Migration Differentials

The study is based on the data collected from 3,514 households covering a population of 23,321 persons. Out of these households, 638 households had at least one migrant, the total number of migrants being 1,734. The migration rates for three types of villages, viz. semi-urban, remote and growth centres are 5.86, 8.83 and 7.63 percent, respectively with the overall rate as 7.44 per cent. This shows that the rate is relatively higher for remote villages. This might be due to the fact that the semi-urban villages are situated near Varanasi city which provides ample job opportunities for local unskilled labourers in non-agricultural sectors; also the persons engaged in agriculture may be less mobile as they generally grow cash crops for which they get quite remunerative prices. Lack of adequate demand for jobs outside agriculture in remote villages may be responsible for the higher migration rate in these villages.

In the subsequent sections we have discussed the migration differentials according to caste, possession of land, educational status and economic status.

Migration and Caste. In rural areas, caste is an important determinant of occupation, education and social status in the community and therefore it may be one of the important factors responsible for migration differential. In this area, about ninetyfive percent households are Hindu households belonging to about 35 castes. Keeping in view the total number of households, these castes are grouped in five categories on the basis of the homogeneity in the pattern of living and relative importance of the caste in the area. Muslims formed a different group. The caste groups are given as follows:

- I : Upper Castes : Bhumihar, Kshatriya, Brahmin, Kayastha, Brahmohatta, Gosain, Mahabrahmin.
- II : Middle Castes : Kurmi, Koiri, Ahir, Gareria.
- III ; Business Castes : Bania, Teli, Thathera, Sonar, Kalwar, Halwai, Barai.
- IV : Functional Castes : Kohar, Kahar, Lohar, Nai, Mali, Mallah, Bind, Nonia, Rajbhar.

-V : Scheduled Castes : Chamar, Khatik, Dharkar, Dhobi, Nat, Pasi, Bhangi, Mushar.

VI : Muslims.

Table I presents the migration rates in three types of villages according to caste. The table shows that the overall migration rate is highest for upper

TABLE I—MIGRATION RATES IN THREE TYPES OF VILLAGES ACCORDING TO CASTE

Caste group	Type of Village			Total
	Semi-urban	Remote	Growth Centre	
I	14.23	14.64	12.35	13.67
II	3.34	6.74	7.91	5.52
III	13.27	15.61	10.14	11.73
IV	3.07	11.33	4.34	6.50
V	2.14	3.36	4.81	3.56
VI	1.12	6.25	12.40	8.74
Total	5.86	8.83	7.63	7.44

castes and lowest for scheduled castes. The caste groups according to their intensity of mobility are as follows:

Upper > Business > Muslims > Functional > Middle > Scheduled.

This relationship may be due to different factors such as education, possession of land, social contacts etc. associated with different caste groups. For example, the prevalence of higher education is relatively more among upper castes which may be helpful in securing jobs in government services and other organised sectors. Such jobs are usually available at longer distances in urban areas. The larger families and more social contacts may also be responsible for the higher rate in this caste group. The lower migration rates for middle and scheduled castes may be because middle caste people are mainly engaged in cultivation, whereas persons belonging to scheduled castes who are mostly illiterate, are either agricultural labourers or work as unskilled labourers in the neighbouring urban area, viz. Varanasi city.

Migration and Landholding. In an economy, where most people earn their livelihood from land, its possession must be relevant in determining the pattern of migration.

TABLE 2- MIGRATION RATES IN THREE TYPES OF VILLAGES ACCORDING TO LAND POSSESSION

<i>Landpossession group</i>	<i>Type of village</i>			<i>Total</i>
	<i>Semi-urban</i>	<i>Remote</i>	<i>Growth centre</i>	
No land	2.84	8.22	8.33	6.07
Below 1 bigha	3.75	5.52	3.70	4.30
1-2 "	3.56	8.94	6.55	6.42
2-4 "	5.46	10.94	6.15	8.36
4-8 "	10.19	12.41	10.53	11.09
8-12 "	9.01	7.67	7.33	7.82
12 and above	18.17	8.10	15.55	14.37
Total	5.86	8.83	7.63	7.44

Table 2 presents the migration rates according to size of land holding in three types of villages. The unit of possession of land is bigha. For convenience, the sizes have been categorized into seven groups, viz., I : No land, II: Less than one, III: 1-2, IV :2-4, V : 4-8, VI : 8-12, VII : 12 or more bigha. Scrutiny of the table reveals a positive relationship between land holding and the migration rate. However, a comparatively high rate of migration is observed among households owning more than 12 bighas of land. This might be because the people belonging to this category are obviously keen in improving their economic and social status further through migration.

Migration and Educational Status of Household. Many studies on migration have pointed out the high degree of educational selectivity in migration patterns. The education of a person as well as of other family members plays an important role in migration decision making. This section presents the study of migration rates according to the educational status of the household. The educational status of a household has been based on the educational levels of all the members of the household.

Table 3 presents the migration rates in three types of villages according to educational status of the household. As is evident from the table, the migration rate is directly related with the educational status in all the three types of villages.

Migration and Economic Status. This section is concerned with the study of relationship between migration and economic status of the household. In the

TABLE 3-MIGRATION RATES ACCORDING TO EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF THE HOUSEHOLD IN THREE TYPES OF VILLAGES

<i>Educational status group</i>	<i>Type of village</i>			<i>Total</i>
	<i>Semi-Urban</i>	<i>Remote</i>	<i>Growth centre</i>	
Low	1.85	3.35	3.06	2.73
Lower Middle	2.83	6.77	8.46	6.18
Middle	5.33	9.79	11.40	8.89
High	7.44	13.15	7.79	9.64
Very High	19.94	20.18	17.15	19.31
Total	5.86	8.83	7.63	7.44

TABLE 4-MIGRATION RATES IN THREE TYPES OF VILLAGES ACCORDING TO ECONOMIC STATUS

<i>Economic Status</i>	<i>Type of village</i>			<i>Total</i>
	<i>Semi-urban</i>	<i>Remote</i>	<i>Growth centre</i>	
Low	0.79	3.04	2.95	2.56
Lower middle	1.20	4.19	3.86	3.12
Middle	2.21	10.57	6.77	6.26
High	8.60	14.11	11.93	11.38
Very High	20.04	29.10	17.85	21.54
Total	5.86	8.83	7.63	7.44

present case the economic status of a household was determined by giving appropriate weights to per capita income, type of house, use of milk and vegetable and possession of other prestigious goods such as radio, watch, bicycle etc.

Table 4 presents the migration rate in three types of villages according to economic status of the household. It is observed from the table that there is a high positive association between migration rate and economic status. However, it should be pointed out that the economic status considered here represents the current status of the household, perhaps not representing the economic status at the time of migration. Thus it is not possible to conclude whether the migration has increased the economic status of the household or higher economic

status is responsible for higher migration rate. One can, only say that households having migrants are comparatively more prosperous in the rural society.

Discussion and Conclusions

The findings of the survey reveal that the households belonging to upper castes, higher educational status with larger land holdings and distance from the city have greater propensity to expel migrants. Thus it is seen that the upper strata of the rural society is more mobile, These findings are consistent with the results of other studies on rural-urban migration in India. Narain [1] in a study of rural out-migration reported that among Hindus, Brahmins (who belong to upper castes in our study) are more mobile as compared to other castes. She also found that Neo-Buddhists (originally usually belonging to scheduled castes) had high outmigration rate. A study of several villages by Agro-Economic Research Centre (AERC), Sardar Patel University [2] has revealed that most high castes had somewhat greater rates of individual migration than the other villagers. A study of 16 Delhi villages by AERC [3] concluded that migrants are educationally more advanced than non-migrants.

References

1. Narain, V., 1972, *Rural outmigration in Southern Maharashtra*. Presented at Indian **Census** Centenary Seminar, held at New Delhi in October 1972.
2. and 3. Connell, J., Dasgupta, B., Roy, L. and Lipton, M-, 1976, *Migration from Rural Areas*, Chapter 8.