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### ROLE OF MIGRATION IN URBAN GROWTH

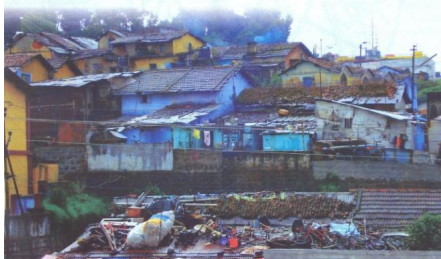
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*Social and cultural factors such as quest for independence, the desire to break away from traditional constraints of social organization, conflict among family members also play their role in migration.*

The three great socio-economic revolutions – the industrial revolution, the agrarian revolution and transport revolution, sparked off another revolution: urban revolution. In fact, higher urbanization is regarded as one of the indicators of development because it is an integral part of the process of industrialization and development. The process of development entails a massive shift of labor and other inputs from sectors that are predominantly rural to sectors that are predominantly urban.

Migration from rural to urban areas and cities is an old and ancient practice. It is a known

fact that migration alters the size and structure of the population of urban areas as well as that of rural areas. Rural urban migration is an important component of urban population growth. Thomson has viewed urbanization in the form of migration and described it as "The movement of people from communities concerned chiefly with agriculture to other communities, generally larger, whose activities are primarily centered in government, trade, manufacture and allied interests". Preston considers rural – urban migration as an indicator of regional and sectoral distortions in the pattern of development, imparting importance to rural-



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urban migration in urban growth, Megee suggests, "Although these cities are growing to some extent from natural increase, the striking fact is that much of the growth is greatly aided by migration from rural areas". United Nations also estimated that 60 per cent of the urban growth of developing countries is due to the rate of natural increase of urban areas and the remaining 40 per cent is due to migration. Migration is the chief mechanism by which all the world's great urbanization trends have been accomplished.

Actually, migration flows are determined by a complex interaction of economic, environmental and demographic factors. These factors have differential impact on the rate and direction of migration. Many studies have been conducted to analyze the causes and pattern of migration. A study done by Prof. Das Kumar shows that migration is caused by the income disparity between rural and urban sectors. Zachariah's study reveals that males predominantly migrate to large cities while females outnumber males in the case of smaller and medium towns. In this study, it is also pointed out that population pressure and increasing educational facilities in the urban areas will be the major forces determining the future trends of rural to urban migration. Greenwood examines migration flows to the urban areas of India using the 1961 census data. The analysis leads to the conclusion that economic factors such as transportation costs, income and job opportunities significantly affect individual's decision to migrate to a city in a less developed country like India. Kamble tries to correlate migration to indicators of development such as per capita income, degree of urbanization, literacy rates and workers in non-agricultural activities. The study concludes that developed states have absorbed proportionately more migrants than the less developed states.

According to Herring and Kindler Berger, the fall in the cost of transportation and quick transmission

of information are the two sole factors responsible for the rapid rate and huge magnitude of migration. Murty and Murty investigated the pattern of internal migration in the state of Maharashtra. The study concludes that about 36 per cent of the population in Maharashtra is migrants, with females outnumbering males. The data establishes an inverse relationship between duration of residence and the number of migration. Prem's study indicates that the predominated form of migration is short distance one. Migration induced by economic factors is less stable than the one directed by traditional sociological forces. Simmon reports that the expansion of labor force, unemployment and underemployment in rural areas forced people to migrate. Kelley and Williamson discussed the two factors namely "push" and "pull" forces affecting the trend of rural-urban migration in the form of two hypotheses viz (1) unusually rapid rates of population growth pressing limited farm acreage, pushing landless labour into cities and (2) economic forces pulling migrants into the cities as an explanation of urban growth. In fact, the exodus of rural population to cities is caused by pull or push factors in quite a controversial statements. In a study, it is concluded that the main push factor causing the workers to leave agriculture is lower level of income. To design policy or to understand the behavior of migration properly, it is essential to understand the "push factor" as well as "pull factors".

Social and cultural factors such as quest for independence, the desire to break away from traditional constraints of social organization, conflict among family members also play their role in migration. Geographical and physical factors like distance, natural barriers, size of the country, weather and climate conditions also make an effect on the movement of people. Thus migration flows are determined by a complex interaction of economic, environmental and demographic factors.

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In case of our country, economic factors exercise a dominant influence on the rural-urban migration process. It is a well known fact that agriculture is the principal occupation of the rural people of our country. About 70 percent of rural population earn their livelihood on the basis of agriculture and agriculture related activities. Because of population pressure, the agriculture sector is now overcrowded and the problem of disguised unemployment has become very acute in this sector. Frequent occurrences of droughts and lack of proper irrigation facilities are the factors responsible for the reduction of employment opportunities in this dominant sector. Again in this era of globalization, agriculture itself is not proving a reliable source of income. High cost of cultivation, scarcity of irrigation water, stagnation of productivity in this sector and fluctuations in prices of agricultural products are the main factors responsible for converting agriculture into non-profitable sector of employment. In such "distress" conditions, rural labourers and farmers are compelled to move from villages to urban areas and cities in search of employment and better livelihood.

## Planning and Migration

Again, under the aegis of planning, the development activities are more concentrated in the big cities of the country. The expansion of trade and commercial activities, industrial development, better facilities of education and other sources of employment in big cities are the factors responsible for the rapid flow of migration in these big cities. National building activities were also concentrated in metropolitan areas. The role of kinship and caste linkages in information flows, motivation and migration, job getting and settlement in the cities are crucial.

No doubt, balanced and planned migration has many advantages. It reduces the burden of less developed places by providing employment opportunities at other developed places. The rural migrant people become aware and acquainted of urban life, urban culture and advancements. They can derive benefits of migration in the form of improving knowledge, efficiency and scope of employment and ultimately living standards.

Thus migration is helpful in equalizing social status and income of the rural-urban settlements. Migration also checks the division and sub-division of land-holding and promotes the concept of division of labour and specialization. In many studies, it is found that migration has contributed towards higher earning of income, remittance of funds, large saving and asset formation by the migrant workers and their families.

The problem is that the uncontrolled and unmanaged rural-urban migration trend is leading to a less than optimal allocation of labour between the rural and urban settlements in our country.

The process of urbanisation has been accelerated by "distress migration" from rural areas which are affecting both rural as well as urban areas adversely. Unfortunately, cities have become unmanageable because of uncontrolled migration. The large cities of India have ceased to be places of congenial for living. The urban population of the country is concentrated in metropolitan cities. It is to be noted that the population of million plus cities was 40.28 million in 1981 which rose to 100.80 million in 2001.

No doubt, these big cities are engines of growth as they are not only creating opportunities for learning skills and earning wealth but also generating employment opportunities for rural migrants. But the problem is that these

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cities, growing uncontrollably, have generated unmanageable problems whose symptoms include slums, congestion, pollution and unhygienic living conditions. Due to migration, these metropolitans have become the centers of the most brutal and inhuman living conditions, with large sections of the migrants living in slum areas. It is estimated that on an average more than one forth of population in the country live in slums or in subhuman conditions. According to Indian's Union Urban Development Ministry, 20 per cent of the country's urban households are denied access to safe drinking water, 58 per cent do not have access to sanitation facilities. Our 'Metropolitan Cities' are overcrowded, urban land has become extremely scarce, services are breaking down and human misery has increased beyond belief. Thus, the main cause of concern is the concentration of urban population in large 'Primate' cities. With the increase in city size, the per capita investment requirements in the infrastructure and overheads are also increasing at a rapid pace. Quite obviously, in a poor economy where the 'means are limited and the 'ends' are many, it implies a frittering away of resources from directly productive investment.

The "gloomy" picture of cities forces us to root-out the factors which have forced the rural labourers to migrate to big cities so that the tide of migration to these big cities can be effectively controlled. Effective policy measures should be taken to check the flow of migration from these rural areas to the big cities.

Migration should be managed in such a way that it can play a positive role in the process of economic developments and can provide a sound basis for national prosperity. The ad-hoc policies related to urbanization and migration need to be replaced by a consistent, logical and systematic policy which can be sustained over a period time. Here are some Suggestions :-

1. An impetus should be given to the development of small and medium towns so that the flow of migration to large cities can be checked. Their infrastructure should be developed so that their economic bases are consolidated strengthened and expanded.
2. Population control measures must be made effective in both urban and rural areas in order to sustain urban situation. Otherwise, even the best of urbanization strategies will fail.
3. Rural and urban settlements should not be considered as competitive but they should be treated as complementary to each other. Urban and rural areas constitute parts of an organic whole. Balanced development of urban and rural areas is the only possible long term solution.
4. The problems of metropolitan cities must be looked in a comprehensive manner and on a regional basis. The civic services in big urban centers must be augmented to make them fit for a reasonable level of living.
5. The flow of migration may be checked only if they are offered better employment opportunities in rural areas. Effective and efficient policy measures must be adopted to establish agro-processing units, village, cottage and handicrafts industrial units in the rural and semi-urban areas so that the rural people can get employment in these industries and are not compelled to migrate in search of job opportunities to big cities. In the same way, efforts must be made to improve agriculture, horticulture, dairying, animal husbandry and primary health and education in rural areas and nearby small towns.

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