

Causes and Motives of Migration of Slum-Dwellers Case Study of a Capital City (Bhubaneswar)

Dr. Sheshadev Mohapatra

Dean of Academics, Mother's Business School, Bhubaneswar

ABSTRACT: In the process of development in developing countries, there is a shift of labour and capital from rural to urban sectors leading to rapid pace of urbanization. But the relationship between urbanization and economic growth is complex and varies some what among countries. The demographic feature of urbanization process, viz. natural increment of population and rural to urban migration has resulted in a substantial increase in urban labour force. The surplus urban labour including most of the rural pushed migrants unable to get absorbed in the formal sector has been forced to find its own source of employment and livelihood in a variety of productive activities in urban centre's which constitute what is called informal sector. Against this backdrop, the present study is an attempt to examine migration of workers from rural to urban areas with reference to slum dwellers of Bhubaneswar. The objective of the present paper is to analyse the causes and motives of migration of slum dwellers ,and their mobility within informal sector and from informal sector to formal sector.

I. GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE

For household survey, the study adopted stratified random sampling method. After collecting a list of the existing squatter localities including the resettlement colonies resided by the urban poor in Bhubaneswar from the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) office, 10 slums and squatter localities based on their spatial distribution and location were selected at random. Taking into consideration, the geographical locality of Bhubaneswar city as a whole samples taken from schedule caste area, public place (Bus stand) religious surrounding (Temple), Educational Institutions (University), commercial and business centre (Rly. Station) largest slum dwellers, Heart of the city where social existence, responsible personnel exist (VIP area) and Suburb of the city where prostitutes, vagabond and all sorts of inhuman nature personnel exist. Incidentally, these areas had originated and grown in different backgrounds and suffer from different problems, although some problems are common and uniform.

In the second stage of sampling, 50 households from each of the selected slums and squatters of the city were surveyed by using simple random sampling method. Thus, all total 500 slum-dweller households from the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation area have been surveyed intensively to find out their existing socio-economic and environmental status by using a structured questionnaire and the direct canvassing and filling up of the schedules by the researcher. All types of relevant information of both quantitative and qualitative types relating to the life, livelihood and shelter of the urban poor residing in the slums were collected through the structured schedules specially designed for the study. Added to that, the researcher collected both quantitative and qualitative data relating to macro picture of the selected slums by holding community level discussions in focus group scenario covering all categories of people such as men, women and children, different caste and community groups, linguistic, religious and regional groups, etc. For collecting detailed official level information about basic civic services and infrastructural development carried out under various programmes and policies of the government for the slum-dwellers, the researcher held discussions with the officials associated with the implementation and designing of such development programmes in the city in particular and in the state in general.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A number of independent variables used to explain migration include (i) wage or income levels (ii) Unemployment rate (iii) The degree of urbanisation (iv) The distance between origin and destination (v) The friends and relatives of residents of origin in the destination and (vi) Population in origin and destination (Yap, 1997). Age, education, income, employment status, race and castes are prominent personal characteristics that appear important in-influencing migration (Greenwood, 1975). Macro economic factors like (i) Agricultural land scarcity (ii) Urban bias (iii) Fuel cost (iv) Public investment, etc are set of forces driving migration (Williamson, 1988). However various empirical studies have given importance on certain factors determining the movement of people from rural areas to urban centres (Samal and Mishra, 1999).

Geographical Distance and Personal Contact

Without kin contacts, migrants' chance of getting employment is greatly reduced particularly in the formal sector (Oberai and Singh, 1983; Rempel, 1996; Yap, 1977). For survival, he may join the informal sector. Moreover, the availability of family members in the urban centres who can help in getting a job in the town may actually facilitate the movement of the people from rural to urban centres. The existing commercial and trade interaction between the rural area and the urban centre serves as a source of information about the conditions and opportunities therein, which in turn helps the movement. The presence of friends and relatives in urban areas who often provide help and financial security and the desire of migrants to break away from the traditional constraints of inhibiting rural social structure have been cited as likely determinants of rural-to-urban migration. Thus, destination contacts have a positive effect on migration to a specific area, when contacts are measured by the presence of parents, friends and relatives in the city, by potential ethnic, contact, by language similarly between the origin and the destination or by the stock of persons in the destination who had migrated earlier from the home location.

Distance, on the other hand, has a deterrent effect (Ibid) with the few exceptions; the distance coefficient in the migration function is negative and significant. Usually migrants to the urban centres came from the same or neighbouring states or districts.

Both variables, contacts and distance – reflect the psychic costs associated with migration. That is intervening factors like pecuniary costs involved and the social and psychological costs associated with separation from the native place can deter a move. Friends and relatives in the new location are emotional comforts. On the other hand long distance between the new (destination) and old location (origin) reduces the chance for frequent visits to the native place. However, both variables also appear to reflect economic moving costs. Destination contacts, as mentioned earlier provide information and temporary support to the migrants.

As distance increase, direct transportation and migration costs also increases. However, these costs are usually small. It is a very small fraction of the higher income required to induce a migrant to move long distances. There is weak support for the notion that distance is also a proxy for information. However, distance and contacts, another proxy for information, are sometimes, correlated (Yap, 1977)

Better Facilities in Urban Areas

There may be social forces which affects the decision to migrate from rural areas to towns such as the availability of urban infrastructure and amenities, i.e. the attractions of “bright lights” of the city (Oberai and Singh, 1983; Rempel, 1996). Few studies also seem to support this hypothesis that migrants are attracted to cities in search of better entertainment, or “bright city light”, educational opportunities, medical services, cultural and entertainment activities and many other facilities which are not just there in the villages.

Educational Facilities

There are two conflicting views on the role of education influencing migration (Stark, 1982). One view is that the better educated rural youths who acquire non-rural specific human capital in higher amount are induced to migrate to urban centres since they are less averse to risk. So, promotion of schools in rural areas stimulates out migration by more selective rural youth. Some of them migrate to improve their education and skill, while others move to towns dissatisfied with the prospects of rural life. The alternative view is that poor educational opportunities in rural areas encourage rural families particularly from wealthier class to send their children to urban areas with better schools and educational institutions. So, the question arises, whether the absence of education or its availability is responsible for generating rural-urban migration.

Government Policies

The policies of the State also have impact on the movement of people between the rural and the urban areas (Oberai and Singh, 1983; Rempel, 1996; Stark, 1982). The most significant among these are: (i) Policies fostering a concentrated growth of Industrial infrastructure in the towns. (ii) Import substitution programmes and (iii) Predominantly urban Social Service investments, which induce migration from the rural areas to the urban centres. Moreover leading international development agencies frequently adopt accommodation policies that aspire to improve the lot of migrants, which, in turn, induces rural-to-urban migration.

Constraints

It is sometimes said that risk avoidance is a major explanatory variable in the decision for rural-to-urban migration (Stark, 1982). The individual pursuing agricultural production has to bear some risk per period due to low immunity of traditional agriculture, variability in rainfall and weather conditions, plant disease, and attacks by pests etc. which affect both grown and stored crops. The low immunity is especially hazardous in the absence of institutional insurance arrangements.

On the other hand, if an individual migrates from the rural to the urban centre, he does not face the similar periodic risks. However, in the initial period, risks are very high in the urban centre since attempts to enter into high-paying sector may fail. Entry into low-paying sectors may be relatively easy. There is high probability of discontinuity of employment in it because it is vulnerable to market fluctuations and sometimes to eviction since it operates on unauthorised occupied land in some cases. But risks associated with urban employment diminish with time and may be relatively lower than the risk associated with agricultural production after some initial, high-risk period. Therefore, it is argued that a rural-to-urban migrant under such circumstances is one who attaches a premium to an early resolution of much of his life-long income associated risks and he trades in "medium-level" risks for immediate higher but thereafter lower risks (Ibid).

Rural-Urban Wage Differential

The people migrate for economic gain from poorer areas to richer areas. Difference in income or wage levels between the two places is significant variables affecting movement between two locations (Greenwood, 1975; Rempel, 1996; Yap, 1977). It is observed in some studies that when wage or per capita income differentials are included explicitly, the rate of migration increases with the size of the differential (Yap, 1977). However, if the notion of wage differences is interpreted normally as differences in money wage, the hypothesis that wage differences are the main determinants of migration has not been confirmed. If the notion of wage differences is interpreted as real wage differentials taking into account the difference in cost of living, various facilities, then the wage difference determining migration has been observed in empirical studies (Greenwood, 1975).

When viewed from the perspective of the rural household, the likelihood of migration of a household member varies directly with the household's perception of the level of income available in the urban centre and the perceived probability of being able to obtain such urban income. On the other hand, it varies inversely with the average level of the rural income and the equality of access to rural productive resources. (Rempel, 1996).

Underemployment & Rural Less Agricultural Income

Low agricultural income and agricultural unemployment and under employment in many developing countries are the major factors pushing migrants from rural areas to the areas with greater job opportunities (Oberai and Singh, 1983). The pressure of population, resulting in a high man-land ratio has been widely hypothesised as one of the important causes of poverty and rural out-migration. But, besides population pressures, the low rate of investment in agriculture, fragmentation of land ownership, inequalities in the distribution of land and rural productive assets allocate mechanisms which discriminate in favour of owner of wealth and a pattern of investment and technological change which is biased against labour are other important causes of poverty and rural out-migration.

There is unequal distribution of land and rural assets in most developing countries. Unequal distribution of land usually encourages large sized operational farms which have adverse consequences on manpower absorption. Further, it may have adverse effect on the rural income distribution. Thus, more the unequal distribution of land the greater would be the income and wealth inequalities which would further reduce the carrying capacity of land. The unequal distribution of income arising from an unequal distribution of productive assets is reinforced by the operation of the price mechanism due to the prevailing capital and labour market structure (Ibid).

For these trends, large landowners get richer while the small farmers who find the new technology expensive and more of a risk than traditional method are left behind. So many small farmers are compelled to sell out their land to large landowners and join the wage labour for work. Therefore, the continuation of the highly unequal ownership of land resulted in increased landlessness and near landlessness in many developing countries. These changes and consequent changes in social and economic relations induce many of the landless to migrate from their native places either to more prosperous rural areas or to the towns and cities (Ibid).

III. MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The informal sector of Bhubaneswar is dominated by the migrant workers since around 87 per cent of the informal sector (IS) workers are migrants. The study covered around 35 percent of the total migrant workers in the sample IS units in Bhubaneswar. The contribution of rural-urban migrant (RUM) workers is comparatively much larger (74 per cent) than other streams of migrant workers in the sample. However, all the migrant workers are hired workers(wage workers) in the sample. The migrant in Bhubaneswar's IS originated both within Orissa and from outside the state but those from outside Orissa have a negligible share (6 percent) within Orissa, the inter-district migrant workers have a higher share (72.34 per cent) compared to the intra-district migrant workers.

Migrant Labourers of Bhubaneswar

Even though Bhubaneswar was proposed to be a planned city, from the very beginning all its planning was contained within a radius of about two kms. Even after 50 years of existence, Bhubaneswar is a very concentrated city, its core being confined within a radius of two kms. To quote a study report by NCDS, "when Bhubaneswar was planned as the capital city of Orissa state soon after the post-war provincial government was installed, the real builders and sustainers of the city – the artisans, construction workers, utility service men, shop attendants, rickshaw pullers and daily workers – were not conceived as a permanent sector of the city's growing population".

Status

The migrant labourers of Bhubaneswar generally settle in the *Bastis* of various slums of the city and earn their livelihood in various activities like rickshaw pulling, petty trading, hawking, doing domestic jobs like house and utensil cleaning etc. Rest of them are daily labourers who choose their job generally in two ways.

Some of them are attached to some petty labour contractors who engage them in jobs of relatively long-term nature like construction. Almost all of them reside in the slums and the contractors pick them up from their slums. For over a given period they are somewhat assured of their job. The others are completely daily wagers who are not attached to any contractor. They generally are hired for the jobs of casual nature by common people and sometimes by petty labour contractors. Normally in the city, they reside in the half – constructed houses or on the verandahs of the shops and markets. Most of them commute daily from the nearby rural areas, by walking or by train, bus etc. Daily they stand in group on the road side in certain places of the city making themselves available for their intending individual employers for the day. The individual labourers get Rs.40 per day at the present rate (1998) and in case of hiring by the contractor at the end of the work the group share the contract amount equally among themselves and the amount they earn something more than the average daily wage.

Facts Responsible for Migration

It is gathered from the labourers that, lack of employment in the rural areas is the main reason for their migration to the capital city at so much cost, hardship and labour. Some of them report to have been forced to come to the city after starving for many days due to want of any type of employment in their area. For some others, it is the prospect of better wage that attracts them to the city. In their villages it is very difficult to earn even the minimum wage whereas in the town they are able to earn almost the double. Some of the daily wage workers are seasonable migrants. Whenever agricultural operation starts they go back to their village and during the off – season, they come back to the city in search of work. The havoc caused by the natural calamities to agriculture, like alternating flood and drought particularly, the last years severe drought in almost all over the state and this years flood in some parts has worsened the conditions of the rural poor forcing them to migrate to the cities.

According to a report of the government of Orissa, the other main reason for migration is the advance taken from labour contractor or their agents and repayment of household loans. One of the reasons for migration that has been revealed during the interaction with their labourers is the hesitation of the educated youths to do manual jobs. Some of the young labourers are educated up to matriculation or even beyond that. A few are even technically trained and skilled.

Activities Before Migration

More than 47 per cent of the UM workers were employed either in rural farm or non-farm activities before their migration to the IS of the capital town of Bhubaneswar. The migration of employed to the town's IS has increased up to the first half of 1980s and then declined. On the other hand, the migration of unemployed in search of jobs has increased since late 1970s.

Causes & Motives

Majority (55percent) of the sample RUM workers in the IS of Bhubaneswar have migrated due to their poverty, inadequate income, unemployment and under employment in their native places.(Table-1)The pull factors had also a role to play since around one-fifth of the RUM workers have been attracted towards the town by economic motives.(Table-1)Thus, the push factors are more important for migration of workers from rural areas to the capital town’s IS. Besides the push and pull factors, certain proportions of RUM workers (19 per cent) have migrated from rural areas following the primary migrants.

In Bhubaneswar also, it is the higher current money income in the town (in 19 per cent cases) compared to that in rural native places rather than more expected life-time income (only in 3 per cent cases) has significant role to play in the migration process of workers from rural areas to the town’s Informal Sector .(Table-1) Though only 19 per cent of RUM worker’s motive of migration was higher current money income, it is observed from the field data that more than one-third of the RUM worker’s current money income in the town at the time for migration was higher than that in the rural areas. Therefore, the expected life-time income hypothesis seems to have no validity in case of the IS of Bhubaneswar. The choice of the town’s IS by the migrants is mostly due to the presence of their family members or relatives in the town .(Table-2)

Mobility

There is mobility of workers within the Informal Sector (IS) since more than 36 per cent of the IS workers have actually moved from one unit to another unit in the same sub-sector .More over, it is observed that around one-third of the workers in the FS have come from the IS in the town .It is also found that the percentage of RUM workers coming from urban Informal Sector (IS) is higher in the later period . This shows that probability of getting jobs in the FS by the IS workers has been increasing in the capital town, may be due to the rapid expansions of the government / public / private sector establishments. The upward mobility of some non-sample workers from the IS to FS has also been observed in the town . At the same time, there is backward mobility of non-sample workers from the UIS to the rural IS or agricultural sector.

It is found that more than 90 per cent of the RUM workers are not fully satisfied with the present jobs .But all of them have not tried for better jobs. Only 52 per cent of them mostly in the sub-sectors of shops and commercial establishments have tried for movement either to better IS jobs or FS jobs. Thus, there is also potential mobility of the RUM workers in the town’s IS.

Table-1 Primary motive of Migration of Informal Sector Workers in Bhubaneswar Town

Sl. No	Period of Migration	R-U Migrants (No.)	No. of Migrants having following Motive							
			a	b	c	d	e	f	g	H
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1.	Upto 1970	2	2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
2.	1971-75	5	2	--	--	1	2	--	--	--
3.	1976-80	8	1	--	---	4	2	1	--	--
4.	1981-85	12	8	--	--	3	1	--	--	--
5.	1986-90	21	11	1	--	1	5	1	--	2
6.	1991-95	26	17	--	--	5	4	--	--	--
7.	All	74 (100.00)	41 (55.41)	1 (1.35)	--	14 (18.92)	14 (18.92)	2 (2.70)	--	2 (2.70)

Note: a = Inadequate income/poverty/unemployment etc. b = Opportunity for year round employment; c = Natural Calamities; d = Following Primary Migrants.e = Higher Current Money income; f = More expected life time income.G = Social Oppression; h = Others.(Figures in the parentheses are percentage of total migrants.)

Table-2 Choice of Town by the Workers in Bhubaneswar Informal Sector

Sl. No.	Period of Migration	R-U Migrants (Nos.)	No. of Migrants having following reason of the choice of town			
			a	b	c	d
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Upto 1970	2	--	2	--	--
2.	1971-75	5	--	4	1	--
3.	1976-80	8	--	6	1	1
4.	1981-85	12	--	11	--	1
5.	1986-90	21	5	15	--	1
6.	1991-95	26	5	10	2	9
7.	All	74	10	48	4	12

Note: Figures in the parentheses are percentage of total migrants. a = Nearer to the native; b = Presence of family members/relatives; c = Brought by the relatives/employers; d = Others (presence of natives etc.)

IV. CONCLUSION

Bhubaneswar is one of the fast growing cities in India has lost its earlier planned status due to massive growth of slum dwelling population and the increased informal sector activities in the recent years. The informal sector of Bhubaneswar is dominated by the migrant workers. The migrant labourers of Bhubaneswar usually settle in the *Bastis* of various slums to earn their livelihood in different activities in the city's informal sector. Some of them attached to petty labour contractors and majority of workers have migrated due to poverty, inadequate income, unemployment and under-employment. Both 'push' and 'pull' factors are responsible for rural-urban migration. In Bhubaneswar it is the higher current money income in the town compared to that in rural native places rather than more expected lifetime income only has significant role to play in the migration process.

There is mobility of workers within informal sector, little upward mobility from the IS to FS and there was backward mobility from the UIS to the rural agricultural sector. There is a strong link of RUM workers of the informal sector with their native rural places.

Notes: This article is based on one portion of my doctoral dissertation, '*Rural-Urban Migration of Workers, case Study of Slum Dwellers of Bhubaneswar*' for Utkal University, Vanivihar, from Nabakrushna Choudhury Centre For Development Studies, Bhubaneswar.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Greenwood, Michael J (1975), "Research on internal migration in the United States: A Survey," *Journal of Economic Literature*, vol. 13 No. 2 PP 397-433.
- [2]. Oberai, P.S. and Manmohan Singh, H.K. (1983), *Causes and Consequences of Internal Migration: A Study in the Indian Punjab*, Oxford University Press, Bombay.
- [3]. Rempel, Henry (1996), "Rural-to-Urban migration and urban informal activities", *Regional Development Dialogue*, vol. 17, No. 1 PP. 37-51.
- [4]. Samal, Kishor C. AND Srijit Mishra (1999) *Determinants of Rural-to-Urban Migration and Migrants in Destination: A review of issues*: *Nagarlok*, vol. 31, No. 1 Jan-Mar. PP 1-12.
- [5]. Stark, Oded (1982); "On Modelling the Informal Sector", *World Development*, Vol. 10, No. 5 pp. 413-416.
- [6]. Williamson, J.G. (1988); "Migration and Urbanisation", in H. Chenery and T.N. Srinivason (eds) *Handbook of Development Economics*, VOL. I, pp. 425-465.
- [7]. Yap, L (1977); "The Attraction of Cities: A Review of the Migration Literature", *Journal of Development Economics*, Vol. 4, No. 4, pp. 239-264.