

URBAN INDIA



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Special Issue on Migration

Overview of Migration

Seasonal Migration

Gendered Migration

Migrant Child Labour

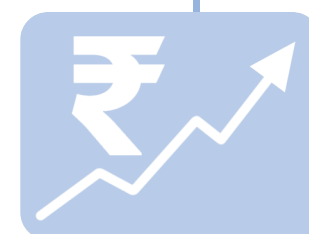
Job Search and Labour Market Outcomes

Migration and Conflict

Legal Aspects of Migration

Book Reviews

Workshops





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Debolina Kundu

Associate Guest Editor

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(Centre for Policy Research)

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- Research notes or book reviews must be not more than 4000 words.
- Graphs and charts need to be prepared in MS Office (Word/Excel) and not in jpeg or other formats.
- Full citation for all references and sources must be provided.
- Articles should be sent by email in MS Word format to the Editor, Urban India along with the declaration that the article is unpublished.
- Authors are requested to provide full details for correspondence (postal and email address).

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JOB SEARCH AND LABOUR MARKET CONDITIONS OF MIGRANTS AT THE DESTINATION: THE CASE OF LUCKNOW

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Abstract

Migration is an integral part of human development and internal migration is prominent in developing countries. Though migration theories have explained the movement of people from macro and individual perspective, not much attention is given on the process of job search and impediments faced by the migrant on account of the move. This paper highlights some of these aspects and sheds light on the problems faced by the migrants at the destination, their job search process, job mobility and other labour market issues. This study relies on the primary survey of migrants conducted at selected labour congregation points where migrants seek work within the capital city of Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh, India.

Introduction

In developing countries, migration is an integral part of the development process. The movement of workers in these countries is dominated by internal migration across regions, especially from rural to urban areas. There exists rich literature on theoretical and empirical aspects of this phenomenon, understanding it from a macro perspective (Harris and Todaro, 1970; Lewis, 1954) and as a household level decision making process (Stark, 1991). However, not much attention has been paid to the impediments faced by migrants on account of migration, especially from a local labour market perspective in developing countries (a few exceptions are Mosse et al., 2005; Rogaly and Rafique, 2003; Banerjee, 1983). This paper attempts to shed light on some of the problems faced by the migrants at the destination as well



as factors that impact their decision to migrate, such as job search process, job mobility and other labour market issues such as nature of jobs, contracts between workers and employers/contractors, wage disputes, etc. Specifically, the paper aims to highlight the process of job search, nature of employment available to migrants, some of the key problems faced by the migrants and effect of migration on the household and individual well being. The paper is based on the field study conducted by Grameen Development Studies (GDS) in Lucknow of the migrants from Eastern Uttar Pradesh and nearby states.

Some of the data collected includes:

Demographic and Socio-economic Information: Age, gender, family size, religion, caste, education.

Migrating in to Lucknow: Source location of migrants, duration of stay in Lucknow, destination prior to Lucknow, single or family migration, nature of work before migrating, reason for leaving previous job, reason for choosing Lucknow as destination, channel for migration, expected help from NGOs at destination.

Post-migration Experiences: Wait time before getting a job, main hurdles in Lucknow, type of work, amount of work available, issues with wage payments, health, financial inclusion/banking and IDs, problems with storing wages.

Connections with Source: Frequency of visits home, desire to return to village, average amount remitted, mode of remittance.

Demographic Profile of the Destination City

Lucknow is the capital of Uttar Pradesh, the largest state of India by population, situated in the northern plains of India. Lucknow Urban Agglomeration (LUA) became a million-plus city in 1981. Besides the areas under jurisdiction of the Lucknow Municipal Corporation, the agglomeration also includes the Lucknow Cantonment. In 2011, the population of the Lucknow Urban Agglomeration is at 29.02 lakhs (Table 1).



Table 1: Decadal Growth of Urban Agglomeration and Lucknow Municipal Corporation (1981- 2021)

Year	Lucknow Urban Agglomeration			Lucknow Municipal Corporation			Lucknow Cantonment		
	Population	Decadal Growth	Growth rate %	Population	Decadal Growth	Growth rate %	Population	Decadal Growth	Growth rate %
1981	1007604	193622	23.79	947990	173346	22.38	59614	20276	
1991	1669204	661600	65.66	1619116	671125	70.79	50089	-9525	-15.98
2001	2245509	576305	34.53	2185927	566811	35	59582	9493	18.95
2011	2902920	657411	29.3	2817105	631178	28.9	63003	3421	5.7
2021*	4500000	1597080	55.0	4440000	1622895	57.6	60000	-3003	-4.8

Source: Census of India

As per the Lucknow City Development Plan prepared in 2006, migration into Lucknow accounted for 36 percent increase in population from 1991 to 2001. Census 2001¹ estimates that in the last decade, Lucknow received 2,07,307 migrants, 56.6 percent of which were from rural areas. According to the census, 22 percent of the migrants from rural areas and 27 percent from urban areas cited 'employment' as the reason for migration. The other reasons for migration include business reasons, education opportunities, marriage etc.

Demographic and Socio-economic Profiles of Migrants

A preliminary survey by the GDS Migration team in 2012 at 52 labor congregation points (*chaurahas*) of Lucknow at Aliganj, Indira Nagar, Vikas Nagar, Gomti Nagar, Daliganj and Chowk helped inform the study. For this study, pockets of migrants were selected based on secondary sources of information and the response of total 399 respondents was collected. Among 399 families, there were 1246 males and 1267 females. The average family size is 6.29 members per family.

¹ City-specific migration data from Census 2011 is unavailable as yet



Table 2: List of Locations, Their Migrant Population and Samples Collected

Sl. no.	Place	Migrant labour strength	Location wise Sample
1.	Engineering College	900-1000	24
2.	Nishatganj	600-700	12
3.	Daaliganj	250-300	18
4.	C-Block, Indira nagar	250-300	24
5.	Balaganj	350-400	31
6.	LavkushNagar	250-300	14
7.	Rajajipuram	200-250	26
8.	Munshipuliya	200-250	24
9.	Chinhat	200-250	24
10.	NavinGallaMandi	250-300	14
11.	Patrakaarpuram	250-300	24
12.	DubaggaMandi	300-350	24
13.	Alambagh	300-400	25
14.	Aishbagh	200-250	20
15.	Gavari, Gomti Nagar	400-450	28
16.	Mithaivala Crossing Gomti Nagar	150-200	23
17.	Telibagh	300-350	21
18.	Shriram Tower	200-250	23
	TOTAL		399

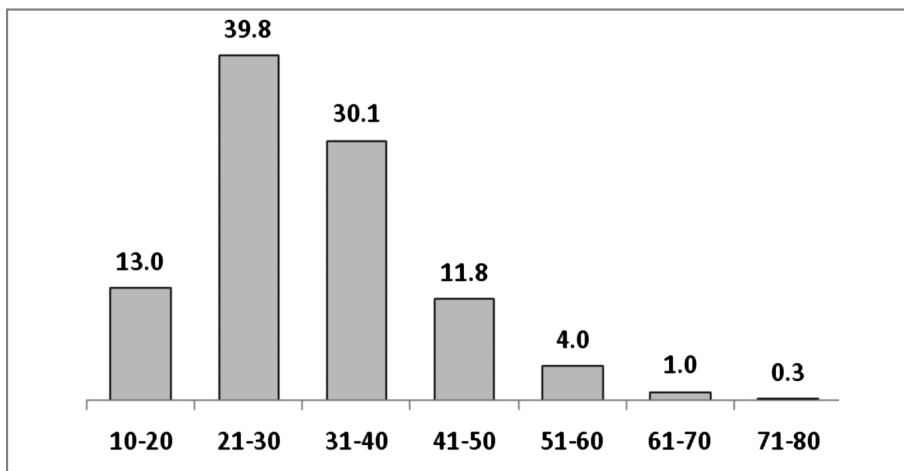
Source: Author(s)', 2012

Age

The age distribution of the respondents was between 14-80 years and 70 percent of sampled migrants were in the age group 21 to 40 years (Figure 1).



**Figure 1: Age-wise Distribution of Surveyed Migrants in Lucknow
(in percentage)**

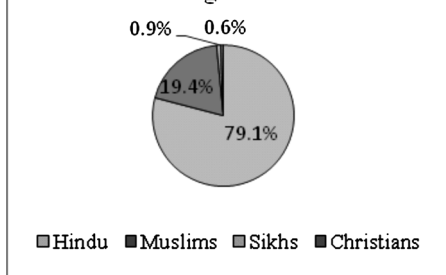


Source: Authors', 2012

Religion and Caste

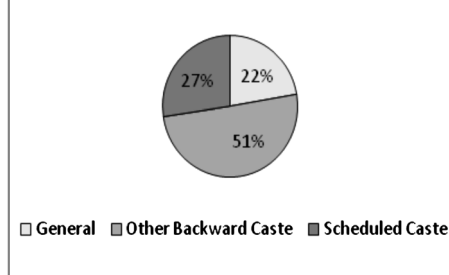
Majority of the migrants are Hindu, followed by Muslims. It is clear from the data that migration is higher among the OBC and SC communities. One possible reason could be that they have small land holding size as well as weaker economic conditions than individuals from the general category (Figure 2 and 3).

Figure 2: Religious Composition of the Migrants



Source: Authors', 2012

Figure 3: Distribution of the Migrants by Social Groups





Education

In the sample, 42.1 percent are illiterate and the rest (57.9 percent) are literate. Most migrants who attended school have done so only until primary or middle school levels (Table 3). Illiterate and poorly educated migrants are compelled to work for wage labour and have little knowledge of their rights and entitlements.

Table 3: Educational Attainments of the Migrants in Lucknow

Illiteracy/Literacy Rate	Sample	Percentage
Illiterate	168	42.1
Literate	231	57.9
Total Migrants	399	100.0
Literacy Level		
Literate (reading/writing)	69	29.9
Primary school	71	30.7
Upper primary school	48	20.8
High school	31	13.4
Intermediate level	9	3.9
Graduate	2	0.9
Post graduate	1	0.4
Total Literates	231	100.0

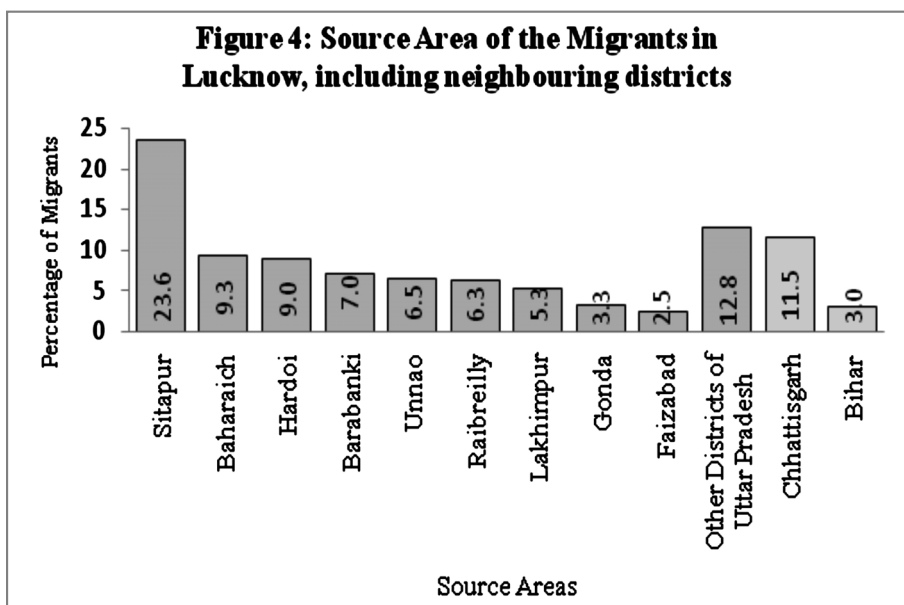
Source: Authors', 2012

Migrating to Lucknow

Source Location of Migrants

People migrate from their hometown to different destinations in search of work. The majority of migration into Lucknow city is intra state migration i.e. from the other districts of Uttar Pradesh, especially from adjacent districts (like Sitapur, Unnao, Hardoi and Barabanki) and comparatively backward districts of the state². This suggests the distress nature of migration induced by the lack of employment opportunities at the source location (Figure 4).

²Most of the source districts are being aided by the Backward Region Grant Fund of the Panchayati Raj Ministry



Source: Authors', 2012

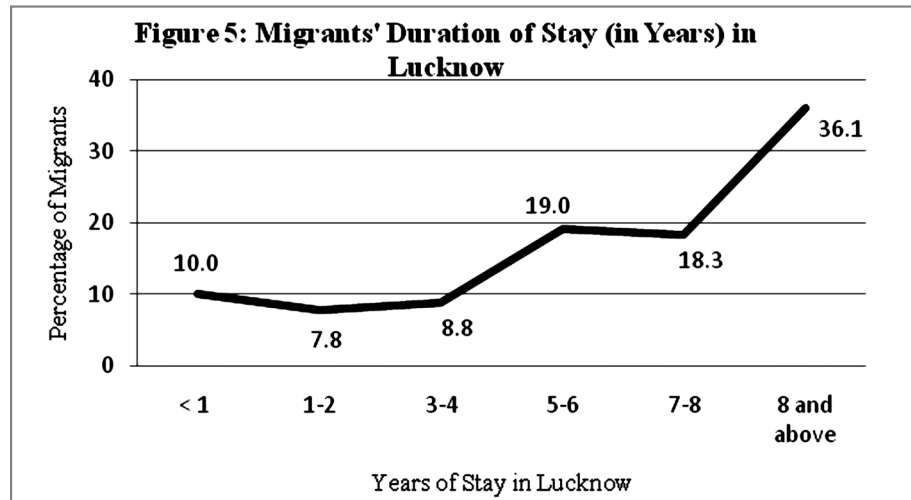
NOTE: Other than Chhattisgarh and Bihar, migrants were largely from different districts of Uttar Pradesh, viz. Bareilly, Azamgarh, Fatehpur, Jaunpur, Siddharthnagar, Sultanpur, Mau, Basti, Balrampur, Mainpuri, Gorakhpur.

Single or Family Migration

Many people migrate alone because of the initial uncertainties at destination, such as improper living conditions or earning opportunities. The data shows 55.63 percent of the respondents are living alone and 44.36 percent are living with their families.



Duration of Stay in Lucknow



Source: Authors', 2012

Migrants in the sample seem to have migrated to Lucknow at various periods of time, with 73.4 percent having stayed over five years (Figure 5). Though the data on this is not conclusive, it appears that those who have stayed in Lucknow for long periods of time are migrants from neighbouring districts.

Destination Prior to Lucknow

Approximately 82.2 percent respondents reported that they visited Lucknow first and are still working in Lucknow. A number of respondents (87) had already been migrants prior to the visit to the Lucknow. One of the destinations visited by the migrants (6.26 percent) prior to Lucknow was Delhi. Others reported a prior visit to Punjab, Maharashtra, Chandigarh, Gorakhpur, Surat, Kanpur and also few other districts of Uttar Pradesh.

Reason for Leaving Previous Job

Of the 87 experienced migrants, 30 percent left their earlier work due to insufficient wages, 20 percent because work was very far from their residence location, 17 percent due to their dislike for the work, and 13 percent due to non-availability of work. Other reasons were bad behaviour of employer,

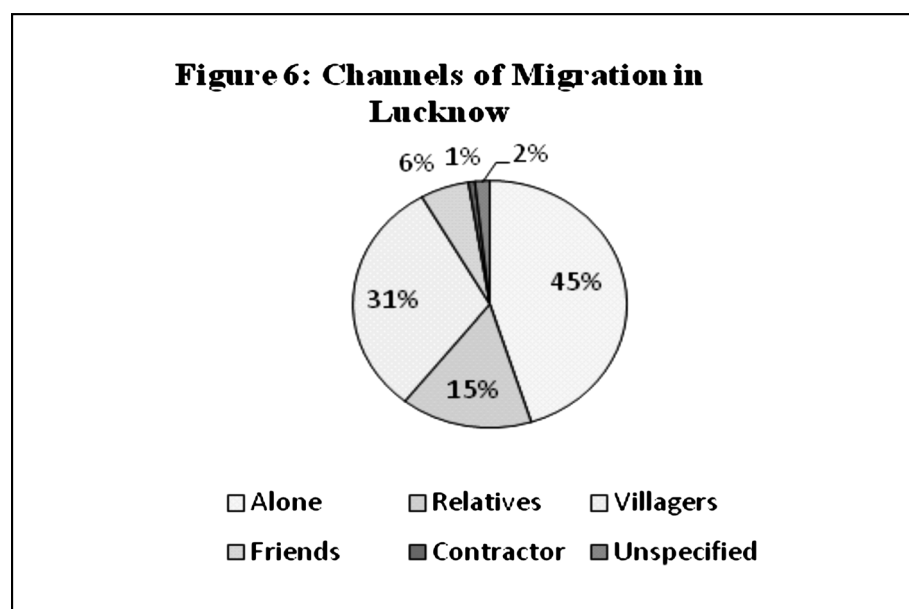


children's issues, high expense, closure of workplaces, health reasons and some followed their friends from one workplace to another.

Reason for Choosing Lucknow as Destination

A total of 355 respondents (88.97 percent) reported selecting Lucknow as migration destination for higher wages, while 23 respondents (5.76 percent) did so because of regular income. Other reported reasons were wages not being given in cash in the village, migration for better future of children in city, better basic facilities, to offset poverty and because of harassment by employer.

Channels of Migration: Role of Friends and Social Networks



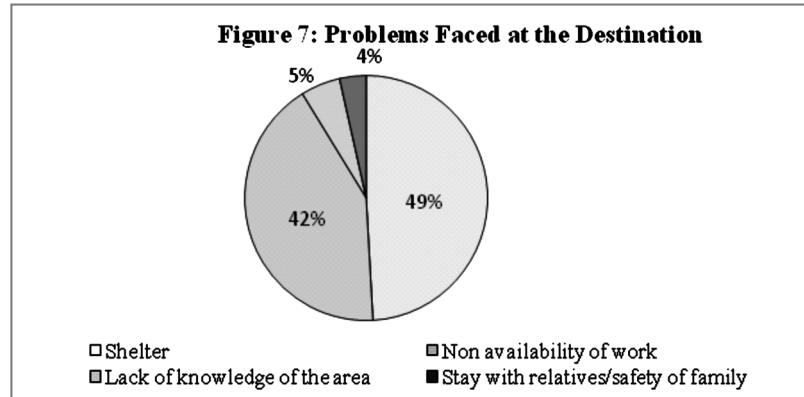
Source: Authors', 2012

In our sample, around 50 percent of respondents migrated with the aid of their family, friends or villagers which together form the social network of the migrants at the destination. Mostly they have fewer livelihood options at source and they reported increased opportunity for employment in the city (Figure 6).



Experiences While Working in Lucknow

Hurdles Faced Post Migration



Source: Authors', 2012

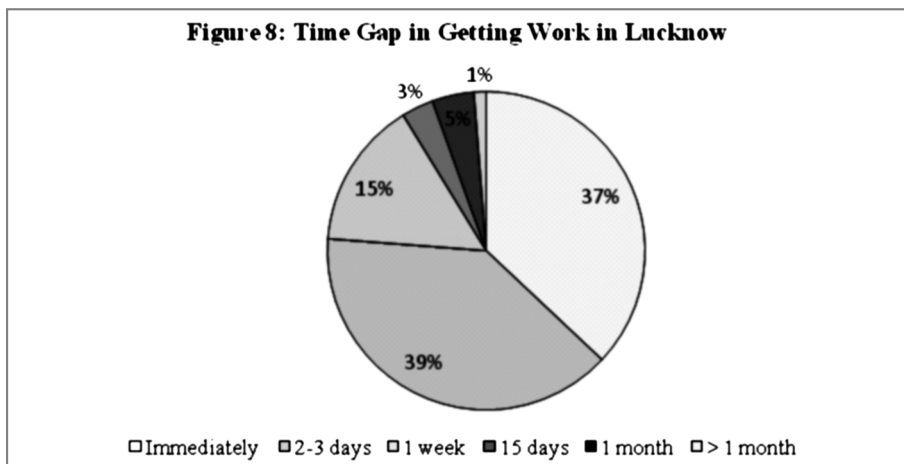
The migrant faces several hurdles during the process of moving from source to destination. Of the different types of problems they face after reaching the destination, the main are finding work and shelter (49.12 percent) and non-availability of work (42.10 percent). Not only do the migrants face problems on coming to the destination, they also face harassment and exploitation at their workplace. There are a number of other problems migrants face like less wages, irregular wages, payments not made on time, derogatory behaviour of the employers, excess work, safety and security concerns, health and sanitation facilities, children's education, loneliness, no proper source of drinking water, electricity, physical and mental harassment, etc (Figure 7).

Migrants mostly live with their relatives/friends on arrival at destination. Seasonal migrants bring rations of food items from their native villages such as *atta*, *dal* and some amount of money to sustain and for search of job at destination. Multiple deprivations and difficulties in measuring poverty make it challenging to understand the impact of migration on reduction of poverty. However, the study finds that the overall impact of migration in terms of being able to repay debts faster, to eat more regularly, to spend on education, health, agriculture and housing and to borrow large sums when needed has been positive and has raised the social and economic status of migrant households. These positive impacts come at a cost, because migration increases the risk of injury and exposure to disease and noxious substances, as well as the negative impacts of long-term separation from family.



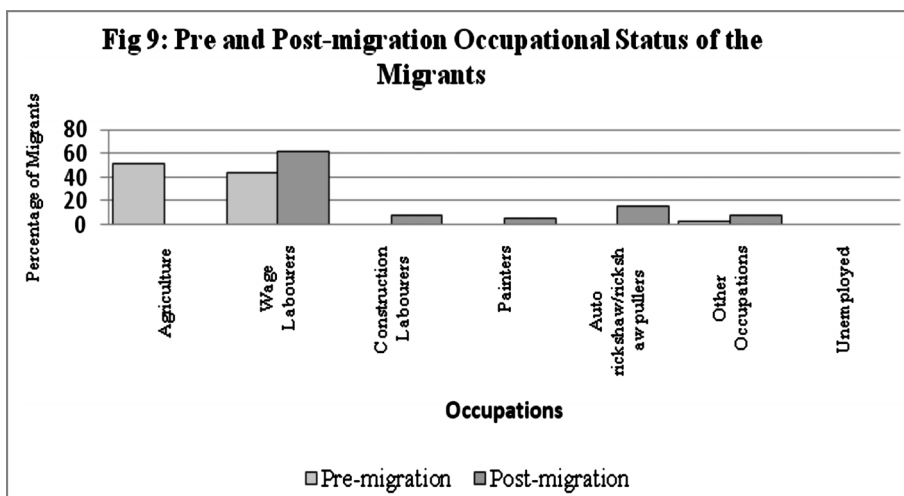
Job Search Duration at Destination after Migration

While the majority of migrants get a job immediately or within a week, some migrants end up waiting for a month or more before finding work. This drains into their meagre resources (Figure 8).



Source: Authors', 2012

Change in Occupation: Pre- and Post-migration



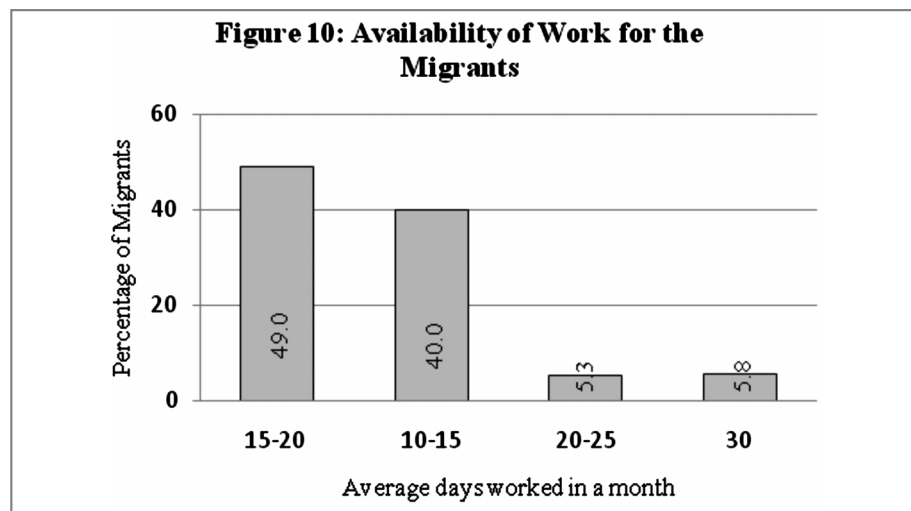
Source: Authors', 2012



While most migrants were involved in agricultural work before coming to Lucknow, with a few working as driver, mason, rickshaw puller, teacher, vendor, weaver and other trades, there is a diversity of occupations post-migration. At the destination, 62.64 percent are daily wage labourers, while construction work, painting work, rickshaw pulling, auto rickshaw driving and vending are other occupations in order of decreasing incidence. It is not necessary that the work they are doing presently is the same as they were involved in when they came to Lucknow. A number of respondents have said that they also learn skills while working.

This shows that the decision to migrate can be on account of livelihood diversification strategy, or because of distress/non availability of jobs at the earlier workplace location. While migrating for the first time, the migrants start working without any particular choice of work as suggested by their friends/relatives, but after some time they become aware about the labour market and start trying to find new better paying jobs, often changing trade and jobs to take advantage of prevalent labour market conditions. They also consider the quality of their working environment while making these decisions. Migrants reported feeling lonely in new locations. They prefer to work at the sites where their relatives/friends are already working.

Availability of Work for the Migrants



Source: Authors', 2012



On an average, migrants get 15-20 days of work in a month. Many of the migrants mentioned that social ties and networks played a very important role in searching for jobs at destination as well as getting regular employment. Once at the destination, migrants develop relationships with other migrants and start to live in a group. The group helps each other in looking for jobs. It was observed that when the migrants are working at one location, they also constantly remain in search of better jobs and also potential job locations to avoid or shorten the duration of unemployment (Figure 10).

Disputes and Untimely Payment of Wages

Migrants also face disputes over wage payment at the destination. Only 5 respondents (1.25 percent) said they get wages before time, 301 respondents (75.46 percent) reported that they got full wages as agreed by the employers, 90 respondents (22.55 percent) reported that they sometimes get lower wages than as agreed by the employer at the time of hiring and 3 respondents (0.75 percent) reported deduction in their payment due to various reasons like they were hired late from labour pick up points, not full time work, somehow work is not properly done by the worker, etc.

Box 1: Case Study of Wage Disputes Faced by Migrants

One incident that was brought to the light of Shramik Sahayata Kendra (2SK) involved 30 interstate migrants including 24 males and 6 females from Chhattisgarh. All the males were engaged in construction work as masons while females worked as construction labour and they resided in an unauthorized colony in Lucknow city. A local contractor had employed these migrants on behalf of a construction company. Most male migrants had a long association of working under the above contractor but no dispute had arisen with anyone for payment of wages before. For this particular work, all the labourers started working at the allotted site and after 10 days, the full payment of wages was made to all of them. Unfortunately, the local contractor was injured in a road accident and his left leg got fractured. On the next morning, when the labourers came to know about his accident, they stopped working at site. Two days passed by and the designated engineer contacted these migrant labourers appealing to start their work and assured them of full payment of wages while informing them that the contractor was merely assigned to look after the recruitment of construction workers. On getting fully assured of payment of wages, all



the labourers resumed their work and worked for 25 days. During this period, the engineer made some advances to them but he withheld the payment of balance wages amounting to over Rupees one lakh in total. On completion of the work at site, the labourers started asking for payment of their wages but he did not kept his commitment, communicating them that the wages would be paid by the contractor himself as per agreement executed between him and the construction company. He further alleged no payment of wages is possible without approval from the contractor. Ultimately, the labourers contacted the local contractor and asked for their wages but he flatly refused them payment saying that the liability of payment falls on those who engaged them in work. Disappointed with the situation, most of the laborers started working at other sites.

After four months, the case of denial of payment of wages of Rs. 1.10 lakhs to migrant labourers was brought to 2SK's notice. Having reviewed the case, 2SK members contacted the construction company and the concerned contractor. Initially, the employer continued denying payment but rigorous efforts and evidences enabled 2SK to establish that a due balance of unpaid wages of Rs. 99,000/- did exist. After two months, the management promised to pay wages to 12 labourers and the payment of Rs. 49000 was made to them with some delay. Despite several rounds of discussions, the contractor refused to pay workers until his dues were cleared by the construction company. The Management asked him to furnish all necessary documents, which took a period of two months, but still the payment was detained. Assessing the situation, 2SK warned the management to bring this to legal processes and media. Keeping in view the exigency, the Management had an emergency meeting and released the remaining amount of Rs. 50000/- to labourers in the presence of contractor on the same day. It was very motivating for the migrant labourers to be actively involved with 2SK and succeed in getting justice. Workers were eager take up the cause of wage disputes with other groups of migrant worker.

Health Hazards among the Migrants

The study reveals the incidence of different seasonal and chronic diseases owing to living in unhygienic conditions with no basic facilities at workplace, dwelling and also improper food habits. Their earnings being on daily wage basis, they need to save some money for their family and because of high fees of doctors they prefer to go to quacks. Most of the illnesses relate to



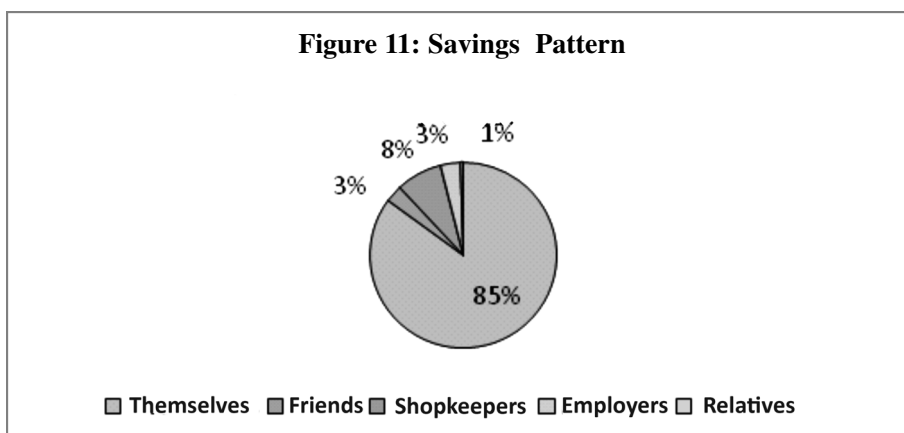
poor hygienic conditions and food habits. The study found that 57 respondents were affected with health problems at their work place and 27 at their residence location. The main illnesses reported are stomach infection among 25 respondents, fever among 10 respondents, cough and cold among 8 respondents, TB among 7 respondents, skin diseases among 5, anaemia among 2 respondents, diarrhoea in 1 respondent and 28 respondents reported other health problems like seasonal diseases.

Other Problems at the Workplace

Not only do the migrants face problems on coming to the destination, they also face harassment and exploitation at their workplace. There are a number of problems that are faced by migrants like derogatory behaviour of the employers, excess work, discrimination at the workplace based on caste, regional identity and other factors, safety and security concerns, health and sanitation facilities, children's education, loneliness, no proper source of drinking water, electricity, physical and mental harassment and no shelter for rest.

Risk of Theft or Loss of Savings

Largely, migrants carry their savings at destination on their person (85.46 percent) while others deposit money with friends, shopkeepers, their employers or relatives (Figure 11).



Source: Authors', 2012



The study has found that as the saving increases over several months, the risks of safekeeping are of different nature. Migrants felt that theft was a major issue in keeping money safe (67.91 percent) and trusting others with such large sum of money, while others (19.54 percent) expressed concerns about the risk of pick pockets and theft if they keep it with themselves, while some (12.28 percent) feared anti-social elements and fear of police harassment for money (0.25 percent).

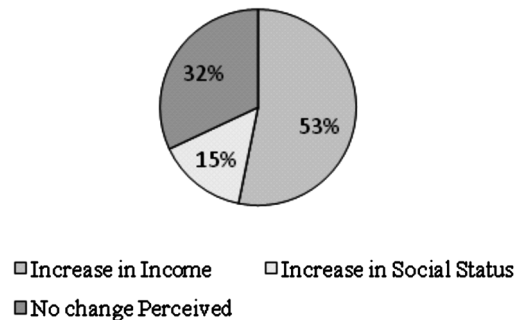
Migrants from nearby districts of Lucknow visit their villages frequently (weekly or fortnightly) and don't feel the need to open a bank account in Lucknow; however, the others were unable to open bank or post office savings accounts owing to lack of identity cards or proof of residence in Lucknow³. Migrants also were inhibited by the need for a minimum balance.

About 35.58 percent stated that they don't want to open a bank account, while only 2 percent have their bank accounts. Overall, migrants rely on social ties, friends and relatives to keep their money safe and are often cheated in the process.

Impact of Migration on Income

Even though there are numerous problems faced by migrants at the destination, the benefits from migration appear to outweigh the problems and induce individuals to migrate despite the hurdles faced. Migrants reported increase in income and enhanced social status post migration, though many were unable to perceive a difference at all.

Figure 12: Impact of Migration



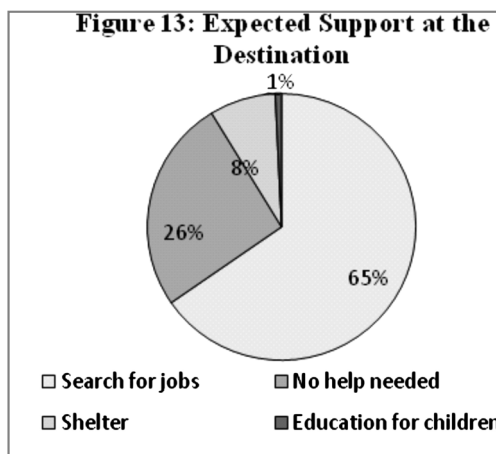
Source: Authors', 2012

³ Banks were not pro-active about opening no frills accounts and the few who did so were not interested in servicing such customers.



Expected Support at Destination

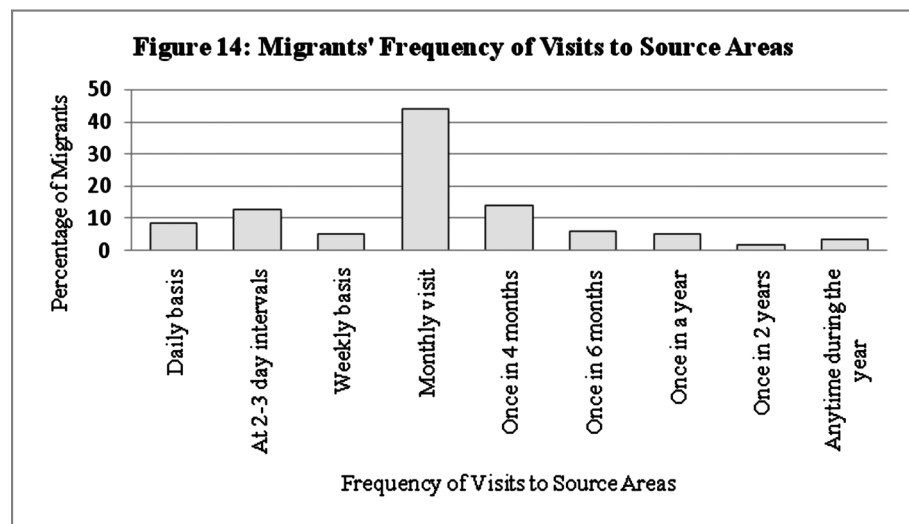
Further, when asked the question, what kind of help they would require at destination, if government or other parties such as NGOs were willing to help them? Responses indicate the need for organisations that can assist migrants find employment as well as help in terms of availability of shelter education of their children (Figure 13).



Source: Authors', 2012

Connections with Source

Visits to Source

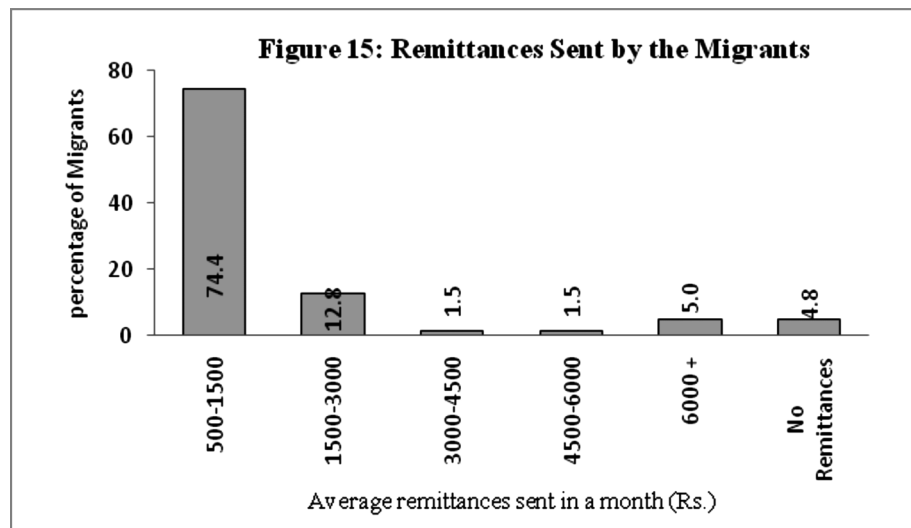


Source: Authors', 2012



The frequencies vary from daily commuters to those who visited once in 2 years, however the largest bracket was those who visited monthly (44 percent). In Lucknow, majority of labourers come from neighbouring districts, because of regular and cheap availability of transport they can go back home in the evening. They are those labourers who work on a daily wage basis. Those who get jobs for one week at a time or 15 days stay there and go back only after completion. They live either at the workplace, footpaths, or under bridges etc. without any basic facilities like drinking water or toilets (Figure 14).

Remittances and Channels Used



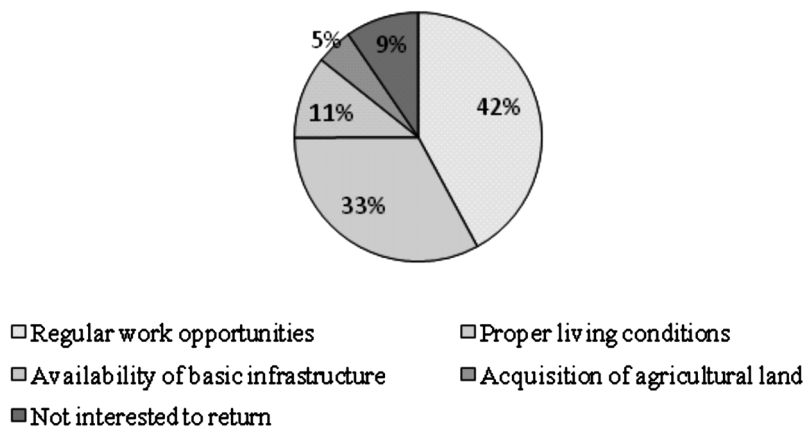
Source: Authors', 2012

Majority of migrants (74.43 percent) send approximately Rs. 500-1500 per month to their family (Figure 15). While looking at the processes followed for sending money to their families, the study found 5 different channels i.e. carrying by self, through bank, by money order, with relatives and through friends. Most migrants (94.48 percent) carry money with themselves as they are able to visit their villages often, while others send money through friends or relatives and via money order. Only 0.5 percent stated that they are sending money through bank.



Willingness to Return to Source

Figure 16: Willingness to Return to Source Areas



Source: Authors', 2012

Migrants were willing to go back to their native villages if employment opportunities and basic facilities drinking water, access to market, electricity, schools, etc were available at the source. There were also those who were unwilling to return and some cited their children's education in the city as a reason to not return (Figure 16).

Conclusion

In summation, the study found that the majority of the individuals who migrate to Lucknow are poorly educated single males in the most productive age group of 21-40 years. In the sampled migrants, around 80 percent have been visiting to Lucknow for work regularly over years and around 35 percent of them are living in Lucknow for more than eight years.

Most of the migrants are from the nearby districts of Lucknow and had transitioned from being employed in agriculture in the village to informal work, largely wage labour, in the city. More than three fourth of the migrants are engaged in construction work either as labourers or as masons. Work is



not steadily available and around half of the sampled migrants get only 15-20 days of employment in a month, others even less than that.

Migrants reported poor living and working conditions in the city that put them at risk of injuries and poor health. Disputes over wages, payment of lower wages than agreed upon and theft of money are common. Though remittances are regular and usually within the range of Rs 500-1500, migrants do not use formal channels like banking, instead carrying cash back home personally or sending it through friends and relations.

The migrant workers in the study, most living alone in the city, had strong relations with families left behind in the village, going back daily or visiting them weekly or fortnightly. Importantly, despite the majority reporting an increase in income or social status because of migration, most of the migrants were keen to go back to their native villages if assured better living conditions and job opportunities at their source locations. This suggests that the nature of migration in our sample was on account of poor opportunities in their villages. Especially for first time migrants, we can say that it is distress migration. Further, for the seasonal and experienced migrant, it is the better nature of jobs and higher wages that is the main motivation for migration to Lucknow.

The study shows that while there are many problems faced by individuals in the process of migration, different agents act as catalyst and lubricants to smooth this migration phenomenon. In the initial stage, it is friends, family, relatives, same village migrants and same state migrants who play an important role in helping migrants settle at the destination. They provide shelter, information about jobs as well as job referrals. Then there are various contractors and middlemen that act as a linkage between the migrant worker and the employers. On some occasions, these middlemen harass the workers by holding their payments, giving lower wages than paid by the employer; but occasionally they also help the migrants in finding jobs, acting as local guardians, helping them in finding affordable shelter and also reducing the risk of fraud and non-payment by the employer. Lastly there are various non-governmental agencies and organizations such as NGOs that help migrants through awareness campaigns, help centres and providing them institutional support in case of fraud, cheating and non-payment of wages, discrimination at work etc.



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