

URBAN INDIA



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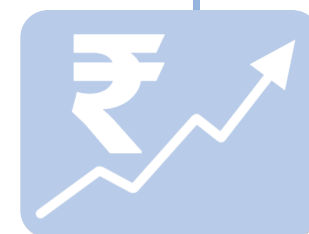


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National Institute of Urban Affairs

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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- 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should be sent by email in MS Word format to the Editor, Urban India along with the declaration that the article is unpublished.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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MIGRATION AND CONFLICT IN THE MEGA CITY: A STUDY OF MIGRANTS IN HYDERABAD¹

**Triveni Goswami Vernal, Bagmi Priyadarshini,
Sayeed Nayeem, P. Raghavendra**

Yugantar (Hyderabad)

Abstract

Migration is a historical phenomenon and an integral part of human existence. While spatial movement had resulted in diversity and multiculturalism, the inflow of migrants has led to the formation of informal settlements in the peripheral limits of the city. In these areas, migrants struggle to establish a foothold in a new social space. Questions of identity begin to acquire a new meaning for migrants in such a scenario, and kinship and friendship ties emerge as significant social institutions for them. The present study looks at the labour market conditions and experiences of migrants in Hyderabad.

Introduction

Migration has been an integral part of the interaction of humans with their environment. The magnitude of migration in the globalized world and its repercussions for sending and receiving countries/communities received enormous attention when the Human Development Report, 2009 took up the theme of 'Overcoming Barriers: Human Mobility and Development'. Internal migration can be defined as "a population shift occurring within national or territorial boundaries, often characterized by persons seeking labour opportunities in more advantageous areas²." While scholars agree that migration is an important route out of poverty, social scientists are still learning to what extent it actually helps in alleviating conditions of poverty. There are significant problems in defining and conceptualizing the issue of migration within India. Deshingkar and Akter (2009) have critiqued the existing data on

¹ The study was carried out by Yugantar with the support of SDTT, Mumbai, 2011.

² Definitions from the Britannica Concise Encyclopaedia and Wikipedia.org, Accessed from the website <http://www.answers.com/topic/kinship> on Jan 19, 2011.



migration (NSS and Census) as not being representative of the true picture of migration in India. Ram B. Bhagat (2005) brings forward the difficulties associated with using the concept of migration during enumeration as the definitions are so varied. Compounding the problem, the Census and the other instruments of enumeration often do not include in its fold the various migrations that take place due to social factors, thus limiting the scope of capturing internal migration in its true essence.

Seasonal distress migration and its consequences have been particularly difficult to understand in the absence of data. Deshingkar (2006) has indicated an increase in temporary and circular migration streams throughout Asia, arguing that the potential benefits of internal migration are not being fully realized because of an inadequate understanding of migration patterns (especially temporary and circular migration), continuing policy barriers to population movement, urban middle class attitudes, social exclusion on the basis of ethnicity, caste, tribe and gender and poor enforcement of legislation meant to protect the rights of the poor. Deshingkar et al. (2006) have pointed out the risks associated with migration for the poor—financial (loss of money by not having a bank account) as well as social (loneliness, poverty, poor labour standards, exposure to hazards at work, etc.).

Several credible organisations have shed light on the reasons for distress migration and the poor working and living conditions of migrant labour that are further compounded by illegal contractual terms. According to IOM, “In the case of most intra-state and inter-state unskilled and semi-skilled migrants, migrant labourers run high risks of exploitation for they are exposed to large uncertainties and lack access to information and knowledge, thus making it very difficult for them to switch jobs in case of dissatisfaction with the current employer. Because of their option-less situation, these labourers lack bargaining power and thereby fail to negotiate reasonable pay scales and fair working conditions with the contractors”³. Apart from this, most migrant labourers have no access to ration cards; they lack basic civic amenities; children’s education gets affected and they are often excluded from community-based interventions.

³ Accessed from http://www.iomindia.in/migration_in_india.html on December 4, 2009



Migrants, Cities and Urban Governance

A city is a chaotic maze of a cross pollination of experiences, a diverse space and a vibrant setting for the emergence of multi-layered identities. Saskia Sassen describes cities as “nerve centres” of globalization where the challenges associated with the globalization processes tend to converge⁴. The 64th Round of National Sample Survey (2007-8) has stated that 3.3 percent of urban households in India belong to the migrant category. An article in the New York Times⁵ describes how “Indian government tried to discourage migration to cities by making city life unaffordable and unbearable for new arrivals” driven by a centrally planned, socialist approach to development. “But rural Indians have voted against these notions with their feet,” the article says, alluding to migration, which has stretched the already deficient urban infrastructure.

A fresh look at urban governance that focuses on strengthening local institutions and involving the population at the local level, thereby allowing for the creation of socially sustainable environments, a strong spatial component and integrated multi-sectoral strategies Lucinda Fonseca (2004) is required to better manage the city. Balbo and Marconi (2005) point out that migration is often viewed as a security issue and hence, the consequences of migration fall onto local governments who need to cope with the demands arising from the new population settling within their city limits. Lack of coordination among and within the many levels of governments operating within the city or metropolitan boundaries adds to the limited capacity to manage the issue.

Hyderabad: Negotiating Multiple Realities

Rooted in a rich cultural past Hyderabad, the capital of Andhra Pradesh, has steadily grown with time and expanded its outer limits to accommodate people, cultures and new traditions along the way. The IT revolution in the 1990s brought in its wake a boom in the infrastructural industries and real estate sectors. This resulted in a huge demand for labour and subsequently, there has been a steady stream of migrants into the city. The total number of migrants to the Hyderabad Urban Agglomeration has trebled from 3-9 lakhs during the period 1991-2001 (Iyer, Kulkarni and Raghavaswamy, 2007).

⁴ Interview with Prof. Saskia Sassen in the Berlin Summer Dialogue on 2-3 September, 2010 .

⁵ *New Arrivals Strain India's Cities to Breaking Point*, New York Times (Nov 30, 2010).



The literature suggests that it is predominantly poor people who migrate to large cities for work. They lack education and skills and tend to crowd in informal settlements in the peripheral limits of the city. Here their lives become embedded in a multi-cultural space and questions of identity acquire new meanings for them over time. For migrants who are trying to establish a foothold in a new social space, kinship and friendship ties have emerged as significant social institutions. This is also seen in Hyderabad in their mode of finding work at the 200+ *labouraddas*, major road junctions where migrant labourers gather in the morning to look for work. Risks associated with finding sustained work, low wage rates and exploitation (Sircar, 2004) points to the vulnerability of migrants and loopholes in the legal framework. Women and children of migrant families particularly face specific vulnerabilities in the city⁶.

Objectives

The main aim of the paper is to:

- Identify the locations of the migrant communities in Hyderabad.
- Develop profiles of migrant workers including socio-demographic indicators, main sectors of employment, terms of employment, recruitment methods/networks, etc.
- Find out the basic facilities available to migrants in terms of shelter, health and financial services etc.

Some of the issues to be explored are the role of social networks amongst the migrants; reasons for migration; transition that the migrant makes to a metropolitan city (pressures on the familial ties/adjustment to a new life/insecurities and fears); relation with the resident communities (tensions/conflict/amity); and means of retaining their own identity.

Methodology

Structured questionnaires were used in the study to understand the livelihood/occupational profile of migrants from various parts of India in Hyderabad.

⁶ *Ankuram Women and Child Development Society*, a Hyderabad based NGO, carried out a 4 year (2006 to 2009) action research on migrant women and children in the labour addas in the city, with support from UNIFEM.



In order to capture the extent of migration in Hyderabad and explore the conditions of the migrants in the city, qualitative methodologies were adopted to collate the data. The study in Hyderabad comprised of four sets of migrant population—three sets of location-based migrant population (in Sultan Shahi, Nallakunta and Sayed Nagar) and one set of region-based migrant population (Oriya migrants).

The aim of the study was to understand the experiences of migrants who were engaged in livelihoods in the unorganized sector. The focus of the study was on understanding migration as a coping strategy. The study was thus limited to individuals from the lower socio-economic strata, but in many locations, we also included contractors who were migrants themselves and had started off their work life as a low income migrants, but gradually managed to expand their businesses over the years to become contractors, and later recruit migrant labourers from their own villages, to work with them.

Sample

Keeping in mind the qualitative nature of the study, the sample covered a small section of migrants in each of the three chosen areas. Through the combined usage of personal interviews and Focused Group Discussions (FGDs), a total of 83 respondents were selected.

Sultan Sahi: Located near the Old City in Hyderabad, Sultan Sahi has a mix of migrants from all over India but mostly coming from the states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal. The majority of the migrants in this location are engaged in traditional family occupations like footwear making, zardozi embroidery, threadwork, bangle making etc. Personal interviews and a FGD were conducted with 22 migrants and 6 child migrant workers respectively in this area.

Sayed Nagar: Sayed Nagar, located near Banjara Hills, has a sizeable population of migrants mainly from Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Maharashtra. The migrants are engaged in various livelihoods in the informal sector as carpenters, plumbers, hotel boys, PoP/false ceiling workers, daily wage labourers, construction workers etc. Personal interviews were conducted with 26 respondents in Sayed Nagar.



Nallakunta: Nallakunta is located near Vidyanagar in the eastern part of Hyderabad. The group of migrants in Nallakunta came from Lucknow and was engaged in zardozi work, for a limited duration every year. They would come to Hyderabad during the lean season in Lucknow when orders for chikan embroidery would thin out. A FGD was carried out with 7 of these migrants.

Ferozeguda, Gandhinagar and Balanagar: These areas are adjacent to each other and are situated in close proximity to the Cantonment area in Secunderabad. The migrant communities in these areas mostly came from Orissa who are engaged in diverse occupations. Personal interviews were carried out with 22 individuals across these three localities.

To examine the pattern of migration in Hyderabad, the paper is divided into five sections. The first section provides a background picture of migration, discusses the objectives and methodology used in the study. The second segment looks at migrants' socio-demographic profile, reasons of migration and the influence of household decision in migration process. The third section delves to understand the labour market particulars of the migrants and financial inclusions like income, expenditure, remittances etc. The fourth part gives an account of challenges faced by the migrants at the destination in terms of access to basic amenities; social cohesion and contestation with the locals. The fifth part highlights the emerging themes, limitations of the study and makes recommendations for inclusion of migrant workers in the cit.

Socio-economic Characteristics of Migrants

The migrants exhibit much variety amongst themselves. A detailed profile of their demographic, social and economic attributes gives useful insights as discussed in Table 1.

Gender Composition: Only 6 percent of the respondents are female, rest are male.

Age Composition: Most of the migrants are young. About one-fourth and one-third of the respondents belong to 18-25 and 26-32 years of age.

Religious and Social Groups: Of all the migrants interviewed, majority were Hindus (75.70 percent), followed by Muslims (22.86 percent). Presence of



Christian migrants was miniscule. Among the Hindu respondents, migrants are primarily drawn from Scheduled Caste (58.49 percent), mostly Chamars and Harijans.

Table 1: Demographic and Social Characteristics of the Migrants in Hyderabad (Total Sample= 70)

| | Percentage |
|---|------------|
| Total Migrants | 100.00 |
| Male | 94.29 |
| Female | 5.71 |
| Age Composition | |
| Below 18 | 7.10 |
| 18-25 | 25.70 |
| 26-32 | 32.90 |
| 33-39 | 20.00 |
| 40 years and above | 12.90 |
| Age not reported | 1.40 |
| Religion | |
| Hinduism | 75.71 |
| Islam | 22.86 |
| Christianity | 1.43 |
| Educational Standard Attained | |
| Illiterate | 25.70 |
| Primary (1 st to 5 th) | 12.90 |
| Middle and Secondary (6 th to 10 th) | 48.50 |
| Higher Secondary (11 th , 12 th) | 8.60 |
| Graduate and above | 1.40 |
| Others (School Drop outs , no response) | 2.90 |
| Total Migrants | 100.00 |

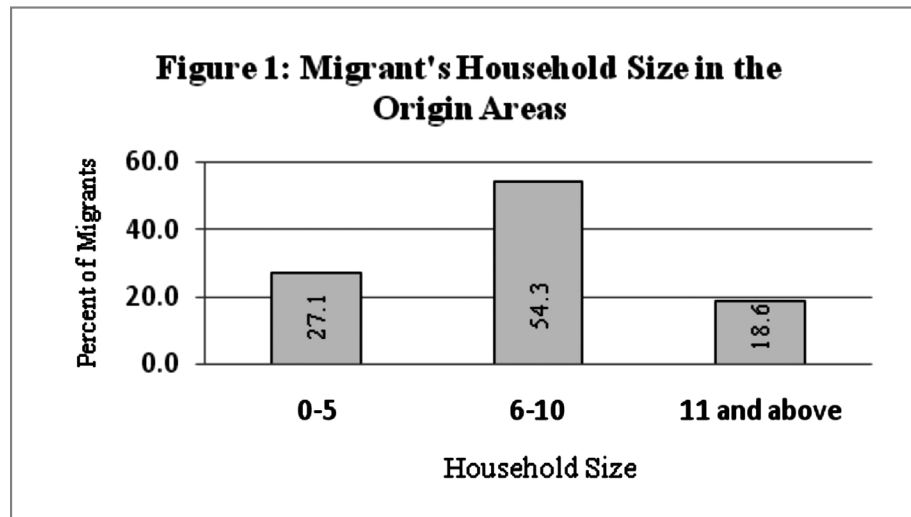
Source: Authors' 2011

Educational Attainment: About one-fourth of the respondents are illiterate. Slightly less than half of the migrants have completed education up to middle and secondary level (taken together).



Household Size

Considering the large family size as well as the socio-economic background of the families of the respondents, it is evident why those individuals have chosen to migrate and help to alleviate the situation of the families, back home (Figure 1).



Source: Authors', 2011

Migration Decisions

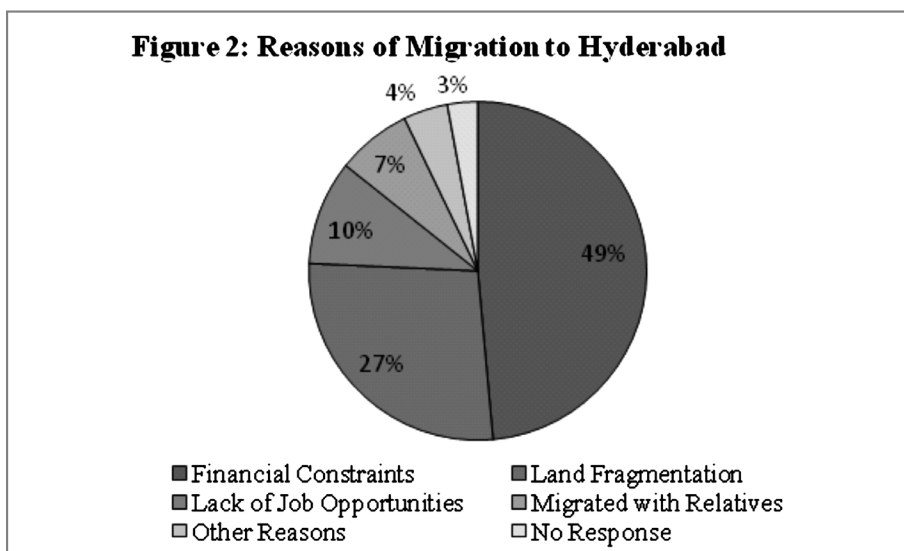
Role of Family in Migration Decision

The family is found to play a crucial role in influencing an individual's decision to migrate (Harbison, 1981), especially if it feels that the process of migration per se, can improve the circumstances of the family. However, the data from this study reveals that 77.10 percent respondents took the migration decision by themselves. For the rest of them, this decision was taken by their parents (18.60 percent) or their spouses (2.85 percent). It was also observed that no woman had migrated herself, to seek an alternate form of livelihood, although there were many instances of women accompanying their husband, brothers and father to the destination and then seeking work, driven by their circumstances.



Reasons for Migration

The migrants indicated several diverse reasons for relocating to Hyderabad. These reasons are not exclusive in nature—they are inter-related and often overlapping. Also, the reasons put forward suggest an overwhelming desire to improve one's circumstances.



Source: Authors', 2011

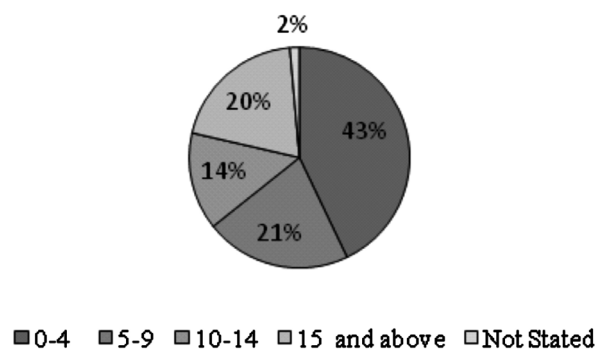
Financial constraints (accumulation of debt, income lower than expenditure, increasing financial burden, etc.) were reported as the major factor compelling them to migrate. Difficulties pertaining to agricultural land (land fragmentation, landlessness, land being taken away under land acquisition policy of the government for the establishment of the mining project POSCO) were the other significant reasons. As respondent 'A' narrated, "our agricultural lands were taken away by the government for the installation of POSCO and they even promised us to get us employed there, but we have no hopes. They have paid us compensation but we have lost our lands". Lack of prospective job opportunities at their native place and migration to join families already living in the city were other reasons reported (Figure 2).



Migrant Experiences in Hyderabad ***Duration of Stay***

The migrants exhibit much variation in terms of the duration of stay in the city. It has been observed that longer the length of stay for the migrants, better the access to facilities for the individuals (for example, possession of ration cards, Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Duration of Stay in Hyderabad
(in years)**



Source: Authors', 2011

Employment and Livelihood

Recruitment Networks

Kinship is the broad term for all the relationships that people are born into or create later in life that are considered binding in the eyes of society. It is one of the most basic principles for organizing individuals into social groups, roles and categories⁷. Kinship ties provide social and emotional support, anchoring individuals within the societal context. For migrants, the bond shared amongst members of a community, can prove to be a big factor in creating a network of mutual inter-dependence, sustaining social support, and allowing individuals to take calculated risks to improve their lives.

⁷ Definitions from the Britannica Concise Encyclopaedia and Wikipedia.org, Accessed from the website <http://www.answers.com/topic/kinship> on Jan 19, 2011.



The relevance of kinship ties in accessing labour market opportunities is also observed in the context of present study. Of the total respondents, 64.3 percent got job through their friends, 24.3 percent took the help of village acquaintances and their relatives assisted 10 percent of the respondents to find a job in the city.

Employment Sectors

The migrant communities residing in the different locations across Hyderabad were engaged in diverse sectors of employment.

Table 2: Location Specific Occupational Classification

| Location | Sectors of employment |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Sultan Shahi | Footwear, bangle, bangle box, vendors etc. |
| Sayed Nagar | Plaster of Paris work, carpenters, <i>mestris</i> , wage labourers, tile/marble workers, wood polishing and painting, sofa makers, masons etc. |
| Ferozeguda, Balanagar, Gandhi Nagar | Factory workers, private companies. |
| Nallakunta | Zardozi embroidery |

Source: Authors', 2011

Location specific livelihoods also reveal special characteristics of the areas (Table 2). Sultan Shahi is located close to the Chatta Bazaar, which is a wholesale market. This proximity is a major factor contributing to the presence of a huge footwear industry in the vicinity. Sayed Nagar is, located adjacent to the IT hub in the city that has spawned a huge demand in the real estate sector and hotel industry. The adjacent areas of Ferozeguda, Balanagar and Gandhinagar are located close to the Secunderabad cantonment and have several industrial units specializing in the manufacture of steel, asbestos, machinery and ammunition, where large numbers of migrants are employed as wage labourers or salaried factory workers.



Table 3: Sector-wise Distribution of Workers in Hyderabad

| Sectors of employment | Percentage |
|--|------------|
| Cooks/Hotel boys | 5.71 |
| Construction sector | 15.71 |
| Carpenters/Wood work/Mason | 12.85 |
| Private companies and manufacturing units (electronic goods and steel) | 28.57 |
| Footwear and footwear box makers | 24.28 |
| Bangle and bangle box makers | 2.86 |
| Vendors (ice cream and sweets) | 4.28 |
| Kirana Shop | 1.42 |
| Tailor | 1.42 |
| Headloader | 1.42 |
| No answer | 1.42 |
| Total | 100 |

Source: Authors', 2011

Table 3 clearly shows that the top five sectors employing migrants are manufacturing units and private companies, footwear business, the construction industry, carpentry, masonry, woodwork and the hotel industry.

Change in Occupation after Migration

Nearly one-third of the migrants were living in other cities (Mumbai, Kolkata, Delhi, Amritsar, Surat etc) before they repositioned to Hyderabad. Of these 72.72 percent acquired the skills related to their current professions (PoP work, carpentry, shoe making, painting, bangle making etc) during their stay in another city. For example, most of the footwear makers in Hyderabad have learnt their skills in Kolkata where they were previously located. The change in the nature and location of professions led to a better income for most of the individuals. Only 22.72 percent migrants have changed their professions after relocating to Hyderabad.

Terms of Employment

Only one respondent had a contractual agreement with his employer. Ninety percent of the respondents reported that they did not enter into any agreement

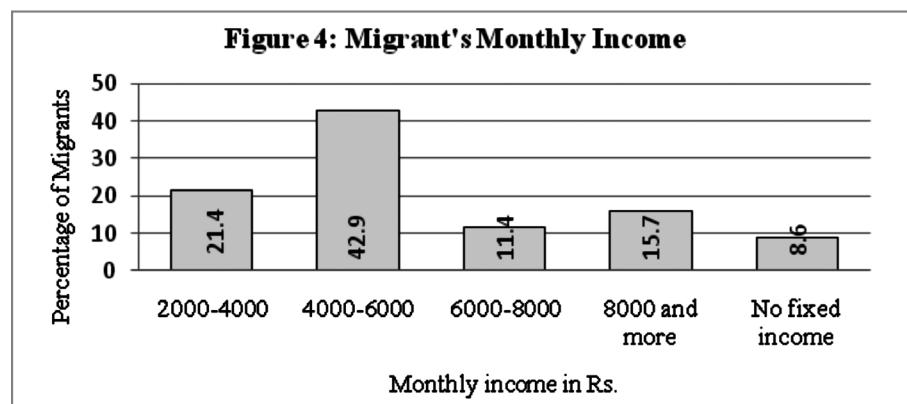


with their employer. The remaining respondents were either contractors themselves or had no idea about a contract. Although the respondents stated that not entering into any contractual agreement offered them freedom to leave the employment whenever they wished to, they also acknowledged that such a situation made them more vulnerable to exploitation by their employers.

A large number of respondents spoke about the poor work conditions that they were exposed to every day. The migrants who were employed as construction labourers and workers in the construction industry (PoP workers, masons, and carpenters etc.) described irregularity of work as their main challenge at the destination. Only 5.7 percent respondent received a bonus from their employers. A few respondents also pointed out that they are often not paid for overtime work done and sometimes only food is provided instead of the requisite monetary payment.

Income, Expenditure and Savings

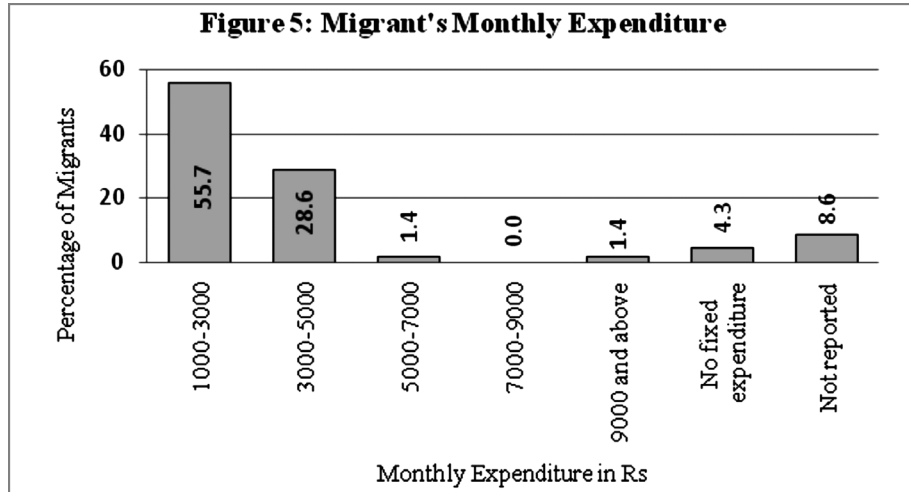
The migrants in Hyderabad were employed in diverse sectors. Thus, variation in income is likely to occur (Figure 4). Those reporting higher monthly incomes work as PoP or plumbing contractors in the construction industry, tea, grocery shop, have worked as salaried factory workers for over 20 years; or are kulfi maker or contractors for footwear manufactures. Those who have been able to rise in their professions over the years and have been able to establish their credibility as independent professionals or entrepreneurs have been able to translate that into greater economic benefits.



Source: Authors', 2011

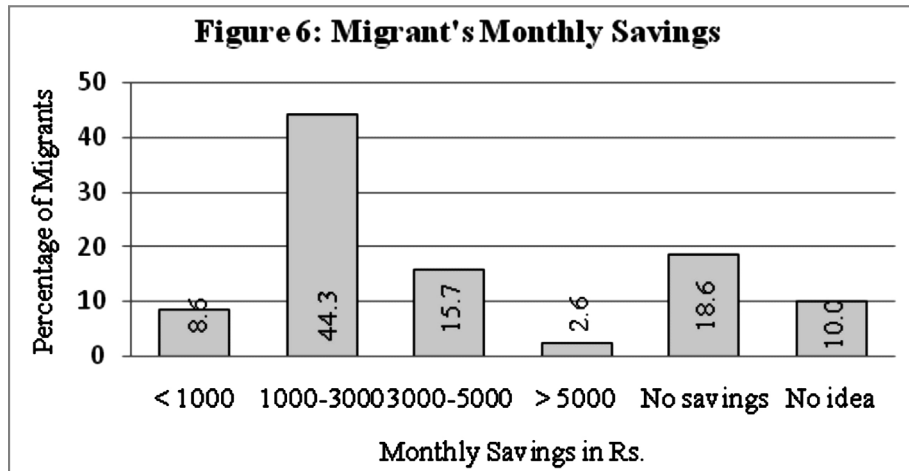


Over half of the sample spends between Rs.1000-3000 per month. This includes the expenditure on purchase of food items, fuel for cooking, snacks/ meals eaten while at work and daily transport expenses (Figure 5).



Source: Authors', 2011

The ability to save differs greatly, with the nearly half the sample saving between Rs.1000-3000 per month. 18.57 percent could not save at all and 10 percent migrants did not respond (Figure 6).



Source: Authors' 2011

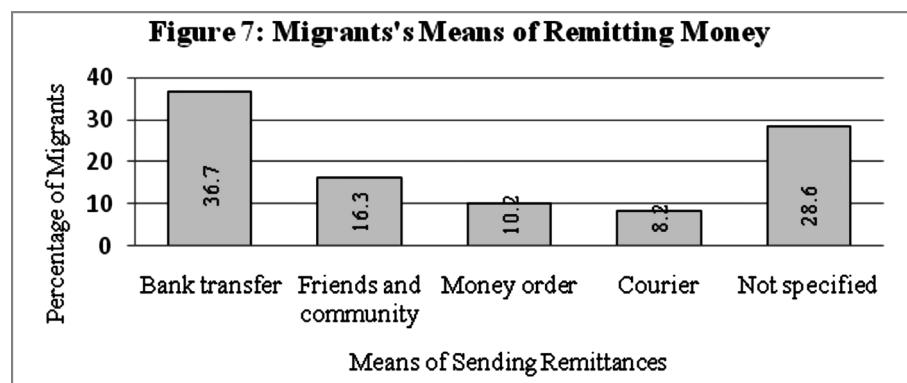


Only 34.28 percent of the respondents have a bank account. Those who do not have an account either save their income at home or alternatively, save it with their employers, if they share a good rapport with the latter.

Remittances

Remittance is one of the most visible outcomes of migration. About 70 percent migrants reported that they send money to their families; however the remittance amounts ranged vastly from Rs. 1000-2000 to Rs.4000-5000 per month. In terms of frequency, migrants reported sending back money one in two months as well as in a lump sum once/twice a year. Only 25.71 percent of the respondents did not remit money because either they lived with their families in the city or they did not have any relative in the village.

While a significant number of migrants used formal methods like bank transfers (36.7 percent), money order (10.2 percent) and courier services to remit money home, sending money through friends and community elders was common. More than one-fourth of the sample population has not specified their means of transferring remittances while many respondents have cited a combination of means for transferring remittances (Figure 7).



Source: Authors', 2011

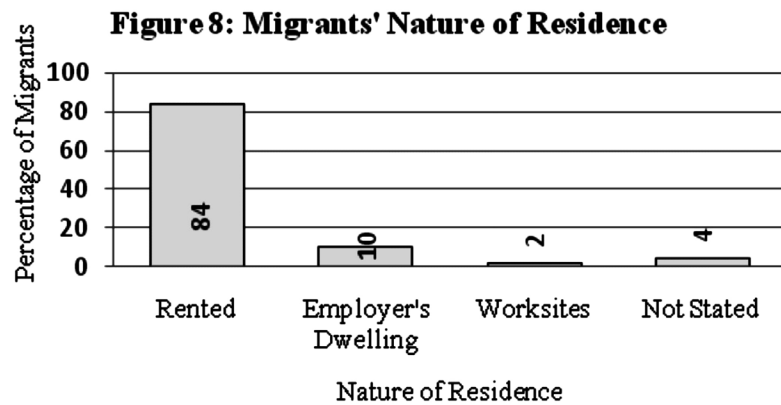
Challenges Faced in Hyderabad

Living Conditions

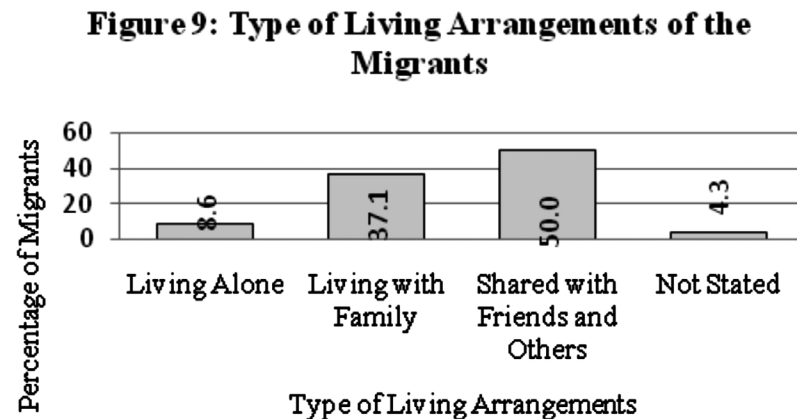
About 48.6 percent of the respondents share their living space with friends in rather cramped conditions. More than half of the residents reside in rented



rooms (often shared with friends). 67.1 percent migrants live in one-room tenements with limited access to basic facilities. The monthly rent varies from a sum of Rs.1000-2500 and was either borne by the respondent completely or shared with others (if living with friends). Only 10 percent respondents reported living in rooms provided by employers and all of them worked in the shoemaking and hotel industry (Figure 8 and 9).



Source: Authors' 2011

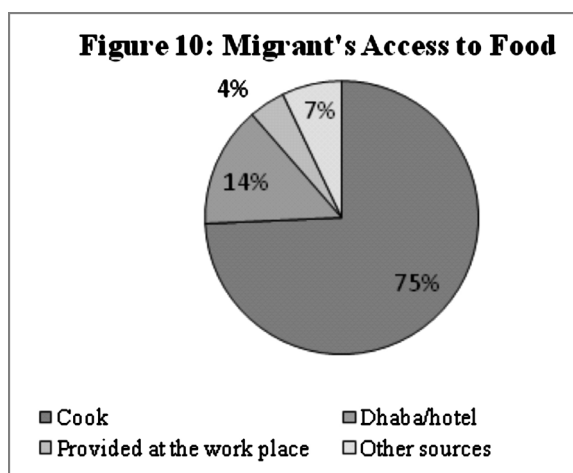


Source: Authors', 2011



Food Security

The respondents raised concerns around the access to good quality food, access to PDS and the spiralling costs of food items. Nearly, 74.3 percent respondents cook their own food and only 4.3 percent are provided food by the employers at the workplace. The rest of the respondents either purchase food from the *dhaba*/hotel or depend on relatives and neighbours for their food requirements (Figure 10).



Source: Authors', 2011

Among the respondents, 87.10 percent spend a sum of Rs.1200 and above on food every month. This sum includes the purchase of food items as well as cooking fuel. 61.40 percent of the migrants do not have access to ration cards. Even for those who have it (31.4 percent), ration card is either at the source (village), barring them from local access to subsidized food. Often the PDS shops are non-functional or they have access to limited items from the fair priced shops. The fall out of such a scenario is that the respondents have no choice but to buy food items and cooking fuel at market rates. As respondent 'B' stated, "I spend anywhere between Rs.1000-1500 on food every month. Although I share my room with friends, we all contribute towards the purchase of food items. Rice is costly here. On an average, we spend Rs.500 for 25 kgs of rice and Rs.40 for a litre of kerosene that we have to purchase in the open market".



Water Supply

Questions regarding access to water revolved around source of obtaining the water and frequency of water supplies. 72.9 percent respondents cited piped water as the source. Other reported sources were over head tanks⁸, wells and tube wells etc. (Figure 11). 90 percent migrants receive water every alternate day. Of the remaining respondents, 1.4 percent receives water daily and, 2.9 percent receive water twice a week (Figure 12).

Figure 11: Reported Sources of Water

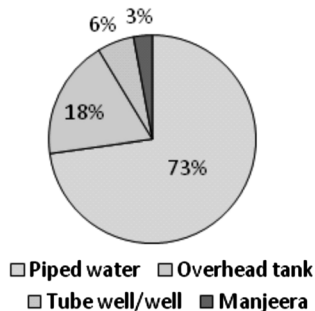
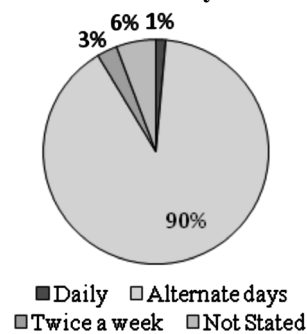


Figure 12: Frequency of Water Availability



Source: Authors', 2011

Sanitation

Almost all the migrants have access to toilets, although for some respondents two toilets had to be shared with around 30 people living in the vicinity. This arrangement was especially true for respondents who were sharing their rooms with others.

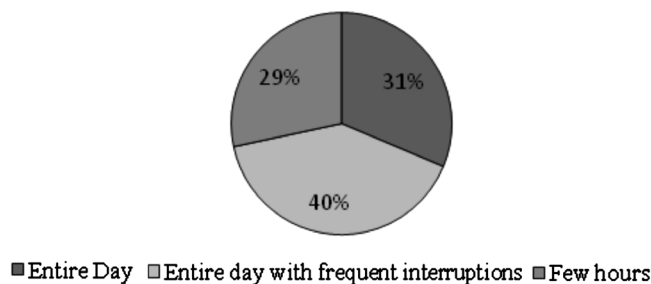
Electricity

Questions regarding access to electricity also included a query on the duration of power supply. 95.70 percent respondents stated that they had access to an electrical connection, however duration was variable (Figure 13).

⁸ The source could be either piped or water pumped from underground sources



Figure 13: Duration of Power Supply



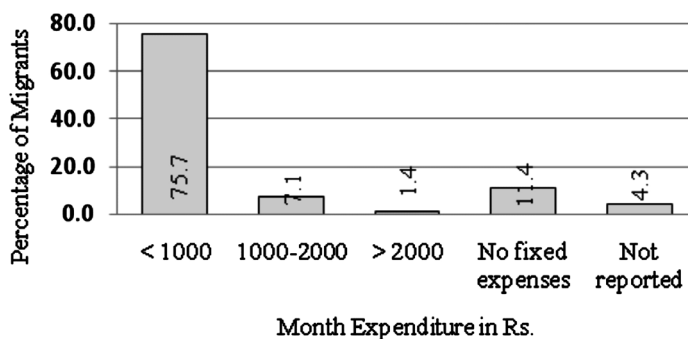
Source: Authors', 2011

Health services

Only one respondent working in a company enjoyed the benefits of the ESI scheme. 77.10 percent migrants do not receive any medical benefits from their employers. Subsequently, whenever there are illness/accidents, they have to incur the expenses themselves. In contrast, 15.7 percent respondents receive some form of medical benefits in case of accidents.

About three-fourth of the migrants, spend less than Rs. 1000 in a month on medical expenses. Nearly one-tenth of the respondents could not provide an estimate on medical expenditure in a month as that would depend on the given situation (Figure 14).

Figure 14: Migrant's Expenditure on Health Services



Source: Authors', 2011



Occupational Hazards

Some of the respondents reported that the lax conditions prevalent at the workplace resulted in illnesses and injuries. The most evident case was that of the group of children who had been employed to make bangles, in Sultan Shahi. The work was not only arduous but also involved a constant contact with hazardous chemicals, especially when the children handle the chemicals without gloves. Respondent “C”, who works in a private manufacturing company, narrated how “the constant inhalation of molten aluminium causes respiratory difficulties. He also lamented that his employer did not provide any medical insurance and in case of an accident, had given a paltry sum of Rs.100-200 and washed his hands off the situation”.

Animosity with Locals

Respondents across all locations cited a sense of perceived animosity with the local populace. They described how unscrupulous elements often tried to take advantage of their vulnerability as a migrant, and subjected them to harassment (physical and verbal) and forceful snatching of belongings. Many respondents also narrated how they were often subjected to cultural stereotypes and derogatory jibes and called names like “bihari”, “pardesi”, “beggar” etc. In Sultan Shahi, a number of respondents engaged as footwear makers described how the locals were hostile towards them—their hostility stemming from a sense of jealousy towards the perceived ‘success’ of migrants. This particular situation has led to a scenario where locals have made an entry into the footwear making business. Elaborating on this further, respondent ‘D’ stated, “life is very challenging in Hyderabad now because some years ago it was only the migrants who used to make chappals and we used to sell our chappals to the local retailers at a high price but now there is tough competition as local *karigars* are also taking up this work and retailers buy it from the local people rather than depending on us. We earn our living with the slight margin of profit we get. Previously if we used to spend Rs. 60 on making a chappal we used to get Rs. 100 from the local retailer but now if we spend Rs. 80 then we sell it at Rs. 90 with a profit margin of only Rs. 10 on each pair. The work also involves tough physical exertion as our livelihood depends on the pair of shoes that we make”.



Social Cohesion

Migrants maintain strong social networks with their community members. Most of the migrants also tend to live together with their fellow group of people, thus forming clusters of the community in various parts of the city. More than half of the respondents (55.71 percent) remain in touch with their community.

Maintaining ties with community members through the celebration of festivals emerged to be the most preferred means followed by regional associations was the next preferred means. The social cohesion through the celebration of festivals is most evident amongst the Oriya migrants in Hyderabad who have are actively engaged in not only the cultural activities of their regional association but also the Jangannath Yatra that they organize with great fervour every year (Table 4).

Table 4: Maintaining Links with Own Community Members

| Ties with Own Community Member | | Means of Maintaining Ties | |
|--------------------------------|--------|---------------------------|--------|
| Always | 55.80 | Festivals | 55.70 |
| Sometimes | 37.10 | Regional Association | 22.90 |
| Never | 1.40 | Meetings | 7.10 |
| Other | 1.40 | Others | 10.00 |
| No response | 4.30 | No Response | 4.30 |
| Total | 100.00 | Total | 100.00 |

Source: Authors', 2011

Snippets

Case Study 1: Child Labourers in Sultan Sahi

Interactions with six young boys from Gaya, Bihar in Sultan Shahi revealed that they came from large families that were struck by poverty and indebtedness. These six boys had been sent by their parents to work in the city and come along with their employer (known to their families) to work in a bangle-making factory. Education is a distant dream for them as they toil hard throughout the day and even late into the night. They work under strict



supervision, which restricts their freedom and impacts their experience of childhood. Although their employer insisted that the boys were above fourteen years of age, the children looked much younger and they could not specify their age when asked.

Bangle making is an arduous process and the boys were exposed to harmful and hazardous chemicals. The children had to work with naked hands and this can lead to serious skin disorders and other health ailments.

Although the employer claims to take good care of these children – cook food for them and also take care of their medical expenses, the children looked gloomy. They are paid a paltry sum of Rs.500 or even less than that in a month, for the work they do. The scenario reflects clear exploitation of the vulnerability of these children.

Case Study 2: Seasonal Migrants from Lucknow

A group of youth (19-22 years) from Uttar Pradesh provides interesting insight into the lives of seasonal migrants. These migrants were engaged in thread work, specializing in chikan embroidery and zardozi/zari work at Uttar Pradesh under local contractors. According to them, “during lean season we prefer coming to Hyderabad through our contacts and work on Zardozi sarees.” They said that they have not yet encountered any problems at the destination and attributed this to knowing the employers. Describing their lives here, they said that every Sunday they make a trip to new place. They mentioned that, “we come to Hyderabad because it gives us an opportunity to roam and visit new places besides working. We stay here for two to three months we do not encounter any challenges, as we know the owner and the contractor well. We divide the rent amongst ourselves. Whatever we earn we spend on food and travel. We can only save approximately Rs.2000-2500 at the end of our visit.” They pay Rs.1000 for their food boxes, which are bought from a local caterer. They also added that they do not have any problems with regard to sanitation or access to water as they have access to pumps that provide them with bore-well water.

Emerging Themes

The present study threw up several interesting insights into migrant lives and experiences in an urban area:



- Migration is an established livelihood strategy for poor households and is unlikely to stop although the patterns of migration, has and will, over time undergo change.
- Kinship ties are central to migratory processes. Members of one's community, relatives and friends were found to have provided assistance with the process of migration—information about the place of destination, a place to live in, finding employment, and so on. Kinship networks were found to ease out the complexities and helped migrants adapt to new environments.
- It was observed that the longer the length of the stay at the destination, greater the opportunities that one can get access to. However, this process is affected by several factors and is contingent on the level of enterprise and aspirations of the individual. For example, some migrants who have lived in Hyderabad for over a decade were found to have access to ration cards as well as have built successful linkages with local authorities.
- The migrants feel a sense of discomfort getting into contract with their employers because they said doing so would mean limiting their opportunities. Without a contract, they felt they could shift jobs at their convenience. But, while choosing an easier way out, they fail to foresee the trouble that they are getting themselves into - getting cheated out of their hard earned money by unscrupulous contractors/agents, having had to work in oppressive conditions and being exploited economically, by their employers.
- Access to food was shaped by one's financial status as well as the livelihood one is engaged in. Many migrants, especially those who were engaged in the hospitality sector, ate at their workplace.

Limitations of the Study

During the field visits to some locations, contacts with the migrant communities were established through individuals who exerted some power and influence in that area. This proved to be problematic to some extent. Migrants were hesitant to speak freely in the presence of powerful persons, including fellow migrants with power like contractors.

Recommendations of the Study

Interactions with the migrants during the study gave us an insight into their needs and aspirations. Some of their suggestions are—a Helpline to address



their grievances, easy access to loans, access to regular work opportunities, identification papers like an ID card as well as equality of rights at par with the local people for improved access to services.

Various organizations working on issues revolving around migrant concerns, urban governance, livelihood and shelter, should unite together to form a common platform. There also needs to be a platform of communication amongst all stakeholders (migrant workers, contractors, NGOs and State). Steps should also be taken to strengthen linkages between the diverse migrant communities in the city, such that a concrete action plan can be strategized for them.

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