

# Transformation of Punjab Due To Migration

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Migration is a global phenomena. Although the United Nations estimates that only 2% of the world's population are migrants. It is accelerating, diversifying and politicised force which helps the people to move. Migration is the process of movement from one place, region, state or country to another, they clearly make demographic and socio-economic effects on the donor and recipient population. Migration is the major factor that brings drastic changes in the society. Not much work is done to examine the consequences of migration in Punjab, policy makers and academicians have casual notions about this process. Without any authentic, accurate and reliable study, there is general conception about the migration that enriches the specific society. Migration is a form of spatial mobility of population between one geographical unit to another involving a permanent change of residence. If a person was born at a place other than the place of enumeration then he is treated as migrant. Of the three components of population change, migration holds the place of prominence. Migration cannot be considered as a mere shift of people from one place of residence to another, as it is most fundamental to the understanding of continuously changing space-content and space relationship of area (Gosal,1961)

The studies regarding migration are seriously hampered due to lack of methodology and data constraints. Most scholars who write about migration theories and models recognise the very imperfect state of present day theoretical and empirical knowledge of migration phenomena. According to Jones (1981), "Of the three components of population change, migration is most difficult to conceptualize and measure .The data constraints are no less pronounced than the lack of methodology. The census of India does provide any direct data on migration. It is only with the help of place of birth data and some idea of magnitude and direction of patterns of migration can be obtained.

India as well as Punjab has experienced both international and internal migration. Historically Punjab has been associated with migration from the earliest due to its geographical set up. Invaders who came to India from northern borders had all passed through Punjab. The people of Punjab are confronted with a large of rulers. Foreign rulers like Turks (from 11<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century), Afghans (from 15<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> century)and they are followed by the Mughals and then Punjab came under the British rule in 1849.Thus the land of Punjab was the meeting ground of different people and races, introducing new cultures and ideas. The people of Punjab could not therefore remain exclusive and static. Always up and doing, with increasing fresh contacts and free communication with wave after wave of new immigrants, they are bound to be effected by them. The receptive mind of Punjabis, even ready to accept and assimilate new things because broader and more hospitable (Ganda Singh 1988:12). Punjab interaction with foreigners made its residents more lively, dynamic and mobile. Under the British rule, Punjab experienced tremendous population

movement. After the second world war, large number of people from Punjab especially Sikhs emigrated to UK. Most of the emigrants are directly from the Doaba region Punjab, that had more population pressure on land. Doaba region is the important region of Punjab which lies between river Beas and the river Satluj also called bist doab. The Shivalik hills separates Doaba from Himachal Pradesh. Jalandhar is the major city, district and ancient state of the region. It is the last- central folk region of Punjab. It spreads over four districts namely Kapurthala, Hoshiarpur, Jalandhar and Nawanshr. Nurbur Bedi Block of district Roopnagar in the part of Malwa so it is not considered as the part of Doaba . It covers almost 17.6% of the total area of Punjab and 19.7% population of Punjab. The main characteristics of population of doaba region is a tendency of migration to various foreign countries such as U.K, Canada, U.S.A, Australia, Germany and Middle East countries.

In the beginning, the migrants had only purpose that is to earn money; and most of them wished to return to their families. However after some experiences, they often preferred to invite their family members ‘ the chance to bring wives and children to migrants seem to have been caused by two factors. One was to prospect of greatly improved living standards with the best that India could offer, including education, climate and occupational opportunities for the next generation. It is surprising to note that due to migration, women seek to change in their status and roles. Earlier the emigration was towards UK largely to England because they found opportunities. At that time, Canada, Australia and New Zealand had heavy restrictions on emigrants. In the last of the 20th century because in the liberalisation in the economical policies, developed countries have become flexible for immigrants. Thus at this time, highly skilled workers, professionals, academicians, scientists, engineers, doctors and managers are migrating to their dreamland. Migrations are caused by a variety of factors including economic, social and political factors. They are briefly described as under.

### **1. Marriage**

It is a very important social factor of migration. Every girl has to migrate to her in-law’s place of residence after marriage. Thus, the entire female population of India has to migrate over short or long distance. Among the people who shifted their residence more than half (56.1%) moved due to marriage.

### **2. Employment**

People migrate in large number from rural to urban areas in search of employment. The agricultural base of rural areas does not provide employment to all the people living there. Even the small-scale and cottage industries of the villages fail to provide employment to the entire rural folk. Contrary to this, urban areas provide vast scope for employment in industries, trade, transport and services. About 8.8 per cent of migrants migrated for employment in 1991.

### 3. Education

Rural areas, by and large, lack educational facilities, especially those of higher education and rural people have to migrate to the urban centres for this purpose. Many of them settle down in the cities for earning a livelihood after completing their education.

### 4. Lack of Security

Political disturbances and interethnic conflicts drive people away from their homes. Large number of people has migrated out of Jammu and Kashmir and Assam during the last few years due to disturbed conditions there.

People also migrate on a short-term basis in search of better opportunities for recreation, health care facilities, and legal advices or for availing service which the nearby towns provide. Table below gives an idea of impact of different reasons on migration.

#### Reasons for migration (during last decade)

Total migrants by last residence (0-9 yrs)	98.3 million
Work/employment	14.4 million (14.7%)
Business	1.1 million (1.2%)
Education	2.9 million (3.0%)
Marriage	43.1 million (43.8%)
Moved after birth	6.5 million (6.7%)
Moved with household	20.6 million (21.0%)
Other	9.5 million (9.7%)

### 5. 'Pull' and 'Push' Factors:

Urban centres provide vast scope for employment in industries, transport, trade and other services. They also offer modern facilities of life. Thus, they act as 'magnets' for the migrant population and attract people from outside. In other words, cities pull people from other areas. This is known as "pull factor".

People also migrate due to 'push factors' such as unemployment, hunger and starvation. When they do not find means of livelihood in their home villages, they are 'pushed' out to the nearby or distant towns.

Millions of people who migrated from their far-off villages to the big cities of Kolkata, Mumbai or Delhi did so because these cities offered them some promise for a better living. Their home villages had virtually rejected them as surplus population which the rural resources of land were not able to sustain any longer. The contribution made by migrant workers to the national economy in the form of remittances are widely acknowledged, more needs to be done to channelize the flow of their capital and skills in a productive ways

in order to maximize development at local and national level. Indians abroad are present in almost in every major region of the world with two types of contemporary flows; first, highly skilled professionals, workers and students with tertiary and higher educational qualifications migrating to the most advanced OECD countries, particularly to the USA, UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Second, the unskilled and semi-skilled workers going mostly to the Gulf countries and other Asian countries. In many cases in the present scenario it is found that two third of return migrants returned from gulf countries. These returnees are of the higher age group and three fourth of them returned to rural areas. They returned not with the objective of any economic reasons but will probably other reasons such finishing the work contract, retirement from the service and many others. But the return

migrants have been actively engaged in self-employed activities in the home country. There has been drastic increase in self-employment activities by male return migrants with a lesser increase in female return migrants.

The study directs further research to see the impact of these return migrants on the regional innovation systems. A deeper analysis to how the return migrants use the knowledge acquired abroad for the development in the home country. The further analysis will be done on the rural areas as it is found the majority of return migrants are working in non-manual activities in cultivation and non-agricultural activities. The further analysis in this direction will help to access the role of return migrants in rural development. They may be bringing new technologies in agricultural activities. Migration brings about certain forms of social changes; and conversely, social change in community and institutional life may bring about certain population trends (IOM 2010). Migrants create awareness for learning and education. Migration has increased the literacy and educational status. After migration, their attitude towards health and sanitation also changes. The migration helps them to freely mix and communicates their feelings with other migrants belonging to different caste, colour, creed and language. Emigrants seem to change the beliefs of people. The social status of the village people has changed. Low caste and lower class people reported that they have now good treatment from the higher caste and class people. It is because they have cash money and are able to purchase small piece of fertile and gross land. Politically, emigrated people seem to be more aware. Another common scenario is that many people have learned the habit of drinking alcohol and gambling. These people become an example to the villagers, and these practices have heavy economic and social consequences on their families and relatives. Migration brings some family problems too as some family heads and members do not return to their villages for some time or forever. Due to this, wives tired and impatient in the husband's long and continued absence. Sometimes wives elope with other men. (Mishra, 1998; Gautam, 1999) The adverse social repercussions of migration are found in the form of neglected children, weakened marital bonds and even broken families. Some migrants found their remitted hard money dissipated on wasteful consumption by the spouse and families left behind. Culture shock affects almost everyone who becomes involved with a new culture. This includes facing challenges to one's beliefs, values and practices and often feeling the need to change one's practices as a result. Mothers and families have additional difficulties coping with challenges to their beliefs, values and practices. New values acquired abroad have also in some cases created problems of adjustment to family and social environment

on return. When families migrate to other places they lose their homes, their families and communities, their language and their status within their communities. It impacts on mental health of parents and children and thus provides challenges to their attachment relationships. It also has a profound impact on the relationship between parents and child. Many of the migrants have also lost the status that comes along with their qualifications and jobs- being in well respected positions in their country of origin to do menial work or being unemployed here (Because of the language barrier and lack of recognition of their qualification (Rodrigo, 1992; IOM Report, 2010). To conclude it can be said that the recognition of the migrants contributions towards their home country through remittances, investments and networks has facilitated a shift in attitude and thinking regarding migration, from brain drain to “brain bank”, “brain gain”, “brain trust” and “brain circulation”. This shift in thinking is evident in the whole of India especially Punjab in recognition of the manifold contributions being made by the migrants to their home country.

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