

## The impact of rural urban migration on traditional rural societies

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### ABSTRACT:

This paper focuses on the factors influencing the rural urban migration and discusses their impact on rural societies. The rural urban migration impacts rural societies through demographic shifts. Increasing rural urban migration is leading to increase in aging population and labour shortages in rural areas. Even though several other countries have witnessed reduction in poverty through urban migration but in India the migration has resulted in creating rural disparities, economic, challenges and social issues. This also leads to a decline in traditional occupations and livelihoods. Another big impact from migration is the fear of losing traditional customs, cultural practices, local dialects and region specific folk arts. Further, the migration is leading to strain on urban infrastructure and urban way of life. Besides, urban unemployment and rise of urban slums is an added impact. Socially this migration is impacting the society negatively as there is a high rise in societal inequality and cultural erosion. Policies addressing the retention of rural youth have failed and governments are considering new schemes for rural youth. But, there is a necessity to readdress the issue with a broader perspective which could offer long term solution to the issue. Community stakeholdership and corporate social responsibility collaboration will assist in making farm sector more supportive to Indian rural economy.

### KEYWORDS:

Rural-Urban Migration, Rural Development, Socio-economic Impact, Policy Interventions, India.

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### Introduction:

Indian population statistics of 2011 reveal that nearly 69% of the population lives in rural areas. But, the statistics of migration reflect that India is the fastest growing urban hub. It is emerging as the tenth most populous urban country. Indian urban population is growing more than the rural population.

The Economic Survey of India 2023–24 projects that over 40% of the Indian population will live in urban areas by 2030. Data from Periodic Labour Force Survey July 2020– June 2021 showed that rural to urban migration was a significant stream of internal migration accounting to 18.9% of the all internal migrants. Rural youth are moving to cities in search of building construction work, tiles laying, quarrying, mining, road making, garments and industrial labour, etc

**The following table shows the rate of migration:**

2008–2009	35%
2013–2014	55%

As a result of migration of the rural population to urban centres the villages are becoming desolated areas with an aging population or only women or small children as the only remaining residents.

Increasing urban trends– According to the 2011 Census of India more than two-thirds (69 percent) of India's 1.21 billion people live in rural areas, but the country is rapidly urbanizing. The cities of Bangalore, Pune, Indore, Calicut, Mumbai, Delhi, and Kolkata are becoming most populous urban areas. It is observed through studies that India has 25 of the 100 fastest-growing cities worldwide. This chart shows the increasing rural to urban migration in India

1951	62 million	17%
2011	377 million	31%
2025	600 million	42.5%

**Source:** The Report of the census of India, 2011

According to 2001 Census about 191 million people as internal migrants had moved long distances to other districts or other Indian states. Thus, the rural–urban divide has been one of the primary reasons for

India's labor mobility. About 70 percent of all internal migrants are women, and marriage is the primary reason for female migration, accounting for 91 percent of rural female migrations and 61 percent of urban female migrations. By contrast, men migrate to urban centers frequently for employment-related reasons. Fifty-six percent of urban male migrants move in search of employment. Other influencing reason for migration among Indian men include family, business, and education of the children

### **Factors influencing rural-to-urban migration**

1. **Insufficient livelihood opportunities:** The primary reason for urban bound migration is the insufficient economic opportunities in rural areas. Despite India's impressive rates of economic growth over the past three decades, vast numbers of Indians are unable to secure a meaningful livelihood. In 2010, 29.8 percent of all Indians lived below the national poverty line, while 33.8 percent of rural Indians lived below the national rural poverty line, according to World Bank data.
2. **Unreliable agriculture sector:** While wage and education gaps between rural and urban Indians are declining, rural India is still characterized by agrarian distress. As a result of climatic changes, agriculture sector has become too unreliable. Deforestation has further highlighted to the distress. This has led to increasing number of farmer suicides. There is a huge volatility in crop productivity. Hence the rural younger generation has lost love for farming and wish to migrate to urban centers in search of sundry jobs.
3. **Lack of economic opportunities:** rural people think that there are very few opportunities to become economic empowerment.

**Impacts of rural to urban migration:** the number of increasing migration ration is of considerable impact on rural society.

1. **Pessimistic impact on family relationships:** The ever-increasing number of rural male youths migrating to urban centers has negative impact on their family relations. The joint family system, the collective land rights system, mutual socio-economic understandings, traditional family collaborations etc are negatively influenced by this rural migration. This has led to cultural erosion and traditional rural values.
2. **Depressing impact on employment generation:** The employment & under employment are causing further problems. Several of the rural youth who migrate to urban areas are non-permanent seasonal laborers earning very meager income. These scanty earnings are spent in

routine living in cities. The income earned through jobs is not only insufficient, but it is also seasonal. Majority of the youth work in construction sites as soon as construction work is complete, they become unemployed.

3. **Poor application of skill and expertise:** The migrated youth become skilled laborers in urban centers as they are trained. After they return to the villages their training and expertise do not support them to find a livelihood. As their visit back to villages do not create any employability, they wish to remain in cities. As situation continues, they permanently abandon villages and settle in Urban sheds and temporary homes.
4. **Negative impact on agro based rural jobs:** The seasonal migration of the rural youth poses a threat to agricultural related jobs in villages. Already rural India is facing the issues of labor shortage in agri sector. Fisheries, Dairy, poultry, horticulture, gardening and such other agro related supportive segments suffer because of labor shortage.
5. **Negative impact on rural economy:** The traditional rural sustainable and minor agro enterprises are negatively impacted by rural migration. The micro, small, medium sized enterprises (MSMEs) in villages are either being shut or on the verge of closure. This is greatly influencing the traditional rural economy which once thrived on dairy, poultry and fisheries.
6. **Impact on culture and society:** the rural migration is creating urban divide along with differences such as digital – non digital, literate illiterate, rural – urban, rich – poor, conservative – modern etc. These lead to societal divide and stratifications lead to collapse of human values.
7. **Impact on urban living:** An exodus of rural to urban centers migration is causing problems on urban living. The fundamental problems of sewage, sanitation, water supply, drinking water, electricity, infectious diseases etc are rising in urban centers. The rise in urban slums is a keen issue of urban development authorities. The migrated people forcibly take shelter in sheds and compact houses where there is very less sanitation amenities.

#### **Meeting the challenges:**

**Policy Interventions:** The challenges of migration can be met successfully through policy interventions including creation of productive employment opportunities through rural youth schemes aiming at provid-

ing micro finance support, inclusive banking support, subsidies and economic assistance. Central government has assessed the critical situation through several policy interventions. Several schemes have been introduced to create sustainable living opportunities in rural areas. These schemes play a significant role in strengthening agricultural sector. They include Provision for Micro finance facilities, Crop insurance schemes, small business support schemes, small entrepreneurship development schemes, provision for Rain harvesting solution schemes, Solar Energy solutions schemes, Self-employment finance schemes, Universal health insurance coverage schemes etc.

**Bridging Technological gaps:** The need for making the youth aware of digital developments so that they can find suitable employment in rural and sub urban centres is foreseen by government. Several schemes to strengthen rural youth in digital awareness have been applied. Digital India, One India, make in India, etc have been supporting them to fill the technological gaps.

**Expansion of technical education:** Government is assessing the perspectives of expansion of higher and technical education segments in rural India. Education supports in creating opportunities. This can also avoid rural youth's migration to urban centres for higher educational purposes. Opening polytechnique colleges, Nursing colleges, Degree colleges and Para medical colleges will help rural youth.

**Reassessing rural development strategies:** Rural development strategies through good irrigation projects, good seed distribution, timely urea distribution, timely marketing support, small storage support, minor water harvesting etc will also help rural people. Government is already extending subsidy support prices to agro products, marketing and supply chain system.

Several schemes are helping the farm sector with starting of agro processing industries, horticultural marketing, dairy products marketing etc.

**Corporate Social Responsibility:** corporate social responsibility is needed to achieve integrated rural development. The corporate companies can provide leadership training & entrepreneurial support to rural youth. The corporate support can be given through training the rural youth in establishment of Micro enterprises, preparing them to inclusive finance & banking services, involving in digital marketing and e-commerce functioning systems.

**Conclusion:**

Thus, the rural migration can be addressed with appropriate policy interventions, community stakeholdership and corporate social responsibility collaboration. These sustainable interventions will support in making the Indian rural sector more strong and sustainable.

**References:**

1. Economic Survey of India, 2023–24
2. Periodic Labour Force Survey July 2020– June 2021
3. Census of India , 2011

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The Authors have no conflict of interest to declare that they are relevant to the content of this article.

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