

Internal Migration in India: Few Insights from the Census (2001 and 2011)

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Abstract—Migration has always been significant and well-observed in the history of any territory. Nearly two-third of the India's population lives in rural areas. With the rapid increase in urbanization and urban areas there seems to be increase in the internal migration in the country. Internal migration leads to significant shift in the demographic equation even though there is no movement beyond the boundaries of the country. This paper aims to find out the status of migrants in India, based on the two censuses 2001 and 2011. The study emphasises the shifts in the decadal composition of migrants in the context of origin, stream, reason, time, etc.

1. INTRODUCTION

Census of India (2001) defines a migrant as a person who is enumerated in census at a different place than his / her place of birth or last place of residence. Many studies suggest that till the 1990s there was deterioration in the population mobility in India [1, 2] which enhanced after the economic reform (Globalisation, liberalisation, privatisation) of 1991[3]. United Nations development programme published the world development report in 2009 which stated that the number of internal migrants was four times the number of the international migrants in the world. In the developing countries of Asian region like India, internal migration is a strategy for survival. The economic benefits can help in the reduction of poverty to an extent [4]. Census of India provides variety of information based on different regions, pattern of migration, reason for migration stream of migration, time period of migration for migrants. However the reasons for migration were first introduced in 1981 and changes have been made in 1991 and 2001 contemporarily.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY-

To compare the composition of different parameters related to the migrants in the census of 2001 and 2011 for e.g. origin of the migrants, average changes in reasons behind migration, gender wise analysis of reason behind migration, changes in different stream of migration, short and long term migration, period of stay of migration.

3. DATA AND METHODOLOGY -

The present study is based on the secondary data from Census of India 2001 and 2011. The census of the country considers migrants based on two views that are 'by place of birth' and 'by place of last residence'. This paper considers the migrants on the basis of last place of residence which are defined as "a person who is enumerated during the census other than his place of immediate last residence". This definition gives a better picture of current migration scenario in the country also the migrants by place of birth do not include specific information like period of stay, streams of migration etc. The data provided by the census has been extracted in to tables, charts and figures in this study in order to derive the crux/ essence of the census.

4. TRENDS AND PATTERN OF MIGRATION IN INDIA-

Soon after independence, census and national sample surveys has been the main source of data for migration. These government organisations collect data on movement of individuals to examine the volume and structure of mobility of people as it has several macro-implications on employment, urbanisation, economic growth etc. This paper has drawn out data from the census in different tables, charts and figures to see the trend and pattern of migration using indicators like proportion of migrants of total population, distribution of migrants by their origin, reason for migration in total and gender wise, distribution of migrants based on period of migration and streams of migration based on place of last residence data from the census.

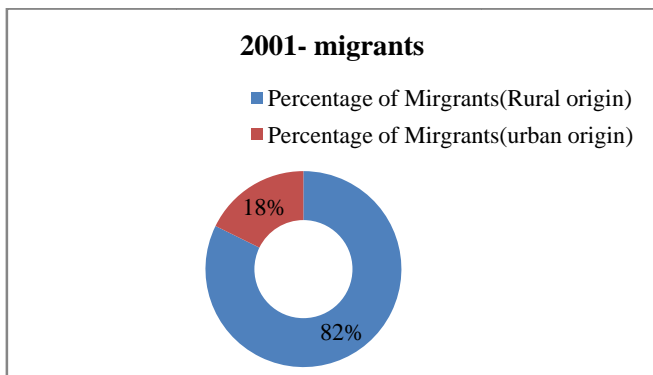
Table 1: Proportion of migrants of total population

Total / Gender	2001		2011	
	Migrants	In percentage terms	Migrants	In percentage terms
Persons	23.21 crores	22.56 %	45.36 crores	37.46%

male	6.43 crores	12.08%	14.09 crores	22.60%
female	16.78 crores	33.79%	31.26 crores	53.31%

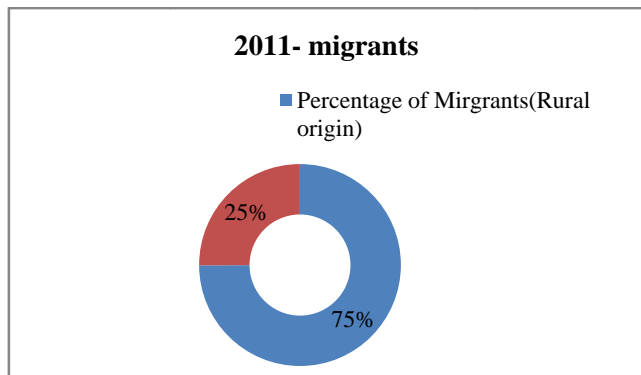
Source: D2 table of census 2001 and provisional table provided by census 2011

In the given table 1, absolute number as well as percentage to the absolute numbers is given for the total migrant population. Now, looking at the census of 2001 figures, 22.56 percentage of the population which is very close to one-fourth of the population were reported to be migrants. Female seems to be more migratory when compared to male counterpart, 33.79 percentage and 12.08 percentage for female and male respectively. In the next decade we see that there is an overall increase in the number of migrants in the country, approximately 38 percentage of the total populace report to be migrants with an increase in around 13 percentages. Females remain more migratory than males with 53.31 percentage (females) and 22.60 percentage (males) respectively. Implementation of employment guarantee programs like MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, MGNREGA) and jobless growth of Indian economy can be a reason behind deceleration of male migration in the country [5]. But the dominance of female in migration process is largely because of customs like marriage which compels them to move to their husband's place [6].



Source: D2 table of census 2001 (table name- migrants classified by place of last residence and duration of residence in place of enumeration)

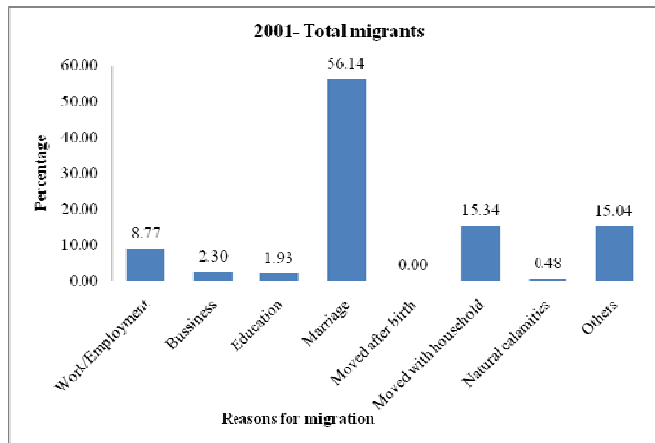
Figure 1- Origin of the migrants for 2001 census



Source: Provisional tables, census 2011

Figure 2- Origin of the migrants for 2011 census

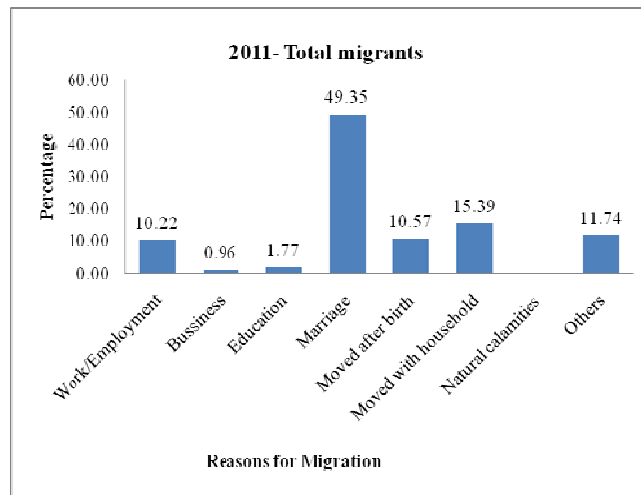
Both the above figures (1 and 2) state the origin of the migrants for 2001 and 2011 censuses. Both show that migrants with rural origins are more in numbers than the urban originated. The rural people are more migratory due to several reasons like shortage of opportunities, seasonal nature of agriculture, poverty, underemployment, unemployment etc [7]



Source: census 2001, D3 table (migrants by place of last residence, duration of residence and reason for migration)

Figure 3- Reason for migration-2001

In the above figure, different reasons (as per census 2001) reported by people for migration is given. Marriage has been reported the by the highest percentage of migrants (56.14%) followed by any other.



Source: Same as figure 2

Figure 4- Reason for migration-2011

In a similar, manner marriage is the most reported reason for migration for 2011 census (figure 4). Noticeably, there is a rise in percentage of people who reported work/employment

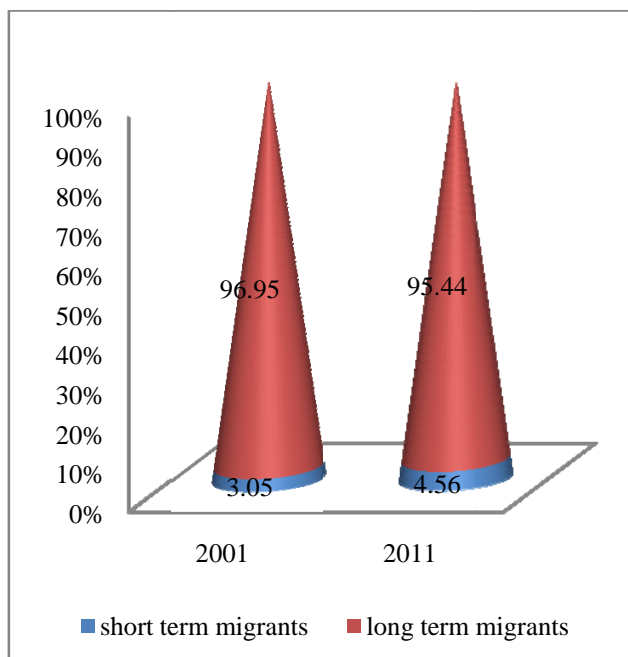
for the purpose behind migration from 8.77% in 2001 to 10.22 % in 2011.

Table 2- Reason for migration across genders for the census 2001 and 2011

Reasons	2001		2011	
	Male	female	Male	female
Work/ Employment	26.96	1.80	27.67	2.36
Business	6.86	0.55	2.28	0.36
Education	4.84	0.82	3.39	1.03
Marriage	3.99	76.12	4.27	69.68
Moved after birth	0.00	0.00	20.23	6.22
Moved with household	26.62	11.01	22.33	12.26
Natural calamities	1.09	0.25		
Others	29.65	9.45	19.82	8.10
Total Migrants	100	100	100	100

Source: same as figure 3 and figure 2

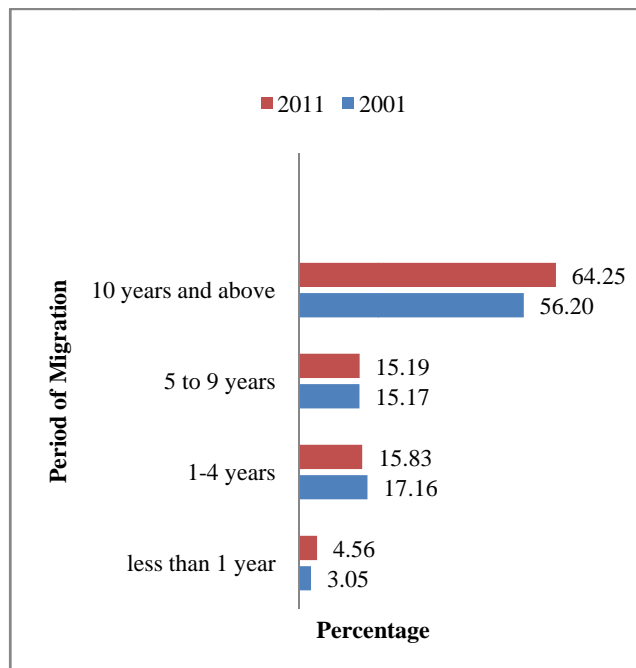
Table 2 shows the reason of migration across the genders. The scenario is quite different for both the genders. Although overall migration trend is increasing, a significant discrepancy in reasons for migration is noticed across gender. In 2001 census, the most major reason for male migrants' is economic, that is 'work/employment' followed by family related reason 'moved with household' with 26.96% and 26.62% respectively. The females majorly migrate after marriage followed by another family related reason 'moved with household' 76.12% and 11.01% respectively. More or less the picture is same in the next census, males have migrated for employment (27.67%) and females reported marriage (69.68%).



Source: same as figure 3 and figure 2

Figure 5- Type of migration on the basis of duration of migration

Census of India migrants who migrated for less than a year as short-term migrants and the period of greater than a year are the long-term migrants. Figure 5 shows short term migrants are very minor compared to long term migrants. They were 3.05% and 4.56% of the total migrants in the 2001 and 2011 census respectively. There is a possibility that data for the short term migrants has been understated as the majority of short term migrants are absorbed in the informal sector and they live life in slums which sometimes do not come under the scrutiny of government agencies.



Source: same as figure 3 and figure 2

Figure 6- Period of migration and percentage share

Census collects the data on the basis of different period of stay for migrants. Figure 6, shows that in both the censuses. Majority of migrants have migrated for more than 10 years in both the decades.

Table 3- Streams of migration in 2001 and 2011

Stream of migration	2001	2011
Rural to Rural	145045231 (64.50)	225825490 (54.86)
Rural to urban	13479429 (5.99)	82611203 (20.07)
Urban to rural	39909864 (17.74)	23841175 (5.79)
Urban to urban	26419838 (11.74)	79318004 (19.27)
total	224854362 (100)	411595872 (100)

Note: Figures in the parenthesis are the percentage to the absolute numbers. Source of the table: Source: same as figure 3 and figure 2

Table 4- Different streams of migration across genders

Stream of migration	2001		2011	
	male	female	male	female
Rural to Rural	36.41	72.34	33.89	63.98
Urban to Rural	6.35	4.20	7.07	5.24
Rural to Urban	34.21	13.50	30.21	15.67
Urban to Urban	23.03	9.96	28.84	15.11

Source: same as figure 3 and figure 2

One of the most important aspects of internal migration given in the census is the stream of migration. Table 3 shows the flows of migrants like, rural to rural, rural to urban, urban to rural and urban to urban. Rural to urban migration has been discussed in many literatures in the past. Rural to rural migration dominated in 2001 as well as 2011 but there is a major rise in the percentage of rural to urban migration from 5.99% to 20.07%. Table 4 shows the different stream of migration across genders. Females tend to migrate from rural to rural the most in 2001 and 2011 with percentage share of 72.34% and 63.98% respectively. Whether as for males, rural to rural had the maximum percentage share in 2001 followed by rural to urban migration 36.41 and 34.21% respectively and it is the same in the next census with 33.89% and 30.21 % for rural to rural and rural to urban respectively. The low income, unemployment, underemployment, lack of non agricultural activities often impose the rural people to migrate in cities [8]. A study shows increasing trend in the rural- urban migration is majorly because of the increase in the urban employment due to development of the urban informal sector post reform period [9]. There is also a significant share of urban to urban migration. There is an increase in the percentage share for urban to urban migration for both the genders from 2001 to 2011. People from the less developed states tend to move towards the developed states because of economic reasons, for better employment opportunities as well as for higher education [10].

5. CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY-

Overall, we see rise in the percentage of migrants to the total population from 2001 to 2011. Females seem to be more migratory but there is upward trend for the male counterpart too. Higher numbers of migrants have rural origin; they belong to the villages of India. Across the gender the reasons for migration also seem to be different for both the sexes. Females migrate more for social and family related reason like marriage. Males tend to migrate for economic related reasons

like work/employment etc. Considering, the period for migration the minimum share goes to the long term migrants. Percentage Share of rural to urban migration is the maximum among different streams of migration and several reasons have been discussed in the above sections.

The study is solely based on the secondary data provided by the census 2001 and provisional tables provided by the census for 2011. There is lacuna in the in-depth analysis of several aspects as the census does not provide very detail facts about the migration for e.g. remittances, household related information etc.

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