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**A CASE FOR MICROLEVEL STUDIES  
ON INTERNAL MIGRATION IN INDIA**

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Rapid population growth in the less developed regions of the world, substantial increases in the size of the urban population and in the levels of urbanization, and a sharp rise in the number and size of big cities specially since the beginning of the second half of the present century, all argue for increased attention to population movement as a key component in population dynamics and in urban and rural development (Goldstein and Goldstein, 1981:1).

In India, although large scale as well as localised sample surveys have been conducted from time to time to estimate the quantum and patterns of migration,<sup>1</sup> the population census has remained the most important source of migration data.<sup>2</sup> Analysis of interdistrict and interstate migration streams has been made in the past from birthplace statistics which have been collected of all people enumerated in all the censuses from 1872 onward (Davis, 1951; Zachariah, 1960, 1964; Mathur, 1962; George, 1965). It was not until 1961, however, that the birthplace was classified as rural or urban, and as (1) within the district of enumeration - intradistrict, (2) outside the district but within the state of enumeration - inter-district (3) outside the state of enumeration but within India - interstate, or (4) outside India. Information on duration of residence at the place of enumeration was also collected for the first time in the 1961 census. The 1971 census refined these statistics by including a question on "place of last residence", and the 1981 census included yet another question on "reasons for migration".

According to the place of birth (or last residence) and place of enumeration internal migrants can be classified into four migration streams: rural-to-rural, rural-to-urban, urban-to-urban, and urban-to-rural. A combination of these four streams with intradistrict, interdistrict and interstate streams which are roughly indicative of migration distance, gives rise to twelve migration streams. With the availability of these data, several studies have been undertaken by the researchers during the 1960s and the 1970s to study the quantum and pattern of migration flow by considering these streams (Bose, 1967, 1980; Kumar, 1967; Mitra, 1967; Gosal and Krishan, 1975; Premi, 1981, 1982).

Characteristics of the migrants in terms of sex, age, marital status, educational attainment, and employment status have also been studied from census data by several researchers (Zachariah, 1968; Mahmood, 1975; Mitra et al, 1980; Premi, forthcoming). The analysis conducted so far from the



census data has provided deep insight into the migration phenomenon in India. The knowledge can be improved further if the migration data in the twelve migration streams for males and females by duration of residence at the place of enumeration and those relating to migrant workers are mapped at the district level and are also correlated with certain indices of levels of development and of quality of life indices, such as agricultural and industrial output and productivity, per capita electricity consumption, employment in secondary or tertiary sector, literacy rate, infant mortality rate, availability of educational and health facilities per 10,000 population, length of metalled roads and all weather roads, etc. Such an analysis would indicate the nature of relationship between the quantum and direction of migration and indices of economic and social development, and would be very useful in analysing population growth phenomenon.

Efforts were also made in a number of sample surveys to collect information on migrants' characteristics, particularly relating to their economic activity, both at the time of leaving the communities of origin and at destination on the survey date. These surveys increased our knowledge about the migration phenomenon beyond what census could provide. There are, however, several issues relating to quantum, pattern or direction of migration and characteristics of the migrants, about which our knowledge and understanding is still very incomplete. Further, we know very little about motives for migration, and the consequences of migration on the communities of origin and destination. Allegations have sometimes been made that unchecked migration of the rural poor has led to the growth of slums in almost all the large cities and metropolises round the world.

The above issues require a clearer understanding of the comparative dynamics of the various types of population movements - permanent, temporary, chain, step, linked or circular in the different migration streams, namely, rural-to-rural, rural-to-urban, urban-to-urban and urban-to-rural, on the one hand, and of the people and their cultures on the other hand. Such understanding can probably be best accomplished by in-depth probing of the respondents both in the communities of origin and destination as is usually done in socio-anthropological enquiries. Hence, taking India as an example, I propose to indicate in this paper the nature of gaps in our knowledge about various aspects of human spatial mobility, why censuses and large scale sample surveys fall short in filling these gaps, and how the suggested social-anthropological type of micro-level enquiries involving in-depth probing can help in bridging them. For this purpose I propose to focus on (1) quantum of migration, (2) pattern of migration flows, (3) characteristics of the migrants at the time of leaving the community of origin and subsequent changes therein, (4) motives for migration and decision to migrate, and (5) consequences of migration on the communities of origin and destination. The design of the needed micro studies on internal migration has been presented in the last section of the paper.

#### Quantum of Migration

Discussing the accuracy of birthplace data, Zachariah wrote that "it would appear reasonable to assume that a simple question on place of birth would be answered with great accuracy and completeness by the entire population... There are, however, possibilities of error in these data...



(which) can arise either from (1) under-enumeration of migrants, and/or (2) misstatement of place of birth", (Zachariah, 1964: 42). Regarding the second aspect, he said that the head of the household, who mostly gives information to the census enumerator "may not be aware of the birthplace of all those who are staying with him on the census night. While he may know the birthplace of his sons and daughters, and perhaps of his wife, he may be less sure of that of his daughters-in-law and other relatives" (Zachariah, 1964: 42f). Further, "in India there are some special customs that make the place of birth of a person mere accident. A high percentage of Indian women return to the father's household to bear the first child and often the second and subsequent children. This custom, together with the practice of taking a wife from another village, which may be in another district or state, also gives rise to some spurious migration as measured from place-of-birth data (Zachariah, 1964:43; See also Davis, 1951: 107; Mitra, 1967; Chatterjee and Bose, 1977; Bose, 1980).

As most of the above movements were within the district of enumeration or across neighbouring districts, the marriage field being limited in India (Libbee and Sopher, 1975), they did not affect the quantum of interstate migration (Davis, 1951; 107; Zachariah, 1964: 43,46). Since 1961, the unit of migration analysis has become each small administrative unit - village, town, city, etc.; hence, the question of birth migration becomes important, particularly because more than 50 per cent of the male migration in India during 1961 and 1971 was rural-to-rural and a substantial proportion of it was within the district of enumeration (Table 1). Demographically, migration of a child soon after its birth from the birth place to the place of normal residence, specially if the child has not left the normal residence after coming into it, may be regarded as spurious.

To determine the extent of spuriousness in migration data several questions arise; for example, what is the pattern of village exogamy in marriage in different parts of the country and among different religious or caste groups? Is the practice of a woman going to her parents' home for delivery specific of Hindus only and that too among the higher castes, or is it almost universal? Is this practice related with first one or two births or does it continue with subsequent births as well? If the practice of a woman going to her parents' home for delivery is widespread, and if the birthplace is reported correctly, should we not have much higher migration rates in the country than reflected in the census statistics? Is the fact of an individual having a different birthplace at all recognised by the respondents or do they think that the child's birthplace is the home of the child's parents and not that where it was actually born? Is this phenomenon, in any way, related to the age of the child, that is, the fact of a different birthplace of the child is recognised during the first few years only and, later on, with the setting in of recall bias, child's normal place of residence becomes its place of birth as well? From the sociological viewpoint, one would like to know if the practice of sending the daughter-in-law to her parents' home is to avoid cohabitation during the later part of pregnancy and during the first few months after child's birth, or is it due to the feeling that mother would take much better care of her daughter and the child than the mother-in-law and will thus minimise chances of puerperal and infant deaths? And, finally, has the social and economic development in the country since independence, particularly the expansion of education and medical facilities, made any changes in this practice, and if so, in what way?



TABLE 1: Per cent distribution of lifetime migrants of each sex by migration streams based on place of birth and place of enumeration, India, 1961, 1971 and 1981

Type of migration streams	1961			1971			1981		
	Males	Females	Sex Ratio	Males	Females	Sex Ratio	Males	Females	Sex Ratio
<b>I</b> <u>Intradistrict</u>									
Rural-to-rural	40.15	65.48	273	38.42	62.01	277	31.90	56.05	237
Rural-to-urban	9.03	4.82	835	9.42	5.19	811	10.51	5.72	769
Urban-to-urban	2.97	1.65	801	2.47	1.47	746	3.51	2.05	715
Urban-to-rural	2.30	1.83	561	3.27	2.92	500	3.35	2.98	470
Sub total	54.45	73.78	329	53.58	71.59	334	49.33	66.90	308
<b>II</b> <u>Interdistrict</u>									
Rural-to-rural	11.28	12.44	404	10.14	12.23	370	10.04	13.83	304
Rural-to-urban	8.80	3.15	1,245	9.02	3.42	1,178	10.70	4.30	1,042
Urban-to-urban	5.22	2.45	947	6.00	3.04	881	7.62	3.99	799
Urban-to-rural	1.48	0.96	686	2.08	1.51	617	2.38	1.89	528
Sub total	26.78	19.00	628	27.24	20.20	602	30.84	24.06	536
<b>III</b> <u>Interstate</u>									
Rural-to-rural	5.31	3.38	702	4.97	3.51	633	4.10	3.40	505
Rural-to-urban	7.83	1.76	1,984	7.55	1.91	1,766	8.32	2.35	1,484
Urban-to-urban	4.87	1.72	1,266	5.48	2.17	1,127	6.04	2.54	994
Urban-to-rural	0.76	0.36	946	1.18	0.63	844	1.19	0.71	706
Sub total	18.77	7.22	1,161	19.18	8.22	1,043	19.83	9.04	917
<u>All Streams</u>									
Rural-to-rural	56.74	81.30	311	53.53	77.75	308	46.04	73.28	263
Rural-to-urban	25.66	9.73	1,175	25.99	10.52	1,104	29.53	12.37	999
Urban-to-urban	13.06	5.82	1,000	13.95	6.69	913	17.17	8.58	836
Urban-to-rural	4.54	3.15	644	6.53	5.05	578	6.92	5.58	519
Total migrants (millions)	41.44	92.97	446	48.35	108.25	447	57.88	138.43	418

- Note: 1. The figures of total migrants in this table exclude immigrants.  
2. The 1981 figures of total migrants include those persons also whose birth place as rural or urban could not be ascertained. Hence, the column totals do not add up to exactly 100 per cent.  
3. Sex ratio has been computed as number of males per 1,000 females.



It is very clear that the above questions cannot be included in population censuses or large scale sample surveys. These questions require detailed probing of the respondents who are in a position to give the first hand information for each successive birth. This type of information involves memory recall for each birth over a long time span and can best be obtained through a series of micro level enquiries in groups of villages selected from different parts of the country. In fact, in order to judge the extent of reliability of census statistics on birthplace migration and how the process of indicating the normal place of residence as the birthplace sets in, one has to utilise a combination of census type and micro level enquiries.

It was indicated earlier (fn.2) that in the Indian census a person became a migrant if he was away from his normal place of residence during the entire period of 21 days of census enumerations, that is, from 10th to 31st March, 1971, even though it was purely a temporary move. This also leads to a certain degree of spuriousness in migration data and needs to be examined. This, however, can be done by conducting an enquiry soon after the population census and not after the lapse of several years. In this enquiry one has to find out if a person was away from his normal place of residence during the specified period and for what purpose.

#### Pattern of Migration Flow

As indicated earlier, based on place of birth (or last residence) and place of enumeration, internal migrants can be classified into 12 types of migration streams. As Table 1 indicates, among lifetime migrants, intra-district rural-to-rural migration forms the most dominant stream for both males and females. Whereas the large share of female intradistrict migration is generally explained in terms of marriage migration, reasons for high male intradistrict rural-to-rural migration are not still very clear. Connell, *et al.*, believe that most seasonal migration is rural-to-rural and is dependent on complementary peaks of labour demand (Connell, *et al.*, 1976: 14). Mapping of the proportion of total intradistrict migrants in all the four streams together to total migrants on the basis of 1961 census data indicates its comparatively higher incidence in Punjab, Haryana, Western Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and Maharashtra (Gosal and Krishan, 1975: 196). Although village exogamy has been generally a rule in this area but male rural-to-rural migration originated largely from the crowded areas with low per capita agricultural productivity, and was directed towards sparsely populated areas with new developmental activities, particularly in agriculture, mining, and plantations (Gosal and Krishan, 1975: 199f). Expansion of education and growth of village industries seem to be some other factors for rural-to-rural migration in at least some parts of the country. There has been acceleration in rural-to-rural migration on account of Green Revolution in Punjab, Haryana, and western Uttar Pradesh because of the creation of large demand for hired labour in these areas which is met by migration of skilled and semi-skilled labour from the poorest districts of eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar (Bose, 1984: 22). In case of migration for economic reasons, one would like to know how much of it is seasonal, and what is its pattern from one village to another. Further, whether it is the rural poor who largely follow this migration stream and does this rural-to-rural migration help in reducing inequalities in household incomes or does it further accentuate them? Whereas an analysis of the relationship between variables such as levels of



agricultural productivity and its growth rate, extent of rural industrialisation, and the growth of educational facilities, rural electrification, etc., and the extent of lifetime or intercensal migration at the district level can reveal the role of some of these factors in enhancing or retarding mobility, one is not able to understand the role of certain other, and probably more important, psychological and tradition based factors for which one needs to conduct micro-level enquiries with deeper understanding of the society and sociological phenomena.

It has been found that in India the rural poor specially the uneducated, either do not migrate or generally move short distances while the comparatively better off people travel longer distances in much greater proportion (Sharma, 1977: 300f). This pattern has also been found in the village studies conducted in Tanzania, Thailand, and the Philippines (Connell, *et al.*, 1976: 73-75). This is probably due to the fact that (1) poor people generally do not possess any entrepreneurial skills and do not have enough resources to go to far-off places, (2) they do not get necessary information and knowledge about the nature of job opportunities to the extent that middle class and richer people get, (3) they do not have capacity to take risks, and (4) they believe that they would not get much higher wages as unskilled workers in comparison to what they might get in the nearby town; hence, they migrate generally from one rural area to another rural area or to a nearby town/city. Here one would like to know if it is the push factor which forces these people to migrate from one place to another and does it operate over a short range or is it directed towards metropolises and big cities equally well? Is there a dominance of any particular caste or community among the rural poor, or is it quite general? Has historicism to do anything with the places of origin and destination in this type of migration? These aspects require deeper probing at the individual and household level both at the origin and destinations - areas of large outmigration and areas of large immigration, and one-shot large scale sample surveys are not likely to succeed in determining the reality of the situation.

Migration literature in India has focussed on male selectivity in long distance, specially interstate migration (Mittra, 1967; Zachariah, 1968; Greenwood, 1971; Bose, 1980). Recent pattern of migration, however, indicates a decline in male selectivity even in this migration stream as there were more female lifetime migrants than male lifetime migrants in 1981, the sex ratio being 917 males for 1,000 females (Table 1). As independent female migration is very limited in India, one is faced with certain other questions to understand the nature of this change in male selectivity, namely: is it the rural push which is causing movement of complete households, or male migrants do not now like to leave their families in the rural areas for long periods after they have settled in the new place? Or is it a part of the expansion of the marriage field for the brides and the grooms?

Related with the above is the fact that migrants to Bombay from eastern Uttar Pradesh and north Bihar (or the Hindi speaking areas) leave their families back in the village in a much greater proportion than the Marathi or Tamil migrants; for example, among married male migrants 35 years and over from Hindi speaking area, only 38 per cent were living in Bombay with their wives whereas, among Marathi and Tamil migrants, this proportion was 83 per cent and 75 per cent respectively (Gore, 1970: 82).



The question therefore arises as to what forces the Hindi speaking migrant to keep his family in the village or home town, even though he has lived in Bombay for several years, which does not operate among Tamil or Marathi migrants? A related question is: do the migrants from the Hindi speaking region bring their school going sons to Bombay for imparting modern education to them and enabling them to take up urban white collar or skilled jobs in later life, or do they keep their children in the villages to look after the property and discharge the familial obligations? One may also like to know the circumstances in which these patterns vary from one community to another community. Probably, the in-depth probing alone can bring out the economic and social-psychological factors associated with these differentials and subtleties of human behaviour which may not fit into any of the existing models but might reveal something which the demographers have not yet considered necessary to know.

#### Migrants' Characteristics at the Time of Migration and Subsequent Changes in Them

Information on migrants' characteristics like sex, age, marital status, educational attainment and employment status became available in India from the 1961 and 1971 censuses. The data, however, relate to migrant's status as on census date and, therefore, conceal the changes that take place between the first move (say, after the age of 10) and the census date. Data were obtained in certain rounds of the National Sample Survey on the changes in the nature of employment before migration and on the survey date (Chakravarty, 1977: 323f), and in a number of city surveys (Sovani, et al., 1956; Iyengar, 1957; Malkani, 1957; Mishra, 1959; Dhekney, 1960; Majumdar, 1960; Sen, 1960; Balakrishna, 1961; Mukerjee and Singh, 1961, Lakdawala et al., 1963; Rao and Desai, 1965; Chauhan, 1966; D'Souza, 1968), but, in most surveys the information on the nature of activity before migration relates to the move which brought the person to the destination and not to the first move. In a recent study on internal migration in the Indian Punjab, Oberai and Singh (1983) obtained migration history of the immigrants to Ludhiana city but one does not get a clear perspective of the process of change in migrants' characteristics. The office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India, proposes to conduct a large scale migration survey in two or three selected states of India wherein effort will be made to collect migration histories. Migration history format has been used in the past by several researchers (Balan, Browning, and Jelin, 1973; Speare, 1976; Butz et al., 1978; Lauro, 1979) but they have concentrated basically on economic aspects of migration. Referring to Todaro's list of variables on which data are commonly collected in migration surveys (Todaro, 1976), Goldstein and Goldstein find a need to add a host of other variables of interest to sociologists, demographers, anthropologists, and political scientists - such as attitudes with respect to modernization, ethnicity, health, political involvement, and kinship structure. The length of the list indicates the enormous and complex challenges facing migration scholars who seek to identify who moves, how movers differ from others at destinations and at origin, how characteristics of movers compare before and after migration with a longer stay at destination or with return to place of origin, and how characteristics of migrants in various streams differ (Goldstein and Goldstein, 1981: 68).

Collection of such data involves, in the first instance, a proper



understanding on the part of both the researcher and the respondent as to which moves should be included in the migration history and which should be excluded. Changes in marital status, educational attainment, and nature of employment are quite frequent between the moves, and these should be clearly brought out according to the age of the migrant. Further, many times, migration moves of certain members are caused by the changes in the family life cycle of the household. It is very necessary to understand the characteristics of the migrant who leaves the community for this reason. However, in obtaining detailed data for all individuals of the household above a certain age (say 10 years), recall bias becomes very dominant in various sample surveys, particularly when the events are numerous and, therefore, it becomes imperative to limit the size of the enquiry and to depend more on detailed probing under relaxed conditions which is likely to provide contact with different members of the household individually. Hence, even for having a clear understanding of changes in migrant's characteristics over time, a micro-level approach seems to be a more suitable alternative.

#### Motivation for Migration and Decision to Migrate

Motive for migration and decision to migrate have drawn probably the greatest attention of the researchers interested in migration phenomenon - international and internal, whether they are economists, sociologists, psychologists, geographers, or demographers. Writing almost twenty years ago, Bogue felt that three key variables were generally involved in migration flows: employment, income, and rapid population growth. Migrants flee from areas where employment opportunities are stagnant, where income is low, and where the rate of population growth is high. Conversely, they are attracted to areas of new industrial development, regions of higher per capita income and areas where the disparity between birth and death rates is less (Bogue, 1966: 163). This is also in essence the push and pull theory of migration which considers basically the economic aspects of migration and ignores all other migration which is largely for non-economic reasons. Economists, for example, basically deal with rural-to-urban migration for economic reasons only (Lewis, 1954; Renis and Fei, 1961; Todaro, 1968, 1969, 1971, 1975, 1976; Harris and Todaro, 1970; Greenwood, 1971; Johnson, 1971; Fields, 1972) and leave out of consideration rural-to-rural, urban-to-urban, and urban-to-rural migration.<sup>3</sup> Bose finds that push-pull theory as an explanation of the migration phenomenon is too simplistic, specially in the wake of very substantial natural increase in the population of big cities and metropolises in the developing countries which, in turn, leads to urban push back (Bose, 1980: ). Connell et al., find that the "push" migration of the poor is usually individual rather than linked at first; is increasingly rural-to-rural and circular; and involves mostly illiterates; while the "pull" migration of the middle income groups is normally linked, with the head of household able to exert social controls, ensuring remittance and/or return; usually involving outmigration of one or two members of the household at a time, is overwhelmingly rural-to-urban; and in most cases involves initially the urban acquisition of secondary schooling, and subsequently urban work based on the resulting qualification (Connell, et al., 1976: 198).

As regards the decision to migrate and process of actual migration, Lee summarises the various factors which an individual takes into account



under four major headings, namely, (1) factors associated with the area of origin, (2) factors associated with the area of destination, (3) intervening obstacles, and (4) personal factors. He further says that decision to migrate is never completely rational, and for some persons the rational component is much less than the irrational (Lee, 1966: 49-51).

The recent researches with regard to decision to migrate have stressed on concepts like economic maximization, motivation, values and expectancies, place utility, community and social networks, environmental pressures and constraints, kinship structure, and family migration strategies which are rooted in the fundamental motive to maintain or improve the quality of life for the individual or family (De Jong and Gardner, 1981: 3f). The basic elements of a micro-level theory of migration decision making, according to them, start with a consideration of motives for migration. However, in migration decision making the degree of information about different possibilities helps to define the alternatives available to the potential migrant, and this delineates the perceptions of awareness space, which may be very broad or severely limited (De Jong and Gardner, 1981: 5).

These theories and suggestions sometimes fail to bring out certain other dimensions with regard to motives for migration as well as decision to migrate. In the first instance, reasons for migration are generally highly diversified and it is only rare that a single specific motive can be attributed for a particular move (Kothari, 1980: 393f). Then, there are situations when a better job with high salaries and social status is available to an individual but still the person decides not to migrate. Again, there is sometimes a very high degree of migration from certain communities or villages, both internal and international, over substantially long periods of time, while there are neighbouring communities and villages with almost no migration; hence, it becomes necessary to analyse reasons for migration both at the community and individual levels. Probably the socio-cultural influences become more dominant in migration decision making than mere economic factors (Hugo, 1981: 187). The issues relating to economic and social persecution (in the form of bonded labour of the landlords and moneylenders), and to the rigidity of village social structure which restricts any type of social mobility of the low-caste people or the tribals which seem to be important have not been generally considered in the earlier formulations on reasons for migration. My occasional talks with auto-drivers, pedicab drivers, rikshaw-pullers, or coolies, etc., indicate a feeling of happiness on being free from bondage and being master of their own fate. Probably, they have not been loser in this process even though most of them live in the cities in slum conditions.

The 1981 census of India for the first time collected information on reasons for migration. Table 2 gives the distribution of migrants from their place of last residence by reasons for migration (employment, education, family moved, marriage, and others) and by duration of residence at the place of enumeration for males and females. Employment accounts for about three-tenths of male lifetime migration but only about 2 per cent of female lifetime migration. It is noteworthy that among male current migrants (duration less than one year), 5.5 per cent moved to the place of enumeration for obtaining education but their proportion shot up to 9.8 per cent for the five-year period before census enumeration, after which



TABLE 2: Per cent distribution of internal migrants of each sex by reasons for migration for different lengths of residence at the place of enumeration, India, 1981

Sex	Reasons for migration	Duration of residence at the place of enumeration (years)			
		Less than one	0-4	0-9	Lifetime
Males	Employment	30.44	33.02	32.99	30.79
	Education	5.54	9.84	8.27	5.15
	Associational (or family moved)	27.13	30.78	32.16	30.57
	Marriage	0.74	1.66	2.07	3.05
	Others	36.15	24.70	24.52	30.44
Females	Employment	6.75	4.29	3.46	1.92
	Education	1.96	2.45	1.84	0.88
	Associational (or family moved)	33.57	27.45	24.27	14.72
	Marriage	21.49	49.55	56.91	72.34
	Others	36.23	16.26	13.47	10.14

Source: Derived from Table D-3 (Census of India, 1981, 1984: 250-271)



the proportion declined with the passage of time and stabilized at 5.2 per cent for lifetime migrants. Among women migrants, the strength of employment, associational, and others as reasons for migration declines monotonically with the lengthening of duration of stay at the place of enumeration but, in contrast, the importance of marriage as a reason for migration increases consistently. These data clearly indicate that reason for migration changes according to the current status of the migrant and the respondent gets conditioned accordingly (see also Kosinski and Prothero, 1975: 13). Accordingly, it is necessary to make a deeper probe of the reasons for migration and the characteristics of the migrant, particularly for the first move after the age of 10 or so and, if feasible, for each successive move. If this is not possible, one may collect information for the first move and the last move only with place of destination in the former case. As this involves a recall of the past events which may, sometimes, not be very pleasant, one has to use a lot of tact and skill which is possible only in micro level enquiries. Hence, a proper understanding of the various reasons for migration which made a person, a household, or a community to leave the place of origin can be had only by conducting socio-anthropological studies.

Related with the question of "why people move" is the question why certain others from the same community or even from the same household do not move since a motivational basis for not moving is fundamental to generalizations about the characteristics of those who move and those who stay (De Jong and Fawcett, 1981: 30). As said earlier, there are villages or communities from which there has been consistent long-term international and internal migration but there are other neighbouring villages and communities which have experienced almost no migration. It is doubtful to assume that people living in villages with almost no migration have been unaware of the migration process and the opportunities which people of the villages with tradition of migration have utilized, but still they decide not to migrate. It is therefore necessary to understand clearly the motives for migration of people belonging to certain communities and not from others.

According to the traditional pattern of living in the villages and small towns in India, in an earlier study Premi felt that it should be the younger brother or the younger son of the head of the household who should outmigrate more frequently than the eldest son (Premi, 1980: 114; see also Connell *et al.*, 1976: 204). His data, however, indicated that it is generally the eldest son who has migrated more frequently than others probably because the economy of the selected towns was such that, as soon as the eldest son was in a position to earn his livelihood, he had to leave his community to eke out a living somewhere else (Premi, 1980: 114). Kothari found that frequently a young son migrated to the city, secured employment of some kind, and subsequently sent for his family, if any. He found that migration from the villages was family rather than individual oriented (Kothari, 1980: 398). In the light of these findings there is a need to understand this process more clearly in a temporal perspective which can be built more easily in micro level studies.

In migration decision making an important question is: Is it the individual himself, or his parents, other family members, or the peers who finally take decision about the actual migration of the individual, his



and acculturation of immigrants and inmigrants, changes in the ethnic, religious or racial composition of the population of receiving areas, the effect of expulsions of the long term migrants when they are no longer required in the receiving countries, and the resultant social change in both the sending and receiving areas.

At the international level, the direction, volume, type and composition of modern migrations not only differ significantly from pre-1939, but are changing almost daily in response to changing policies reflecting need for, and restrictions on, immigrants (Appleyard, 1984: 4). This situation, to a certain extent, is found with internal migration as well. As the consequences of different types of migration are different, it is useful to classify the international migrants on the basis of their status into the following categories: (1) permanent (I inward; E outward); (2) professional and skilled transients (and dependents) (I and E); (3) temporary workers (and dependents), (I and E); (4) illegal (I and E); and (5) refugees (I and E) (Appleyard, 1984: 4). In the case of internal migration, one may delete categories (4) and (5), particularly (4), from the above typology but include (a) seasonal or circular migrants, and (b) commuters.

In the analysis of consequences of internal migration, it is useful to classify the migrants according to the migration stream, namely, rural-to-rural, rural-to-urban, urban-to-urban, and urban-to-rural. Literature on consequences of migration, however, mostly relates to rural-to-urban migration, and there again generally the emphasis has been on the negative consequences on the communities of destination in the form of growth of slums, and spread of rural poverty (de Souza, 1978: xv). This may be due to the fact that, at the macro-level the remaining streams have not been considered of much importance. At the micro-level, however, even rural-to-rural, and urban-to-urban migration streams as also urban-to-rural stream can make very substantial impact both on the communities of origin and destination (Hugo, 1984: 68), specially when these are considered at inter-district and interstate levels. For example, in his study of urban outmigration, Premi discusses the loss of original economic base of certain towns over time and their inability to create new economic viability for themselves which has ultimately resulted into chronic outmigration of the people to areas of better economic opportunities. He says, "The impact of continuous outmigration on the communities of origin is noticed in the form of comparatively higher sex ratio (females per 1,000 males), a trough in the age pyramid on the side of males in the age group 25-44, a lower literacy rate and a comparatively lower proportion of persons with primary or middle level qualifications, and a very high selectivity of high school pass and graduates among the migrants" (Premi, 1980: 167).

Different types of migration depending on the length of stay away from the community of origin when combined with the type of migration streams have very different demographic, economic, and social consequences on the communities of origin and destination. If the migration is circulatory, as is generally found in rural-to-rural and urban-to-urban migration streams, it may not have much demographic impact on the communities of origin as well as those of destination, but permanent and semi-permanent migration do affect the growth rates, sex-age-marital status of the populations as well as the period fertility and mortality rates. No systematic study seems to have been undertaken in India to analyse the nature and



direction of the various influences on the communities of origin and destination mainly because of the lack of disaggregated data.

From the economic point of view Zachariah (1968) observed that in Bombay migrants had an over-representation in blue collar and unskilled occupations while non-migrants were over-represented in white collar occupations because of the difference in their educational attainment. Mitra *et al.*, (1980: 67) have concluded that the migrants to the cities had little skill, education, training and, as such, most of them were absorbed in either low grade services or in low grade production process activities and indigenous means of transport. Thus, migrants to the cities are regarded as a sore in the city polity, which probably is not true. In the study relating to cityward migration in India, Premi (forthcoming) observed that migrant workers to cities possessed higher levels of education and skills and they were engaged in much greater proportion in white collar jobs than the non-migrants. Conversely, non-migrants were more in production process occupations and in "urban informal sector".

Regarding long-term impact of foreign remittances, from his study of Jandiali village in Punjab, Helweg observed that "in the first stage, remittances were used for family maintenance and improving land productivity. Such investments eventually enabled Jandiali to be a very prosperous village. Remittances in the second phase assumed a symbolic purpose, with returns being used to acquire a higher class ranking and power within village society. This created tensions as the existing leadership was challenged. Inflation also resulted, thus hampering those without emigrant resources and making the position of some of the poor low-caste villagers worse ... Conspicuous consumption created employment for Jandialians and immigrants from Uttar Pradesh. In the final phase of emigrant remittance behaviour, there was a focus on business type investment, which helped the village economy to diversify and become more independent of the climatic factors on which farmers had been dependent" (Helweg, 1983).

Regarding workers in metropolitan urban and industrial areas in India, Mitra found that their savings were systematically ploughed into rural areas even as savings from rural areas were scraped by entrepreneurs for setting up industries in metropolitan and urban areas. In 1960-61, the Calcutta Industrial Region sent out Rs.276 million by postal money orders alone, mostly to rural areas of India. Bombay sent Rs.231 million, Delhi Rs.77 million, Madras Rs.69 million, and Bangalore, Ahmedabad, and Kanpur about Rs.27 million each. These figures afford some idea of the further savings which the worker carries home with him on his annual holiday, which must be more than twice of these sums and also how he gets along without the barest minimum of house, sanitation, comfort, and privacy in the metropolitan area (Mitra, 1967: 611f). It is quite likely that the size of these remittances to villages and home towns has increased considerably over time, but it is difficult to say whether its proportion to the total net national output has increased.

With respect to the amount and pattern of remittances, Connell *et al.*, observe that international migration can produce substantial returns but as it involves heavy costs, these returns are restricted to households with sufficient income to meet such an outlay. Rural-urban migration produces lower returns, and rural-rural migration the lowest of all. The



proportion of migrants remitting appears to decline with distance as well as with lengthening of absence from the village. When the remittances were substantial and sustained over a significant period, they had been used in several villages to develop the productivity of agricultural base of the village. Most remittances are, however, consumed by every day needs, and any surplus goes into various forms of conspicuous consumption. Richer households, with access, through schooling, to urban-based modern employment may reap high returns from migration while poor households, forced into migration by shifts in the village economy may obtain a significant and vital proportion of their income from remittances from migrant members (Connell *et al.*, 1976: 207-9). In the villages of Ludhiana district, Oberai and Singh found that remittances accounted for the entire income of the households in the bottom decile (Oberai and Singh, 1983).

From the social point of view, migrants are regarded as a "bridge" between the traditional culture and modernizing societies and forebearers of social change in the communities of origin since, when these people return back either for good after a successful career or for short vacations, they carry with them new ideas in the form of new techniques of production, new style of living, and rationality of behaviour, etc. Further, the various types of consumer durables including clothing which these migrants bring with them serve to demonstrate their successful career at destinations. In a way, this encourages the young adults to outmigrate from these villages to those destinations where these return migrants have worked in the past or where the visitors are currently working.

From the viewpoint of the receiving communities, particularly the primate and metropolitan cities, the flux of rural masses has led to mostly unplanned and haphazard growth of the cities and some of the worst slums. Rural poverty carried to the cities through rural-urban migration is most visible in slums and squatter settlements, environmental deterioration, sub-standard housing, and low levels of health and nutrition (de Souza, 1978: xv). Further, the spontaneous settlements of the urban poor are not merely aggregations of shacks and huts but communities of fellow migrants. Each is based on a network of primary affinities of language, religion, village, caste or kin, which enables the rural migrant to become socialized and acculturated in the complex and diversified environment of a metropolitan city (Majumdar, 1978).

It is, however, doubtful if the slum population of the major cities is composed entirely of the rural migrants only. It is quite likely that a certain proportion of slum population (which cannot be easily estimated), particularly in the older parts, is of those who have been there for two generations or more. The poor rural migrants get easily assimilated and acculturated with them but find difficulty in getting assimilated into the middle class since the latter has never made any effort on its part.

In the studies relating to social consequences of migration attention has largely been focused on issues relevant to the receiving communities. There is little, if any, attempt to analyse these consequences in the communities of origin, particularly at the familial level. Connell *et al.*, indicate that at the individual household or village level, certain groups clearly benefit from migration, and remittances can act as a potent means



of social mobility (as indicated in the case of Jandiali village above); but it is the poorest in most of the villages having families with no migrants and, hence, no remittances, who are the worst sufferers. Usually migration brings major net remittances only to those households who can afford the foregone income, and the initial costs, involved in sending out migrants. This may result in greater inequality among the different sections of the village society and in new and more extreme social differentiation in the village (Connell et al., 1976: 103).

It was indicated earlier that a large proportion of married migrants from eastern Uttar Pradesh and north Bihar continue to keep their families behind in the villages, probably because they continue to have familial obligations over a long period of time which requires sending additional cash income regularly to the family of procreation.

In considering the economic aspect of migration the separation of the wife from her husband for long periods has been completely ignored. This aspect is very much reflected in the folk songs of this region known as "Birha" and "Bidesiya". They bring out in very clear terms the loneliness of the young bride, her husband being hundreds of miles away from home.

In the study of the consequences of migration, there is therefore a need to pay a greater attention to the consequences on the communities of origin rather than communities of destination. In doing so, one should analyse not only the economic consequences of different types of migration in different migration streams, but the social and political consequences as well. As different social groups in the village (or town) have varying propensities to migrate, it is also necessary to analyse the impact of migration on them. Finally, as family is the smallest social group, one should also give due attention to the impact of migration on different members of the family, the parents, wife, and children. All these aspects of consequences of migration again require deeper probe of the processes and consequences in which the demographer alone cannot succeed. He has to depend on the economists, sociologists, psychologists, anthropologists, and political scientists.

#### A Scheme for Conducting Microlevel Research

By considering five different aspects of migration - quantum, pattern of migration flows, characteristics of migrants, motives for migration and decision to migrate, and consequences of migration on the communities of origin and destination, I have tried to bring out in this paper the gaps in our knowledge which require deeper probe than is possible in census or large scale sample surveys. I have also shown that the issues cut across various social science disciplines like economics, geography, sociology, psychology, anthropology, and probably history and political science besides demography. Moreover, probably on all the above five aspects of migration, one can easily find regional variations and, hence, a single study in one region, howsoever comprehensive, may leave a large number of questions unanswered. This implies that there is scope to undertake several studies in different parts of the country which can be almost simultaneous or spread over a number of years.



In discussing the various aspects of migration I have repeatedly said that the phenomenon requires a deeper probe but I have not specified the nature of this probe. As the migration phenomenon involves the families of the migrants in the communities of origin and the migrants themselves at destinations, it is easy to see that any comprehensive survey would need the study of the communities of origin of the migrants at the household level as well as the communities of destination. However, as is well known, such studies are very very costly both in terms of money and time and have therefore been rarely attempted, if at all. However, instead of continuing to remain in ignorance, it would be worthwhile to develop small scale studies by selecting a couple of villages with high migration rates - permanent and seasonal, and a couple of others with very low or no migration from the same region - district or even tehsil; trace the migrants from them and contact them at destinations.

The issues raised in this paper, particularly about quantum and pattern of migration, require two different approaches for collecting the relevant data, namely, (1) the census type one-shot enquiry, and (2) a social-anthropological type of enquiry requiring an understanding of the village social structure and class and caste hierarchy, on the one hand, and recording of the migration phenomenon starting with place of birth in a historical perspective for the different members of the household on the other hand. For this purpose, instead of depending purely on the memory of the head of the household, it may be necessary to gather information by probing several other members. It is therefore suggested that after conducting a census type enquiry in the selected villages, one may take a reasonable sample of households and probe deeply about the various aspects of the migration phenomenon. It would be very useful to contact the members from the migrating households at their destinations to know how they think about the decision to migrate, how they live, how much money they send home, etc. To understand the social and psychological impact of the separation of the wife and children from the migrant, one may learn a lot from the prevalent folk songs and other stories besides talking to them.

Regarding motives for migration and decision to migrate or to stay in the communities of origin, one again requires detailed information on past events. To know the differences between off-hand information and the real reasons one should first conduct a one-shot enquiry which should be followed by detailed probing of the households with migrant members, households with no migrants, and of the migrants themselves at destinations. Information obtained through such enquiries could help in developing certain models and hypotheses which can be tested further in the field with other microlevel enquiries or sample surveys.



### Footnotes

1. Recognising the need to study the frequency of periodic movements in relation to economic cycles, the National Sample Survey Organisation of the Government of India began collecting information on migration from its ninth round onward. The information was collected in 9th, 11th to 23rd rounds and in 28th round. The nature of information collected in different rounds, however, varied but covered most of the basic information to discern the pattern of migration, characteristics of the migrants, and reasons for migration in almost all the rounds. Further, the analysis has been largely restricted to interstate variations (see, National Sample Survey Report Nos. 53, 126, 182). The Research Programmes Committee of the Indian Planning Commission sponsored a number of city surveys during the 1950s and the early 1960s which described the growth of selected cities during the first half of this century, the pattern of immigration to them and the characteristics of the immigrants vis-a-vis the total population or the non-migrants in the respective cities (Sovani et al., 1956; Iyengar, 1957; Malkani, 1957; Mishra, 1959; Dhekney, 1960; Sen, 1960; Majumdar, 1960; Balakrishna, 1961; Mukerjee and Singh, 1961; Lakdawala, et al., 1963; Rao and Desai, 1965; Chauhan, 1966; D'Souza, 1968; See also Bulsara, 1964. Some other important studies relating to migrants to the cities have been conducted by Sovani, et al., (1948), Mitra, (1963, 1970), Malhotra (1964), Gadgil (1965), Mukerjee and Singh (1965), Ghosh (1966), Bose, (1968), Zachariah, (1968), and Gore (1970) besides other writers. Recently Connell, et al., (1976) have examined the process of migration from rural areas by considering the information available in the village studies carried out in different parts of the world with a greater emphasis on studies conducted in India.
2. In the Indian census data on migration are collected by considering each individual's place of birth or place of last residence. A person is considered a migrant if his place of birth is different from his place of enumeration. According to the place of last residence, a person is counted as a migrant if he had another place of normal residence irrespective of his place of birth before he came to the place of enumeration. If a person born at the place of enumeration had shifted subsequently to another village or town by the nature of his work or for studies, etc., and had come again to the place of enumeration, he was deemed to have another place of residence prior to his enumeration at the present place. This, however, excluded persons who were away from their normal residence being on tour, pilgrimage or for temporary business purposes (Census of India 1971, 1975: 19). Normal residence of a person was, however, defined in relation to the period of enumeration. Thus, if a person had been away throughout the enumeration period from what he regarded as his normal residence, he was not considered eligible for enumeration at that place but was enumerated wherever he was actually found during the enumeration period (Census of India 1971, 1975: 16), and became a migrant at the place of enumeration.



3. Dhar (1980) has utilized a modified gravity model to analyse migration in all the four migration streams - urban-to-urban, rural-to-urban, urban-to-rural, and rural to rural at the interstate level and urban-to-rural, and rural-to-rural at the within state level. He finds that variables such as rural unemployment, educational level, and land distribution are important determinants of migration flows.

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