

Understanding the linkage between International and Internal Migration process: A study of Eastern Uttar Pradesh, India

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Abstract

The issues of concern for internal and international migration dynamics are whether today's internal migrants are tomorrow's potential international migrants; whether international and internal migration are substitutes for each other; and whether internal and international migrants share the same profile.

Present study based on both primary and secondary data attempts to understand the linkage between internal and international migration process and pattern by taking case of Eastern Uttar Pradesh, a poor but highly migration-prone region of India.

International migration from this region started long back in 1833 during colonial period but due to global political and economic dynamics it could not develop into migration corridor. However it could link this region with internal destinations which was intensified after independence. In contemporary period, international migration from the region occurs through internal migration and the internal destinations in fact, act as incubator for the first time international migrates.

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Extended Abstract

Rationale of study

There are two approaches to study the dynamics of internal and international migration- “single mobility framework” by Ronald Skeldon which calls for the creation of a to orient future research and synthetic analyses. While the method by Bloemraad advocates for comparative migration studies at the place of origin. The process of internal and international migration has been interlinked in three different ways. First, there is “step migration”, where people move to one or more locations within their country before emigrating to another country; second there is what might be called “replacement migration”, where the “gap” left by workers moving abroad is filled by workers from other parts of the country, and third, return migration, where international return migrants turn to internal migration (Laczko, 2008).

In India there were three main pocket of international migration today- a) Punjab b) Kerala and Tamailnadu, and c) Uttar Pradesh. Uttar Pradesh having a long history of migration, is the recently entrants into the international migration stream. The eastern part of the state is one of the backward regions also known for distress labour migration. The studies on both streams of migration suggest that the process of migration is complex phenomena. The

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internal migration leads to international migration or international migration is substitute of internal migration need to be analysed in different spatio-cultural contexts.

Research Question and Objectives

Now the question arises like how international migration and internal migration are interlinked with each other? What play crucial role in selection of migration stream- the economic or socio-cultural factor? Which stream of migration is more beneficial for the sending region ?

The main objective of the study is to explore the dynamics of internal and international migration involving the interlinkage in the causes, process and consequences of stream at origin.

Methodology

The study uses both secondary (archive, Census of India, and different Government reports) as well as primary of data sources. Primary data was collected from four villages located in one of the migrant sending pockets of Eastern UP. Using stratified random sampling method, data was collected from 203 internal migrant household (IMHh) and 108 international migrant household (InMHh).

Findings

To fulfil the objectives, investigation was done from two perspectives- one by studying the history of migration from the region and linking it with present pattern of migration. The other was through retrospective method where family history of migration was investigated.

International migration from this region started long back in 1833 as indentured labourer migration during colonial period. However, migrants have always been confined to poor, ill/semi literate and un/semi skilled male population. Migration from this region has been adopted as a part of livelihood strategy, where males migrate leaving their wife, children and parents behind in the villages. The history of international migration could not led to development of international corridor but resulted in internal migration as an easy alternative of livelihood earning.

Thus international as well as internal migration has close linkage with the family migration history. The inter generation migration history of a family reveals that 31 percent internal and 41 percent international migrants were from second or third generation. Household with the history of migration tends to sent more international migrants than the internal migrants. The data also shows change in destination of migrants from east to west in both the streams. The grandparent generation of migrants from this region migrated towards east mainly to Kolkata, Burma and Singapore but new generation have changed their destination with change in development and economic activities. They migrate to Mumbai (in India) and to Gulf countries.

Only 18 percent of international migrants have directly gone to their current place of destination. In other words 82 percent international migrants have made their first move somewhere within the country. After acquiring some skills, knowledge, network and threshold money then they decided for international stream.

With the transition from internal to international destination the skills, wage and age of first move improved. The majority of internal as well as international migrants are absorbed in

construction sector. The development of modern communication system particularly mobile phones play crucial role in migration initiation and maintain link with left behind family.

In nut shell, International migration from this region started long back in 1833 during colonial period but due to global political and economic dynamics it could not develop into migration corridor. However, international migration in the past could link the region with internal destinations which was intensified after independence. In contemporary period, international migration from the region occurs through internal migration. The internal destinations in fact, act as incubator for the first time international migrates where they acquire skill and experience, develop a network, and save some money to meet the initial cost of international migration.