

# State Wise Working Status of Rural to Urban Migrants in India

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### Abstract

In the present paper an attempt has been made to analyze the working status of rural to urban migrants among the states and union territories of India. The study is based on secondary sources of data, collected from Census of India publications 2001, New Delhi. The data regarding the place of last residence (duration of residence one to four years) of the total migrants has been taken into account. The overall analysis of the study reveals that the percentage of main workers in India is 32.97 percent and that of marginal workers is 3.12 percent. Whereas the highest percentage is recorded in non-workers (63.91 percent) category.

The state wise distribution of working status of rural to urban migrants in India shows a high degree of variation. The highest percentage of main workers is found in the northern and north-eastern states, and lowest in western, central and eastern regions of the country. While, the highest percentage of marginal workers is recorded in the western, central and north-eastern parts of the country and lowest in the northern, eastern and southern states. However, northern, western, central and eastern parts of India reported the high percentage of non-workers and lowest in few northern and north-eastern states.

**Keywords:** Migrants, Main Workers, Marginal Workers, Non-workers.

### Introduction

Working force is an integral part of development process. Variations in the quality of labour as well as quantity affect the specialization and division of labour. Labour force is directly related with the principal components of demography i.e. fertility, mortality and migration ( Chakraborty, S., 2013). Migration of workers is a human phenomenon which has historical roots and wider implications. The search for the source of survival or quest for Eldorado, the blissful life, has ever remained the inspiring and the dovetailing force of migrations within countries or of trans-migration. Migrations have economic genesis but resulting socio-political cultural ramifications.

In India, during the last 50 years rural population has decreased from 82.0 to 68.9 per cent. Migration from rural to urban areas is up from 27.8 to 31.1 per cent since 2001. It is estimated that approximately 2 million people are shifting from rural to urban areas annually and approximately 22 million people have migrated from rural to urban areas since 2001. Further, approximately 55 per cent of the households in rural areas and 67 per cent of the households in the urban areas had migrated for employment related reasons(Gautam, H.R., 2012).

Lack of job opportunities at their native place, regional disparities, poverty, regional imbalance in the development, different development policies adopted by states and gender discrimination are some of the main reasons behind migration of population in India. Regional variation in workforce, economic opportunities and growing marginal workers lead to huge mobility from one part of India to another part. Towards urban or urban centric migration from rural rather than urban to urban is the unique pattern of Indian migration. Urban centric economic growth or policies promotes economic growth around pre-existing growth centres in the advance regions (Srivastav, 2009; Srivastava and Sasikumar, 2005) is the responsibility for that.

Rural to urban migration has attracted the attention of academicians as well as the policymakers throughout the world in recent years, because of its wide range of socio-economic, political, demographic, ecological and environmental implications. It plays an important role in the process of economic development and social transformation because the shifting of the work force from primary to secondary and tertiary sectors that result in structural change (Parida, J.K. and Madheswaran, S., 2010).

Rural-urban migration is a mechanism of adjustment by individual and group to development gaps created between the dynamic industrial sector in urban/ peri-urban areas and often the more inert agricultural sector in rural areas (Guery, 1995). In rural areas people don't get an employment, their main livelihood is mostly agriculture and in some cases seasonal employment in agriculture, that's why workers face a lot of problems. The landless poor who mostly belong to lower castes, indigenous communities and economically backward regions constitute the major portion of Migrants. The Indian daily Hindustan Times on 14th October 2007, revealed that according to a study by a Government Institute, 77% of the population i.e. nearly 840 million Indians live on less than Rs.20 a day. Indian agriculture became non remunerative, taking the lives of 100,000 peasants during the period from 1996 to 2003, i.e. a suicide of an Indian peasant every 45 minutes. Hence, the rural people from the downtrodden and backward communities and backward regions such as Bihar, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh travel to far distances seeking employment at the lowest rungs in construction of roads, irrigation projects, commercial and residential complexes, in short, building the "Shining" India (Dwivedi, R., 2012).

#### **Aim of the Study**

The present study intend to investigate the working status of rural to urban migrants in all the states and union territories of India.

#### **Study Area**

India as a whole has been chosen as a study area for the present work and the boundary of a state/ UT has been considered as a smallest unit of study. The country comprises of twenty eight states and seven union territories (Census of India, 2001). It lies entirely in the northern hemisphere. The main land extends between 8° 4' and 37° 6' North latitudes, and 68° 7' to 97° 25' East longitudes. It stretches over an area of about 32,87,240 square kilometers and bounded by the Himalayas in the north and Indian ocean in the south, surrounded by Pakistan and Afghanistan in the north- west, China, Bhutan and Nepal in the north, Bangladesh and Myanmar in the east. According to 2001 Indian Census, the total population of India was 1,027 million of which 72.2 percent was rural and remaining 27.8 percent was urban. The general density of population was 324 persons per square kilometer and the general sex ratio was 933. The overall literacy rate was 64.8 percent.

#### **Database and Methodology**

The data used in this paper is obtained from Census of India, 2001. The census of India provides migration data on the basis of place of birth (village or town), place of last residence, duration of residence (stay) at the place of enumeration, places of residence on a specified date before the census, and reasons for migration. Besides these, it also provides data on economic activity, industrial category and occupational division of migrants.

In the present work the data related to economic activity of the rural to urban migrants in India whose duration of residence was 1 to 4 years

have been analysed. According to Census, those workers who had worked for the major part of the reference period (i.e. 6 months or more in a year) are termed as main workers. Those workers who had not worked for the major part of the reference period (i.e. less than 6 months in a year) are termed as marginal workers. A person who did not at all work during the reference period was treated as non-worker. The data of main workers, marginal workers and non-worker who migrated from rural to urban areas have been taken into account and then converted into percentage and processed in tabular form. On the basis of tables and processed data, maps have been prepared with the application of GIS-Arc view programme (version 3.2) to show the patterns of intra-state variations in the economic activity of rural to urban migrants in India. The boundary of a state/UT has been considered as the smallest unit of study. Moreover, the working status of rural to urban migrants from the union territories of India has not been shown in the maps, but the distribution of working status of rural to urban migrants from all the union territories has been studied and their per cent values have been given in the Table 1.

#### **Results and Discussion**

**Table 1: Percent Distribution of Rural to Urban Migrant Workers in India, 2001 (Duration of Residence 1-4 Years)**

State/Union Territory	Main Workers	Marginal Workers	Non-Workers
Jammu & Kashmir	34.56	3.63	61.82
Himachal Pradesh	43.75	2.12	54.12
Punjab	41.48	2.61	55.90
Uttaranchal	27.20	3.34	69.46
Haryana	32.66	4.63	62.71
Rajasthan	27.31	4.33	68.36
Uttar Pradesh	24.17	4.04	71.79
Bihar	17.72	3.03	79.25
Sikkim	49.68	3.55	46.78
Arunachal Pradesh	34.90	3.49	61.61
Nagaland	33.45	5.45	61.11
Manipur	33.44	12.79	53.77
Mizoram	39.66	12.40	47.94
Tripura	31.14	2.04	66.82
Meghalaya	30.47	4.08	65.45
Assam	40.28	3.47	56.26
West Bengal	31.50	3.51	64.99
Jharkhand	21.03	2.73	76.24
Orissa	30.90	2.52	66.57
Chhattisgarh	28.78	3.42	67.80
Madhya Pradesh	24.86	4.31	70.83
Gujarat	36.42	1.44	62.14
Maharashtra	36.51	2.93	60.56
Andhra Pradesh	31.23	3.39	65.39
Karnataka	35.36	2.78	61.86
Goa	38.40	4.52	57.08
Kerala	25.88	2.72	71.40
Tamil Nadu	36.30	3.06	60.63

Union Territories			
Chandigarh	41.94	1.46	56.60
Delhi	42.05	2.82	55.12
Daman & Diu	54.14	1.14	44.72
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	58.92	1.01	40.06
Lakshadweep	35.30	2.18	62.52
Pondicherry	32.31	1.74	65.95
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	39.73	2.99	57.28
<b>India</b>	<b>32.97</b>	<b>3.12</b>	<b>63.91</b>

**Source:** Census of India, Migration Table- D1106

Table 1 highlights the percentage distribution of working status of rural to urban migrants whose duration of residence was one to four years in India. It will be seen from the data that the percentage of main workers in India is 32.97 percent and that of marginal workers is 3.12 percent. Moreover, the non-workers accounts for the largest percent of rural to urban migrants in India i.e., 63.91 percent.

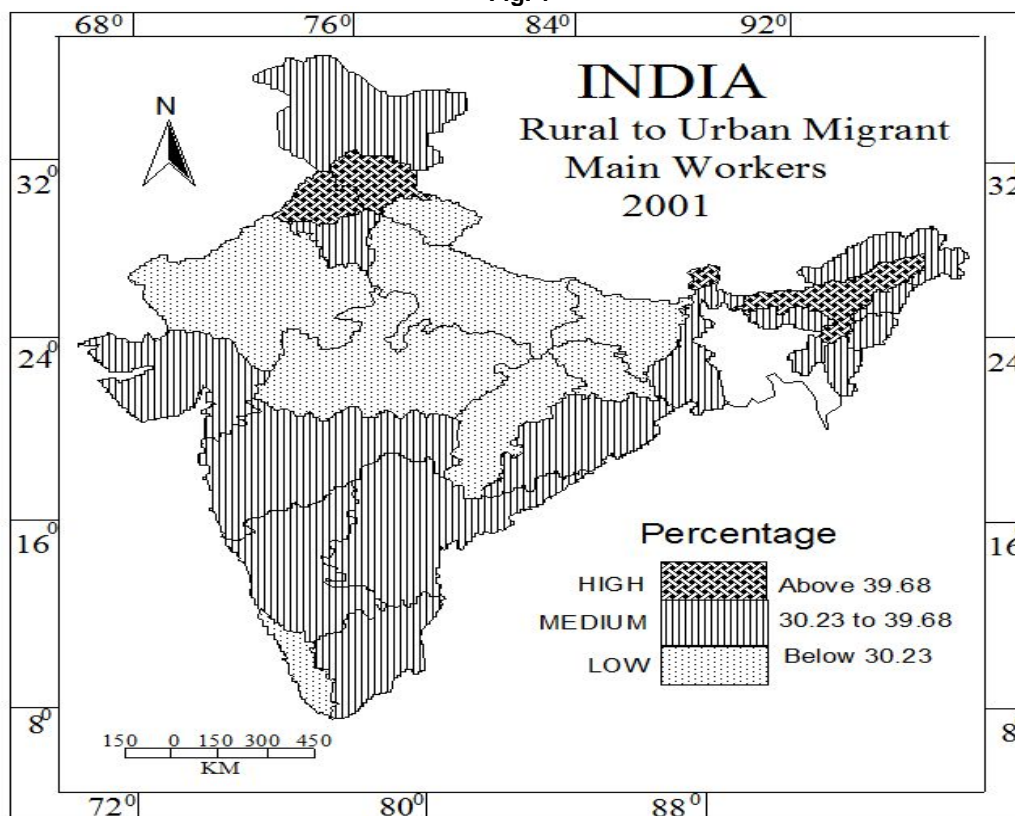
An analysis of data given in Table 1 shows that there are a wide range of variations in working status of rural to urban migrants in India. The main, marginal and non-workers who migrated from rural to urban areas in India varied a lot and are grouped into three categories as high, medium and low (Figures 1, 2 and 3).

The range of variation of rural to urban migrant main workers in India varies from 49.68 percent in the state of Sikkim to 17.72 percent in the state of Bihar. All the states may conveniently be arranged into three grades such as high (Above 39.68 percent), medium (30.23 to 39.68 percent) and low (Below 30.23 percent).

The rural to urban main workers is marked with notable variation in its distribution among the states of India. Only four states i.e. Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Sikkim and Assam lies in the high category (Above 39.68 percent). In all the four states the percentage of main workers is more than forty percent (Fig. 1).

About 57 percent of the country have the medium level (30.23 to 39.68 percent) of rural to urban migrant main workers, namely Jammu & Kashmir, Haryana, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Meghalaya, west Bengal, Orissa, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Goa and Tamil Nadu in which the states of Gujarat in the west, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and west Bengal in the southern and eastern part constitute a big contiguous region extending from west to east and covering all the southern states of India except Kerala. While the states like, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura and Meghalaya form an identifiable region in the north-eastern part of the country and the remaining states (Jammu & Kashmir, Haryana) fails to form any contiguous region in the country.

**Fig. 1**



**Source:** Based on Table 1

There are eight states (Uttaranchal, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Kerala) lie in the low category (Below 30.23 percent) of rural to urban migrant main workers in India. All these states namely, Uttaranchal, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh form a remarkable region in the central part of the country while the remaining state Kerala is found to be scattered in the southern part of the country (Fig. 1).

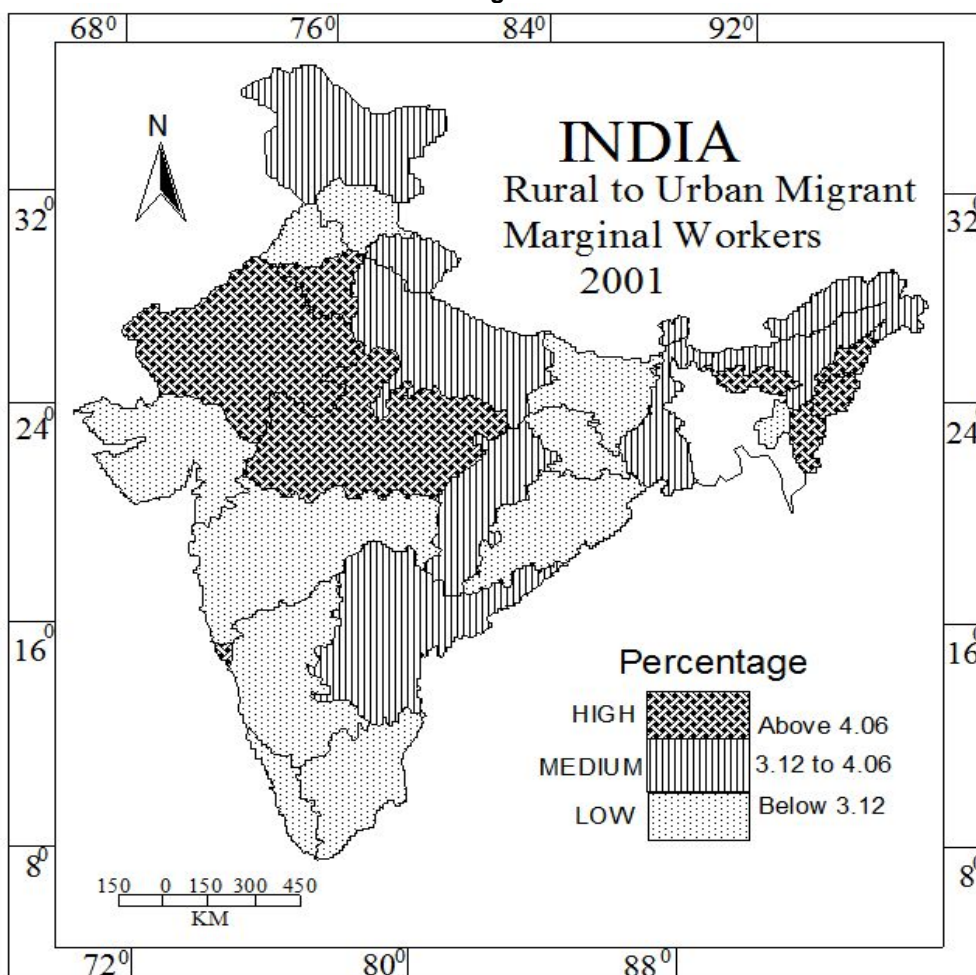
The figure 2 reveals the array of variation in rural to urban migrant marginal workers among the states of India that varies from 12.79 percent in Manipur to 1.44 percent in Gujarat. This range of variations may be categorized into three groups as shown in Fig. 2.

It may be seen from figure 3 that the eight states have high percent (Above 4.06 percent) of rural to urban migrant marginal workers in India. This includes the state of Haryana, Rajasthan, Nagaland,

Manipur, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Madhya Pradesh and Goa. They formed two regions: one in the north-western and central part including the states of Haryana, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh while the second region in north-eastern part consisting the states of Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Meghalaya (Fig. 2).

There are nine states that fall under medium level of rural to urban migrant workers in India, they are Jammu and Kashmir, Uttaranchal, Uttar Pradesh, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh. All these states have percentage between 3.12 to 4.06 percent. The states like Uttaranchal, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh form a linear group extending from north to south-eastern part of the country while another group is witnessed in north-eastern part comprising of Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh and Assam. The remaining states of the same grade are scattered and do not make any definite region in the study area (Fig. 2).

Fig. 2



Source: Based on Table 1

However, majority of the states i.e., around forty percent reported the low category (Below 3.12 percent) of rural to urban migrant workers in India. This includes Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Bihar, Tripura, Jharkhand, Orissa, Gujarat,

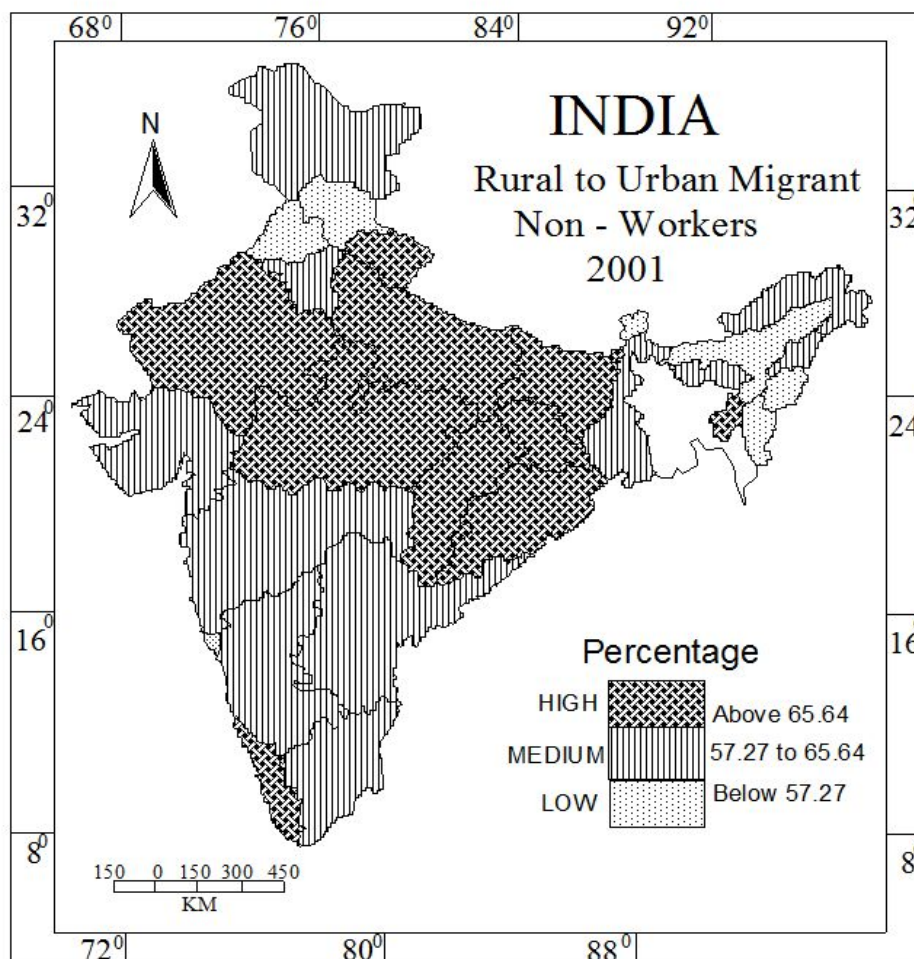
Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. They form three separate regions in north, south and east direction. The larger region stretches from west to south, including the states of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka Kerala and Tamil Nadu. While the second

region, in eastern part comprises of Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa and the third region, in northern part is made up of Himachal Pradesh, Punjab.

The table 1 exhibits the string of variations of rural to urban migrant non-workers in India. The range

varies from 79.25 percent in the state of Bihar to 46.78 percent in the state of Sikkim. This range of variations may be arranged into three categories as shown in Fig. 3.

Fig. 3



Source: Based on Table 1

Figure 4 reveals that the high level (Above 65.64) of rural to urban migrant non-workers is witnessed in the states of Uttaranchal, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Tripura, Jharkhand, Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Kerala, among which Uttaranchal, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh combined to form a single large extensive region spreading over the northern, western, central and eastern parts of the country while the remaining states do not form any contiguous region (Fig. 3).

The medium category (57.27 to 65.63 percent) includes eleven states i.e. Jammu and Kashmir, Haryana, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Meghalaya, West Bengal, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Out of these states, five states- Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu jointly constitute a large region that covers the western and southern parts of India while the remaining states failed to form any contiguous region and are found to

be scattered in northern (Jammu and Kashmir and Haryana) north-eastern (Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Meghalaya) and eastern (West Bengal) parts of the country.

There are seven states that have low percent (Below 57.27) of migrant non-workers in rural to urban migration stream in India. They are Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Sikkim, Manipur, Mizoram, Assam and Goa. They formed two small regions: one in the northern part (Himachal Pradesh, Punjab) and the other in the north eastern part (Sikkim, Manipur, Mizoram, Assam) of the country. In south only one state, Goa have low percent of rural to urban migrant non-workers in India.

**Conclusion**

It may be concluded from the above analysis that the percentage of main workers in India is 32.97 percent and that of marginal workers is 3.12 percent. Whereas the highest percentage is recorded in non-workers (63.91 percent) category in all the states and UTs of India.

The state wise distribution of working status of rural to urban migrants in India shows a high degree of variation. The highest percentage of main workers is found in the northern and north-eastern states, and lowest in western, central and eastern regions of the country. While, the highest percentage of marginal workers is recorded in the western, central and north-eastern parts of the country and lowest in the northern, eastern and southern states. However, northern, western, central and eastern parts of India reported the high percentage of non-workers and lowest in few northern and north-eastern states.

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