

Programme: Master in Sociology
Postgraduate Department of Sociology,
Patna University

Semester II

Course: CC-6 (Sociology of Population Studies)

Unit-II Migration

(Part B: Nature of Migration, Migration Streams and Characteristics of Migration)

Learning Objectives:

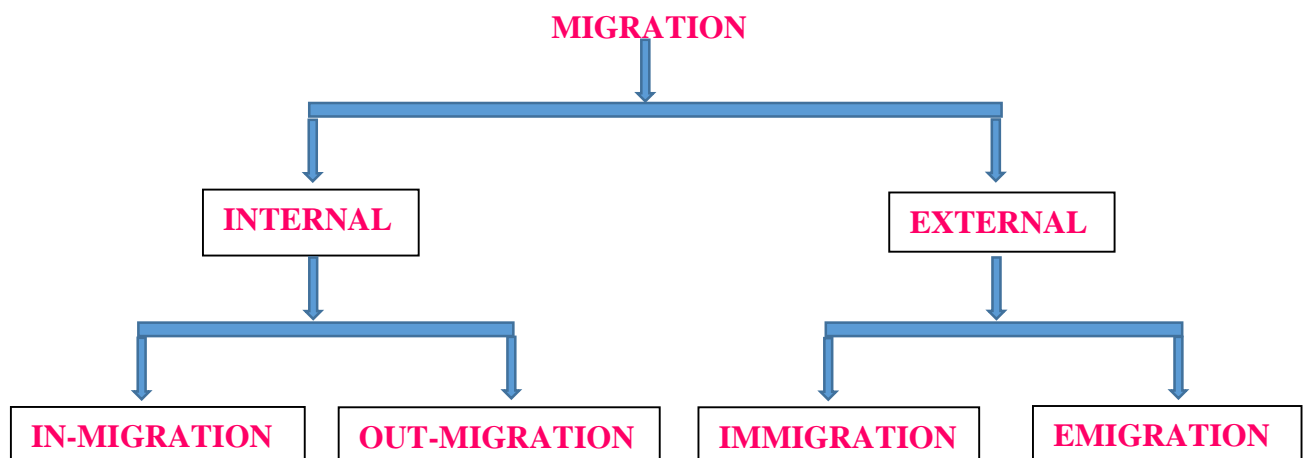
- To understand the nature/types of migration.
- To understand migration streams and their impact.
- To explain the characteristics of migration.

Introduction:

The existence of the human beings can best be explained when based on Darwin's theory of natural selection. This theory argues that only those who are fit would survive. And to survive each and every human beings as well as animals compete with each other for food and habitat. Migration is a way through which one moves from one place to another in search of job or to survive and be safe from different calamities or if they are displaced. In Part A of Migration we learn about what migration is and how the data on migration or say migrants movements can be collected. In this section, Part B, we will get to know about nature of migration, its characteristics and migration streams.

Nature of Migration:

Migration can be internal (within the national boundaries i.e. migration from one place to another with a country) or external, also called international (across the international borders i.e. migration from one country to another). Thus, people may move within a country between different states or between different districts of the same state or they may move between different countries. Therefore, different terms are used for internal and external migration. These can be categorised as follows:



1. **Immigration and Emigration:** ‘Immigration’ refers to migration into a country from another country and ‘emigration’ refers to migration out of the country. These terms are used only in connection with international migration. For example migrants leaving India to settle down in the United States or Canada are immigrants to the United States or Canada and emigrants from India.
2. **In-migration and Out-migration:** These are used only in connection with internal migration. ‘In-migration’ refers to migration into a particular area while ‘out-migration’ refers to movements out of a particular area. Thus, migrants who come from Bihar or Uttar Pradesh to Punjab are considered to be immigrants for Punjab and out-migrants for Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. The term ‘in-migration’ is used with reference to the area of destination of the migrants and the term ‘out-migration’ is used with reference to the area of origin or place of departure of the migrant.

Cyclic or Circulatory Migration

Movements of individuals that involve only a temporary change of residence are generally not considered as migration. This type of movement is known as nomadism or pastoral nomadism. If this movement of the people is along with their animal stock – sheep, goats and cattle between two fixed points it is called *transhumance*. For example, Gujjar Bakarwals in Jammu and Kashmir move towards the foothills in winters and the highland pastures in summers. When the winter approaches they return to their settlements in the foothills. The movement of farm workers is also a kind of cyclical migration because they follow the growing season. Tourism and commutation are not generally considered as migration.

Some migrations are *cyclic* in nature, which means that they are like oscillations/circuits. People migrate between two fixed points. It is an annual cycle, to be completed within the same year. Pastoral nomads move with their animal stock in a circulatory way: winters in the foothills and summers in the highland pastures. The routes and the destination sites are well defined. Here one can cite the examples of Gujjar Bakarwals of Jammu and Kashmir and the Gaddis of Himachal Pradesh. Similar types of migration are common in the mountainous regions of central Asia, Africa and South America. These nomads have grazing rights on a certain aspect of the mountain range, even though they do not own the land. Governments protect their movement and grazing rights.

Migrations differ in terms of direction, distance, duration and purpose/motive behind the movement. Migration may be classified as *free* or *voluntary* as opposed to *forced* or *impelled*. In extra-ordinary situations people are forced to migrate. For example, natural hazards, such as floods, drought, forest fires, avalanches in mountainous areas and earthquakes force people to run away from their homes to safer places to save their lives.

Forced or Impelled Migration

When individuals or groups decide to leave their home country in order to avoid devastation caused by drought, famine, epidemics, war, civil strife, or terrorising dictatorial regimes, it is called *forced migration*. For example, the exodus of Afghans from Afghanistan to neighbouring Pakistan, Iran and India during the US-UK military operations including carpet bombing in Afghanistan. Similarly, people migrated in large numbers to avoid persecution by the Nazist regime in Germany under Hitler before the Second World War. A comparable example of the forced migration is of the Irish people who fled away from Ireland to avoid starvation and death caused by the famine conditions during 1856-85. These migrations are described as forced because there is no choice before the migrants but to run away. When a state/country forces a section of its population to move out of the country, as they are not desirable, we call it *forced* or *impelled migration*.

In certain situations migration can be massive just as the migration of millions of people from India to Pakistan and from Pakistan to India immediately after independence in 1947. There are other examples of forced migration, such as deportation of criminals, political dissidents, and religious minorities. During the days of slave trade about twenty million black Africans were taken to America forcefully to work as labourers on the plantation estates in the United States of America (USA). It is estimated that about eight million people of European origin were pushed out of Europe under the forced labour policy of the Nazist regime before and during the Second World War.

Primitive or Early Migration

Distinction has often been made between *Early/Primitive migration* and *forced/impelled migration*. Early migrations, particularly in the prehistoric and early historic times, were a sort of random movement and not a planned migration. People were moving out as a result of a kind of human wandering lust. But they were responsible for the peopling of the continents all over the world. These movements have also contributed to the process of inter-mixing of civilisations and cultures.

Refugee Movements

What happened in history is not always old. In the world of today people are found leaving their homes and hearths, fleeing from one country to the other to avoid persecution and imminent death. They often take refuge in the neighbouring countries. In fact, refugee movements are so common these days that the United Nations (UN) has created a special fund for the rehabilitation of the refugees. These refugees are homeless and jobless. They have lost all means of livelihood, which sustained them before migration. The UN Commission on Refugees helps them monetarily and pleads with the governments of receiving countries to find a place for them. Unfortunately, they are rehabilitated in impromptu shelters/camps. The so-called Bihari Muslims who migrated to East Pakistan immediately after the partition of British India in 1947 are still living in camps, even though fifty-seven years have passed.

Seasonal and Periodic Migration

Migrations are sometimes *seasonal* or *periodic*. This type of migration is very common among the nomadic people living on the margins of the deserts or semi-arid zones of the world. For example, many migrants go to different states mainly Punjab and Haryana from states like Bihar and Uttar Pradesh to work as farm labourers when agricultural harvest season is at its peak.

The short duration movement of population is also a type of seasonal migration. There is also a diurnal movement of workers. This type of movement takes place when people move from their places of residence to their places of work. This type of movement is called commutation. Thus migrations may be periodic, annual, or diurnal. In India periodic movements of millions of people are a common phenomenon. These travels are related to pilgrimage to sacred places, large fairs, such as *Kumbh Mela* and *Pushkar Mela*. Millions of people in India go on pilgrimage for a holy dip in the rivers and lakes to perform religious rites.

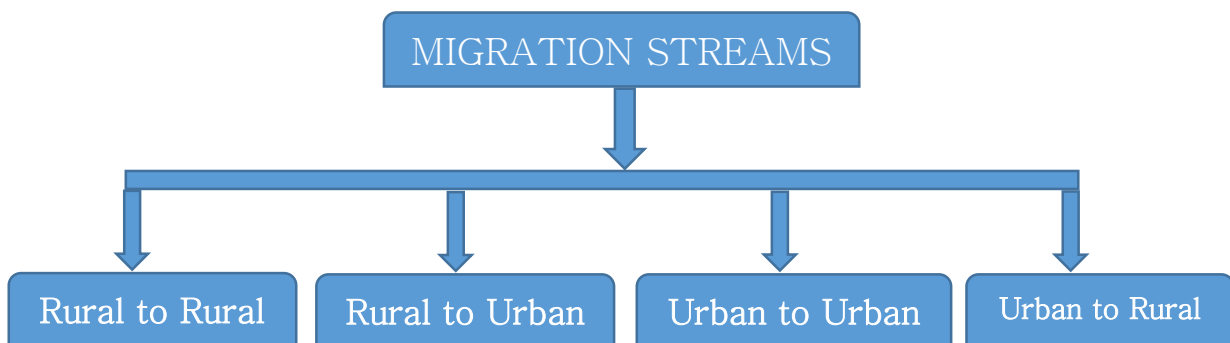
Another type of periodic migration is the movement of an individual from his original place of residence for a period of few years. He visits his home periodically. The main aim of this type of migration is to earn more and to send remittances to the family in the native place to establish themselves after they return to their original homes. There are many Bihari migrants who migrate to other states periodically to earn money and send remittances back to their homes so that their families' basic needs would get fulfilled.

Forms of Internal Migration in India or Migration Streams: Information on migration for India, as a whole, and its different parts is obtained through the use of the Census. Better and more detailed questions have been asked in recent census counts. They show improvements in the studies on migration.

Indian census gives information regarding migration streams made from 'birth place' statistics from 1872 onwards. However, in 1961, the birth place was classified as rural or urban, and put into four categories of space migration:

- (i) within the district of enumeration,
- (ii) outside the district but within the state of enumeration,
- (iii) outside the state of enumeration, i.e., inter-state, and
- (iv) outside India.

The 1971 Census defined these statistics by including a question on place of last residence, and 1981 Census included a question on reasons for migration.



In India, the migrants are classified into four migration streams, namely, **rural to rural, rural to urban, urban to urban and urban to rural**. Rural to rural migration has formed the dominant migration stream since 1961. There have been substantial increases in the proportion of rural to urban, and urban to urban migration with the passage of time. Another important point is that the proportion of the females is much higher in rural to rural migration, while in the other three streams the proportion of the males is comparatively much higher. This is simply because the females change their residence on getting married, and new places could be in the neighbouring districts.

The relative size and importance of these migration streams may vary from country to country. In some countries, rural to rural migration is the dominant type of migration, while in others it is rural to urban and yet in many others the highest proportion of migrants are found in urban to urban migration. In India, as stated earlier, rural to rural migration formed the dominant migration stream in the 1961, 1971, 1991 and 2001 Census. However, there have been substantial increases in the proportion of rural to urban and urban to urban migration with the passage of time, the increase being much more during the decades of 1970s, 1980s and 1990s than of the 1960s. However the dominant form of internal migration in the country is rural to rural. In all other streams (rural to urban, urban to urban and urban to rural) there is dominance of rural to urban migration among the males could be due to better developed agriculture in certain states and districts, which may attract migrants from other parts of the country. Development of industries in certain states or cities may be another important factor in rural to

urban migration. Rural to rural migration is mostly dominated by the females. The female migration is largely sequential to marriage, because it is a Hindu custom to take brides from another village (village exogamy). According to the National Sample Survey, more than 46 per cent migration to urban areas is also caused by marriage. The custom of women returning to urban areas is also caused by marriage. The custom of women returning to her parents to deliver her first child also accounts for significant internal migration.

Typology based on time classified migration into long range migration and short range or seasonal migration. When a move is made for a longer period, it is called long range migration. However, when there is permanent shift of population from one region to another, it is known as permanent migration. But when people shift to the sites of temporary work and residence for some or several months, it is known as periodic or seasonal migration. For example, during peak agricultural season excess labour is required, and people from the neighbouring areas is also caused by marriage. The custom of women returning to her parents to deliver her first child also accounts for significant internal migration.

Apart from these two important types, migration could be voluntary or involuntary or forced, brain drain (migration of young skilled persons) and migration of refugees and displaced persons.

Characteristics of Migration

There are some important characteristics of the migrants and migration. An important characteristic is the age selectivity of the migrants. Generally, young people are more mobile. Most migration studies, especially in developing countries, have found that rural-urban migrants are predominantly young adults and relatively better educated than those who remain at the place of origin. It is obvious that migration for employment takes place mostly at the young adult ages. Also a major part of the female migration consequential to marriage occurs at the young adult ages. Thus people have a tendency to move when they are between their teens and their mid-thirties (15-35 years) than at other ages.

Another important characteristic is that the migrants have a tendency to move to those places where they have contacts and where the previous migrants serve as links for the new migrants, and this chain is thus formed in the process, and is usually called chain migration. Various studies show that people do not blindly go to a new place. They usually have kinship chains and networks of relatives and friends who help them in different ways. In some cases, the migrants not only tend to have the same destination but also tend to have the same occupation. For example, research reveals that in certain hotels in Jaipur almost all the workers belong to one particular sub-region of Kumaon. The agricultural labourers in Punjab and Haryana are mainly from Bihar and Eastern Uttar Pradesh.

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