

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

Semester II

Course: CC-6 (Sociology of Population Studies)

Unit-II Migration (Part A)

Learning Objectives:

- To understand the meaning of Migration
- To explain various data sources of migration

Introduction:

Migration is one of the components of population growth and change (others are fertility and mortality). However, migration is different from the other two processes, namely, mortality and fertility in the sense that it is not a biological factor like the other two, which operate in a biological framework, though influenced by social, cultural and economic factors. Migration is influenced by the wishes of persons involved. Usually each migratory movement is deliberately made, though in exceptional cases this may not hold true. Thus migration is a response of human organisms to economic, social and demographic forces in the environment.

The study of migration occupies an important place in population studies, because, along with fertility and mortality, it determines the size and rate of population growth as well as its structure and characteristics. Migration also plays an important role in the distribution of the population of any country, and determines the growth of labour force in any area. Migration is thus an important symptom of social change in society.

Definition:

In a layman's language, the word 'migration' refers to the movements of the people from one place to another. According to Demographic Dictionary, "migration is a form of geographical mobility or spatial mobility between one geographical unit and another, generally involving a change in residence from the place of origin or place of departure to the place of destination or place of arrival." Such migration is called permanent migration, and should be distinguished from other forms of movement, which do not involve a permanent change of residence.

Everett Lee, a well-known demographer, defines migration broadly "as a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence". No restriction is placed upon the distance of the move or upon the voluntary and involuntary nature of the act.

Migration, according to Eisenstadt, refers to "the physical transition of an individual or a group from one society to another. This transition usually involves abandoning one social-setting and entering another and different one."

Mangalam also stresses the permanent shifting of people in his definition and considers migration as a relatively permanent moving away of a collectivity, called the migrants, from one geographical location to another. It is preceded by decision-making on the part of the

migrants. They weigh and consider sets of values in two comparative situations, resulting in changes in the interactional system of the migrants. Holiday trips or sailor's occupations are not included in it. Mehta, in his study of Rajasthan, treats migration as an act of movement or spatial mobility.

According to Lundquist, Anderton and Yaukey, "**Migrations** are those population movements that add or subtract from the *members* of a population or society." Thus, a vacation trip, a move to a neighbouring apartment, an errand to the store, a daily commute to work cannot be considered as migration. Reason is no population in these cases is added or subtracted to a particular population or society.

For demographers, membership in a population is closely linked to the idea of *residence*. Residence, in this context, means more than just being physically present at a geographic location at a moment in time; it implies being socially *affiliated* with a population.

The society in the **area of origin** (the *sending* society) wants to know how many people, of what kind, it is losing. The society in the **area of destination** (the *receiving* society) wants to know how many people, of what kind, it is gaining. And, from the perspective of individuals, changes in residence that involve the tearing up of old roots and the setting down of new ones are psychologically, socially, and economically more important than casual moves.

Migration, or change in population membership, is then demographically identified as a change in **residence**.

Pressat, in his work, *The Dictionary of Demography* (1985) argues that to qualify as a migration, a move (from one place to another) must satisfy three conditions:

- (1) It must involve a permanent or semi-permanent change in one's residence;
- (2) It must cross some administrative boundary; and
- (3) It must occur during a given time or period.

Thus, the simplest definition of migration would be:

Migration is a change in residence across some geopolitical boundary in a given period of time.

Or,

Migration is defined as a geographical movement of people involving a change from their usual place of residence.

A perusal of all these definitions indicates that almost all scholars emphasise time and space, and define migration as a movement from one place to another, permanently or semi-permanently. In brief, when a person leaves his native place or village, comes to an urban area, takes up a job, and starts living there, he is known as a migrant and his move is referred to as migration.

Data Sources

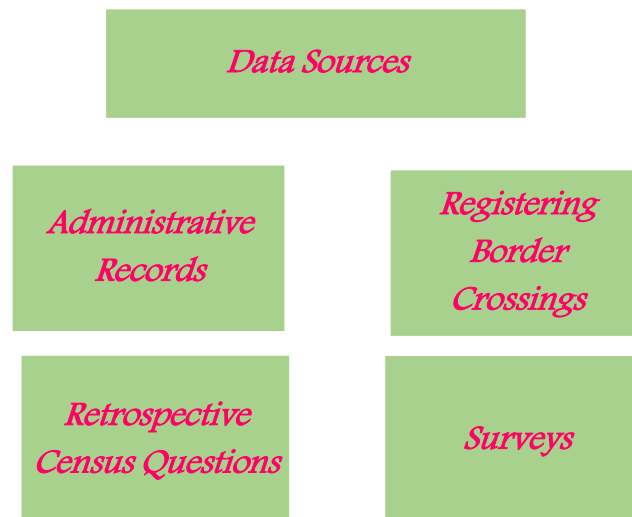
Of the three population processes in the growth equation (i.e., fertility, mortality, and migration), our data on migration are the least complete. Among migration data, those on international migration, and especially undocumented international migration, are the worst.

One reason for this negative distinction is that we do not have a world government. Such an authority could insist on all nations cooperating in tracking moves from one country to another,

just as some nations track moves among their regions, provinces, and states. Instead, what we have is a mishmash of differing national definitions, priorities, and procedures, mostly based on national rather than international concerns; leaving us unable to answer some crucial questions, such as the effect of migrant labours on source and host countries and the consequence of different immigration policies.

For a large country like India, the study of movement of population in different parts of the country helps in understanding the dynamics of the society better. At this junction in the economic development, in the country, especially when many states are undergoing faster economic development, particularly in areas, such as, manufacturing, information technology or service sectors, data migration profile of population has become more important.

Estimates of both international and internal migration typically come from four main sources, and the weight placed on these data sources differs between the study of international and internal migration: (1) administrative records, (2) inferences made from past and present residences as reported in censuses or surveys, (3) surveys that specifically target immigrants, and (4) estimations of migration made from knowledge of growth and the other components of growth.



Administrative Records

Administrative sources of migration data include population registers, registers of foreigners, applications (for visas, residence, and work permits), exit clearances, border control statistics and registrations, and any other source of information generated by the bureaucratic processing of movers. Administrative data generally are available for international migrations, though the number of countries that publish relevant administrative data is still limited. In addition, they are not designed primarily to collect migration information and are of limited use for that purpose.

Registering Border Crossings

An especially useful type of administrative records is the registration of border crossings. One way to track a demographic process—be it mortality, fertility, or migration—is to register the events making up the process as they occur. Data collected at border crossings occur at the time of movements and have the advantage of being frequently collected for both foreigners and citizens. Unfortunately, most border statistics provide unreliable data on international migration.

One problem springs from the fact that officials at the border do not know, at the time of crossing, what the mover ultimately will do. The United Nations recommends asking how long the migrants lived at their prior residences and how grants (with long previous and expected durations of residence) from other types of travellers. Even following such guidelines, border officials would know only the mover's stated intentions, and intentions change.

A related problem is that the two nations involved—that of origin and that of destination – might differ in their priorities and in their records. Nations tend to be more concerned with detailed information about people who are joining them (immigrants) than about people who are leaving them (emigrants). Moreover, decisions about how to determine residence (or affiliation) and which characteristics of movers are important to record vary from nation to nation. The upshot is that the two countries involved in any given migration stream are likely to record it differently. This makes combining their data to estimate net migration difficult.

Another category of problems is logistical. Simply recording all the border crossings that later might prove to be migrations can be a difficult job. It is easier for nations whose ports of entry and exit are limited, such as islands. At the other extreme, some countries have long land borders that normally are not fully patrolled, such as the northern and southern borders of the United States. And, finally, the borders of political units within the nation are usually relatively unimportant, so nations seldom monitor the crossings of internal borders as they do external ones.

Retrospective Census Questions

Most governments rely on household inquiries, in the form of censuses and surveys, to estimate migration. Between 2005 and 2010, seventy-eight countries conducted a population census, and fifty-nine of those collected information on country of birth, country of citizenship, year of arrival, or a combination of these questions. Some, like recent U.S. censuses, ask about residence at some specified prior time, say five years ago or one year ago. Where the current residence differs from the place of birth or prior residence, some move must have occurred, probably a migration. This indirect measurement of migration from census data thus far has been the most comparable data on international migration. Because these methods identify migrants but not the exact timing of migration, they are more useful in measuring the size of a population's stock of international migrants than they are for measuring the migration flow.

But this method is not airtight. People can and do conceal their foreign origins. More importantly, some kinds of moves are not recorded, such as moves by those who emigrate and are abroad at the time of the census, by those who emigrate but return to the same location before the census, and by those who immigrate but leave or die before the census. The method is particularly limited in measuring emigration, requiring a complex procedure of comparing censuses over time to identify those who have left and those with death records to identify people lost to emigration rather than death. If national censuses ask similar questions about place of birth or prior residence for more detailed geographic areas within the nation, then internal migration can be estimated.

There are advantages to asking place-of-prior-residence (over place-of-birth) questions: The shorter period between the prior-residence data and the census date means fewer intervening moves will go unrecorded. Moreover, the timing of those that are recorded is bracketed more narrowly and recent migrations are often of greatest interest. The disadvantage is that the data refer to a very limited calendar period.

Another major concern is the ability of a country to carry out a full census. Both in developed and less-developed countries, the recent global economic crisis has affected the census budget

to nontrivial degrees. In some cases, countries also may be paralyzed from natural disasters and humanitarian crises, and others may simply avoid counting or providing information on migrants for discriminatory reasons. Indeed, even the most trusted source of immigration data also suffers from many challenges.

When a person is enumerated in census at a different place than his / her place of birth, she / he is considered a migrant. This may be due to marriage, which is the most common reason for migration among females-or for work, what is the case as generally among males, etc. It also happens that many return to their place of birth after staying out. To capture such movements of population census collect information on migration by last helps to understand the current migration scenario better.

Table 1: Number of Migrants by Place of Birth – India 2001¹

S.no.	Category	Migrants by Place of Birth	Percentage
A	Total Population	1,028,610,328	
B	Total Migrations	307,149,736	29.9
B.1	Migrants within the state of enumeration	258,641,103	84.2
B.11	Migrants from within the districts	181,799,637	70.3
B.12	Migrants from other districts of the state	76,841,466	29.7
B.2	Migrants from other states in India	42,341,703	13.8
B.3	Migrants from other countries	6,166,930	2.0

Source: Table D1 India, Census of India 2001

Table 2: Number of Migrants by Place of Last Residence – India 2001²

S.no.	Category	Migrants by Place of Birth	Percentage
A	Total Population	1,028,610,328	
B	Total Migrations	314,541,350	30.6
B.1	Migrants within the state of enumeration	268,219,260	85.3
B.11	Migrants from within the districts	193,592,938	72.2
B.12	Migrants from other districts of the state	74,626,322	17.8
B.2	Migrants from other states in India	41,166,265	13.1
B.3	Migrants from other countries	5,155,423	1.6

Source: Table D1 India, Census of India 2001

In India, as per census 2001, about 307 million person have been reported as migration by place of birth (see Table 1 above). Out of them about 259 million (84.2%), migrated from one part of the state to another, i.e., from one village or town to another village or town. 42 million (2%) from outside the country. The data on migration by last residence in India as per Census 2001

¹ http://censusindia.gov.in/Census_And_You/migrations.aspx

² Ibid.

shows that the total number of migrants has been 314 million. Out of these migrants by last residence (see Table 2 above), 268 million (85%) has been intra-state migrants, those who migrated from one are of the state to another. 41 million (13%) were interstate migrants and 5.1 million (1.6%) migrated from outside of the country.

Surveys

Because sample surveys are less costly than censuses, they can be used to probe more deeply into the migrations of their fewer respondents. On the other hand, surveys have the weakness of not supplying information about every local area, only those that are included in the sample. The ideal balance seems to be to include as many questions as can be afforded in decennial censuses or large national samples, and then to supplement those with periodic and more intensive surveys.