

Internal migration in India: Socioeconomic and Regional biases

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“Internal migration in India: Socioeconomic and Regional biases.”

Abstract:

Internal migration shapes India's labour markets, regional development, and socioeconomic structures. This study examines the socioeconomic and regional determinants of internal migration in India. It compares migration patterns across different survey periods. The analysis uses National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) and Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) data. It examines migration patterns using descriptive statistics and logistic regression models. The study considers education, age, gender, social groups, marital status, and geographical regions. These variables help explain differences in individual migration propensities.

The descriptive analysis identifies substantial regional variation across India. It also reveals changes in rural and urban migration patterns. The rural share of migrants declined between the two survey periods. Meanwhile, the urban share increased, indicating changing patterns of population mobility. Regional comparisons also reveal distinct patterns of in-migration and out-migration. These differences reflect the uneven distribution of economic opportunities across regions.

The regression results highlight the importance of socioeconomic characteristics. Higher educational attainment generally increases the likelihood of migration. However, intermediate educational categories show different patterns across survey periods. Younger individuals demonstrate comparatively stronger migration propensities. Gender also influences migration decisions across the examined periods. The estimated models associate female status with higher migration propensity. Marital status further differentiates migration behaviour across population groups. Currently married and widowed individuals demonstrate higher migration propensities. The findings also identify differences across social groups. These differences suggest that social stratification may constrain migration opportunities. Regional coefficients further reveal variations in migration propensities across geographical zones.

The study contributes to understanding India's changing internal migration dynamics. It connects individual characteristics with broader regional development disparities. However, the findings require careful interpretation because the surveys cover different periods. Differences in survey design and measurement may affect direct comparisons. The estimated associations also do not establish causal relationships. Future research should examine migration motives and destination choices more closely. It should also investigate employment outcomes and migrants' living conditions. Such evidence could strengthen policy responses to migration-related challenges.

The findings highlight the need for inclusive migration policies. Policymakers should expand educational and employment opportunities across regions. They should also address structural barriers facing disadvantaged communities. Improved public services can support migrants and receiving communities. Balanced regional development may reduce distress-driven migration pressures. These measures can promote more equitable mobility and sustainable development across India.

Keywords: Migration, Regional Development, Logit Model.

JEL Code: O15, R19, C40

1. Introduction:

India, a land of breathtaking diversity, is further enriched by the constant movement of its people within its borders. This phenomenon, known as internal migration, has significantly impacted regional development, labour markets, and social structures across the nation. This research delves into the complexities of internal migration, aiming to create awareness about its multifaceted implications and provide insights for policymakers. Internal migration refers to the movement of people across administrative boundaries within a country, driven by economic or non-economic factors. It's a voluntary or involuntary phenomenon, with the duration of stay at the destination varying. This movement plays a crucial role in shaping India's demographic landscape.

Millions of individuals leave their hometowns in search of better opportunities, particularly in urban areas. This influx of population fuels the growth and transformation of cities into thriving economic hubs. However, this shift also presents challenges. As migrants fill gaps in labour demand, they bring much-needed workforce diversity, but this can strain infrastructure and lead to overcrowded housing situations. Careful planning and development strategies are crucial to ensure that both residents and newcomers have access to basic amenities like housing and healthcare.

Labor markets are another domain significantly impacted by internal migration. Migrants often possess skills and experiences specific to their regions, proving invaluable assets in various sectors. However, policies fostering inclusivity are necessary to ensure fair treatment and protection under labour laws. Schemes like Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban can be a model for providing adequate housing facilities.

Beyond economic factors, internal migration is influenced by social and cultural aspects as well. As migrants settle in new regions, communities become more heterogeneous, with diverse traditions and customs weaving a richer tapestry. However, this process can also lead to tensions and social friction. To foster an environment of "equitable development," understanding gender dynamics within migration patterns is crucial. Women often face unique vulnerabilities during their journeys, requiring tailored support systems that prioritize their needs.

This research goes beyond merely describing migratory patterns. It delves deeper, scrutinizing the motivations behind these journeys. Factors ranging from economic betterment to access to educational facilities or dialect-specific job opportunities all play a role in these decisions. Interestingly, the analysis reveals that marriage can be a significant motivator, particularly for women. This highlights the importance of cultural elements in shaping the direction, volume, and overall impact of migration on economies and societies.

The pursuit of employment is a primary driver of internal migration. Rural areas often lack sufficient job opportunities, prompting individuals to seek work in urban. Manufacturing,

construction, services, and even IT hubs offer the promise of higher wages and improved living conditions, acting as a strong pull factor for those seeking to uplift their socio-economic status.

Education also fuels these internal movements. Aspiring students migrate to access renowned educational institutions or pursue specialized courses unavailable in their hometowns. This thirst for knowledge and advancement propels young minds to seek opportunities beyond their immediate surroundings.

Regional imbalances further contribute to internal migration. Disparities in development between states and regions can lead to rapid growth in some areas while others lag. Analyzing these patterns is essential for crafting policies aimed at regional equalization and balanced growth across the nation.

Understanding these motivations and their effects is crucial for policymakers. It allows for targeted interventions to address issues related to population movement and societal shifts. Mitigating the negative consequences of mass departures from rural areas, such as understaffing in agriculture and food security concerns, requires thoughtful strategies. Similarly, managing urban overcrowding and fostering social cohesion are essential for ensuring a high quality of life for both migrants and host communities.

Thus, internal migration is a multifaceted phenomenon with significant implications for India's development. By understanding its complexities and diverse motivations, this paper will contribute to the existing literature of internal migration in India. The finds of this article will provide valuable information to create policies that promote inclusive growth, address challenges, and foster a welcoming environment for all, ensuring that no one is left behind in this dynamic and evolving landscape.

The study is divided into several sections. Section 1 contains the abstract and introduction part, Section 2 contains a literature review, while Section 3 presents descriptive statistics that help identify important variables for regression analysis. The methodology, model specification and data descriptions are provided in Section 4, followed by a discussion of the results in Section 5. These sections lead to conclusions about the overall narrative presented above, which explores various factors influencing decision-making processes during internal migration within India.

2. Background and Motivation:

India experiences a steady flow of people migrating inside its borders, which shapes the country's development. This research paper examines the complications of internal migration in India. It seeks to understand the numerous motives that drive people to relocate, including economic demands, social aspirations, and educational goals. Examine the effects of internal migration on regional development, employment markets, and social structures, noting both good and negative implications. Provide policymakers with insights into how to develop strategies that increase inclusivity, address migrants' challenges, and promote harmonious coexistence within communities. Emphasise the significance of understanding gender

dynamics within migratory patterns to guarantee women's needs are met and their opinions are heard.

By investigating these issues, this research article hopes to contribute to a better understanding of internal migration in India, eventually proposing policies that promote a more equal and sustainable future for all.

3. Literature and Analysis:

The International Organization for Migration defines a migrant as someone who crosses any administrative border, regardless of legal status or reason for movement. Internal migrants can move within a district or state, and wage and employment are key factors in migration, with the 'push and pull' theory explaining that migrants are pushed away from their homelands by various factors and pulled to their destination lands by job opportunities and higher wages, better living standards. In places reliant on agriculture, people migrate to diversify their source of earning and reduce risks associated with agriculture. The wage differential is a major factor in migration decisions, supported by theories such as the Harris-Todaro and Lewis model.

The Lewis model proposes that an economy consists of two sectors: traditional and modern. In the traditional sector, population pressure is high, resulting in zero or negative marginal productivity and lower wages. As a result, people migrate to the modern sector where marginal productivity is positive, and wages are higher. The Harris-Todaro model also suggests two sectors: the agricultural sector and formal sector, where the formal sector has higher wages. Migration occurs towards the formal sector until wage equality is achieved in case of wage flexibility; otherwise, migrants may end up in the informal sector.

Sarkar discusses migration history between India and Bangladesh following their partitioning in 1947 based on religious reasons rather than economic ones (Sarkar, 2010). Hindu individuals from Bangladesh migrated to seek refuge from possible threats due to Muslim dominance during this time. Migration rates increased initially but later declined significantly over time due to political factors driving migrations across South Asia throughout much of the mid-to-late 20th century.

Boubtane et al. conducted a study that found a positive effect of GDP per capita and a negative effect of unemployment on migration worldwide. However, the employment rate does not affect net migration flow. The study also discovered that the native-born unemployment rate has no impact on migration, but migration negatively affects the native-born unemployment rate. Conversely, the foreign-born unemployment rate has no significant impact on migration flows while immigration negatively influences the foreign-born employment rate.

To investigate these findings further, the authors used the Konya approach of causality in panel data to examine the relationship between immigration, unemployment, and economic growth in host countries. The results suggest that Granger-causality from unemployment to immigration is only evident in certain cases (e.g., Portugal), while economic growth positively Granger-causes immigration flow in other countries (e.g., France Norway UK). Additionally,

due to migrants' high skill level, the human capital content of an inflow compensates for any negative effects caused by increased immigration growth.

Abraham (2018) identified three stages of migration: pre-emigration, emigration, and post-return. The study focuses on return migration as an integral part of temporary labour migration. Temporary migrants migrate to undertake contractual jobs that offer opportunities for skill enhancement. Higher proportions of returning migrants lead to increase per capita output in the home economy (Dustmann et al., 2011). Evidence suggests that work experience gained abroad improves occupational choices in the home economy. Pre-emigration occupations and occupations abroad show moderate mobility, while there is no such mobility between pre-emigration and post-emigration occupations. This indicates that migrants often work in non-traditional sectors but tend to return to their previous jobs after returning home.

Migration is driven by a desire for better returns on human capital investment and can increase wage premiums for workers upon their return. The study shows that early neoclassical economic models of migration differed from the human capital model. The neoclassical model viewed migration because of the expected utility differential, while the human capital model saw it as an investment in human capital. However, return migration was seen as a failed attempt to migrate rather than a spontaneous circular movement between economies.

In the Indian context, Rajan et al.'s overview highlighted key points about temporary labour migration. Rural to urban migration accounted for 63% of all migrations and rural to rural was also significant at 30%. The national average for rural-to-urban migration stood at 61% but states like Chhattisgarh (82%), Bihar (81%), and UP (80%) had much higher rates above this average. West Bengal (63%) and Assam (67%) showed slightly higher rates of rural-to-urban stream due possibly to their lower level of urbanization leading people to migrate from these areas in search of work.

There were differences observed regarding out-of-state versus within-state migratory patterns across states; with Bihar (83%), Jharkhand (74%), UP(61%) showing significantly more out-of-state movements compared to underdeveloped regions, which experienced comparatively less development such as Gujarat having only around 97% percent within the state which is considered relatively higher than the developed state Kerala with an approximate figure stands at 77%. Migration rates are higher among socially backward classes such as Schedule Tribes (ST) (45 per 1000), Scheduled Castes (SC) (24 per 1000), and other backward classes (19 per 1000). In Gujarat, the ST category has a migration rate of 160 per 1000, while in West Bengal it is at 71 per 1000. The SC category sees higher migration rates in states like Jharkhand (65 per 1000) and Bihar (58 per 1000). This study also reveals that male labour migration is more prevalent overall, except for the ST category, where female labour migration dominates.

A separate investigation by Keshri & Bhagat focuses on temporary labour migration showing that it is more common in rural areas compared to urban areas. On the other hand, permanent migrations tend to occur predominantly from urban-to-urban areas. Gender disparities exist within temporary migrations with around two-thirds of male migrants moving from rural areas

to cities versus only four out of ten females taking part in this type of movement. Among women, most migratory movements happen between rural towns or villages accounting for over half their total streams.

Temporary migrations are especially high among impoverished families from lower caste backgrounds without much education while permanent moves tend towards those who have relatively better economic circumstances along with increased levels of education and social status.

The authors concluded by pointing out that survival purposes primarily drive temporary labour migrations, whereas relatively economically well-off individuals dominate permanent labour movements across regions highlighting regional inequalities caused by uneven economic development that stimulate short-distance relocation aimed at finding work opportunities.

Mahapatra et al. presented a different perspective on female migration, challenging the notion that marriage is the only main reason for it. They revealed that in recent years, an increasing number of women have been migrating for employment purposes. This trend has shifted from primarily poor women seeking job opportunities to also include educated women taking advantage of better education and thriving IT and software sectors in urban areas.

While marriage remains, a significant factor influencing their decision to migrate, recent trends show that more women are getting married and moving to cities because of improved employment prospects there. The study categorised female migrants into two groups: those who migrated within the last five years and those who migrated permanently - with each group demonstrating distinct effects regarding marriage's role in migration. The study found an increase in labour force participation among permanent migrants over time while noting that motivation behind migration for those who moved within five years was predominantly driven by employment opportunities. Moreover, it concludes that whereas previously migrant women were mostly from disadvantaged backgrounds seeking job prospects, nowadays more educated women are migrating due to factors such as economic independence and self-reliance alongside employment opportunities.

A similar phenomenon was observed by Singh et al., indicating gender dynamics within India's internal migration patterns where men exhibit less mobility compared to females overall. Although most female migrations continue being related to marriage commitments; however, recently there has been a growing trend towards migratory movements influenced by expanding work options.

4. Objective:

Our main objective is to visualize the driving forces of internal migration in India along with the possible decadal effects determining decisions regarding internal migration on India's labour market intricacies.

5. Methods:

5.a. Data Source:

This study analyses migration patterns in India using mixed-methods research. The primary data sources are the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) and the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), known for their comprehensive demographic and economic variables coverage. The NSSO datasets cover various survey rounds over multiple years, capturing demographic details, economic activities, and migration information. Household-level data is emphasised to provide a holistic view of migration within India. Data from the PLFS offer valuable insights into labour market dynamics, including employment patterns and short-term migration. Quarterly survey rounds allow for the examination of seasonal trends in migration. The NSSO data sets spanned multiple years and survey rounds, capturing essential information such as demographic details, economic activity status, and crucially migration data.

What made these datasets particularly valuable was their focus on household-level information. This enabled researchers to consider not only individual migrants but also their families and their experiences during relocation. By considering factors such as education levels, and income disparities between regions or states within India the scenario of migration becomes apparent.

Thus, thoroughly studying these data sets and thereby the combined efforts yield significant implications regarding policymaking surrounding internal migrations within India. sheds light on the factors driving internal migrations, including economic disparities and employment opportunities across different regions.

5b. Variables:

We have classified certain dependent Variable and independent variables for our analysis. 'Migration choice' is the dependent variable and 'education group', 'age group', 'gender', 'social group', 'geographical zone' and 'marital status are considered independent variables.

In our paper, we delve deep into to find out the emboldening factors of people to migrate. To do that we took 'migration choice' as the dependent variable. Here, our dependent variable itself is a categorical variable as it comprises two responses; Yes and No. 'Yes', explains the person is migrating and 'No' explains the person is not migrating, though 'not migrating people' does not mean they are not in the labour force, rather this explains that they got involved somewhere in their home area and not opting to migrate somewhere else. Therefore, to frame the model, we used a dummy variable treatment and assigned '1' and '0' according to the response of migrating and non-migrating persons.

We took education group, age group, gender, social group, geographical zone and marital status as our independent variables. Our aim is to find out whether those variables are the deciding factors for migration or not. Several non-quantitative responses are coded under each independent variable. For instance, 'education group' shows the education qualification of the labour force. It has eight categories. viz. non-literate, literate without formal schooling,

primarily educated, upper/Middle primarily educated, secondarily educated, higher secondarily educated, graduated and above, which comes under 'higher education' and Others. If we look into our next independent variable 'Age Group', it also comprises three categories viz. age group of 15 to 30, 31 to 60 years and 60 years and more. It is to be noted that the age group between 0 to 14 has been dropped as these age groups are not in the labour force because, under this age group, most of the migration occurs due to parents' migration (evident from PLFS 20-21 report). Our next variable is 'gender' which takes the value 0 and 1 based on female and male labourers. Similar to gender division a social group-wise classification is also studied in our paper, where we classified social groups into 4 categories, viz. ST, SC, OBC and others. It is to be noted that the General caste also comes under the group 'other'. Furthermore, with a view to check whether zonal division influences migration or not, we have subdivided our states into 4 groups, viz East, West, North and South; those are also considered as categorical variables. 'Marital Status' can also be a defining factor of migration and this is our next independent variable, which also takes several responses viz. Not married, currently married, widowed and divorced/separated.

5c. Analysis (Econometric Method):

As of now, every independent variable is categorical, thus the Simple regression model could end up with severely misleading results, so we are incorporating a logistic regression model. Logit model is the most suitable regression model when both explained and explanatory variables are categorical.

We have the null hypothesis that the value of all the beta coefficients is zero, suggesting there is no relation between the independent and dependent variables. The non-zero value of the coefficient reflects a relationship between the dependent and independent variables, which is our alternative hypothesis.

Since we consider migration choices as the dependent variable take two possible responses, either migrate (1) or not to migrate (0).

Let us specify our model as

$$Z_i = \alpha + \beta X_i$$

Where $Z_i = 1$ if individual chooses to migrate and 0 otherwise.

The corresponding independent variables (level of education, Age, Gender, Zone, Marital Status, Social Groups) is X_i . Now P_i be the probability that a certain choice Z_i is taken place. Here we assume that P_i follows the logistic distribution.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Then } P_i &= 1/[1 + e^{-Z_i}] \\ \text{Or, } [1 + e^{-Z_i}] P_i &= 1 \\ e^{-Z_i} &= [1 - P_i] / P_i \end{aligned}$$

where $[1 - P_i] / P_i$ is the odd ratio. This will give us the ratio of the probabilities of an event occurred or not.

$$\text{Or } e^{Z_i} = P_i / [1 - P_i]$$

The logit model is obtained by taking logarithm of both sides

$$\text{Ln} \{ P_i / [1 - P_i] \} = Z_i = \alpha + \beta X_i$$

The advantage of logit model is that it takes the problem of predicting probabilities within the range of 0 and 1. The slope of the logit function follows the cumulative distribution function, it measures the effects of a change in explanatory variables (X_i) on the probabilities.

For estimation, we can rewrite the model as

$$\text{Ln} \{ P_i / [1 - P_i] \} = Z_i = \alpha + \beta X_i + u_i$$

5e. Robustness Checks:

Conducting a robustness check of a logit model explaining migration decisions in India using the NSSO 64th round (2007-08) and the PLFS (2021) data involves several key steps. First, the datasets need to be cleaned and harmonized to ensure consistency in the variables used for analysis. Both datasets should have the same dependent variable, such as a binary indicator of migration decision (e.g., whether an individual has migrated or not), and the same independent variables, such as age, education level, income, and marital status.

Next, we specify a logit model where the likelihood of migration is modelled as a function of these independent variables. We then estimate the logit model separately for each dataset using logistic regression. The estimated coefficients, standard errors, and significance levels from both models are compared to assess consistency.

Once the models are estimated, their results are compared to assess robustness. This involves comparing the coefficients, standard errors, and significance levels of the variables in both models. Consistent findings across the two datasets, such as similar signs and magnitudes of the coefficients and similar levels of statistical significance, would suggest that the logit model is robust.

In the analysis, we expect that key variables (e.g., age, education, gender etc) should have similar signs and magnitudes in both datasets. For instance, if higher education consistently increases the likelihood of migration in both the NSSO and PLFS datasets, this suggests that the relationship between education and migration is robust over time and data sources. Similarly, the significance of the coefficients should be checked: variables that are significant predictors in one dataset should ideally be significant in the other as well. The model fit statistics such as the pseudo R-squared values are compared to ensure that the models explain the migration decisions similarly across the two datasets.

The constant term represents the baseline log odds of the dependent variable when all other predictors are zero. The negative coefficient indicates a lower baseline likelihood of migration.

All predictor variables seem statistically significant (p-values < 0.05) across the three time periods, suggesting that the observed relationships are unlikely to be due to random chance. The Wald chi-square statistic and associated p-values indicate that the overall model is

statistically significant for study periods. The Wald chi2 statistic tests the joint significance of all coefficients in the model. The low p-values (0 in all cases) suggest the model is statistically significant.

The Pseudo R² values (0.2792, 0.2938, 0.2919) represent the goodness-of-fit of the model. These values suggest that the model explains around 28-29% of the variation in the migration patterns. These values indicate that the model explains a substantial portion of the variability in migration.

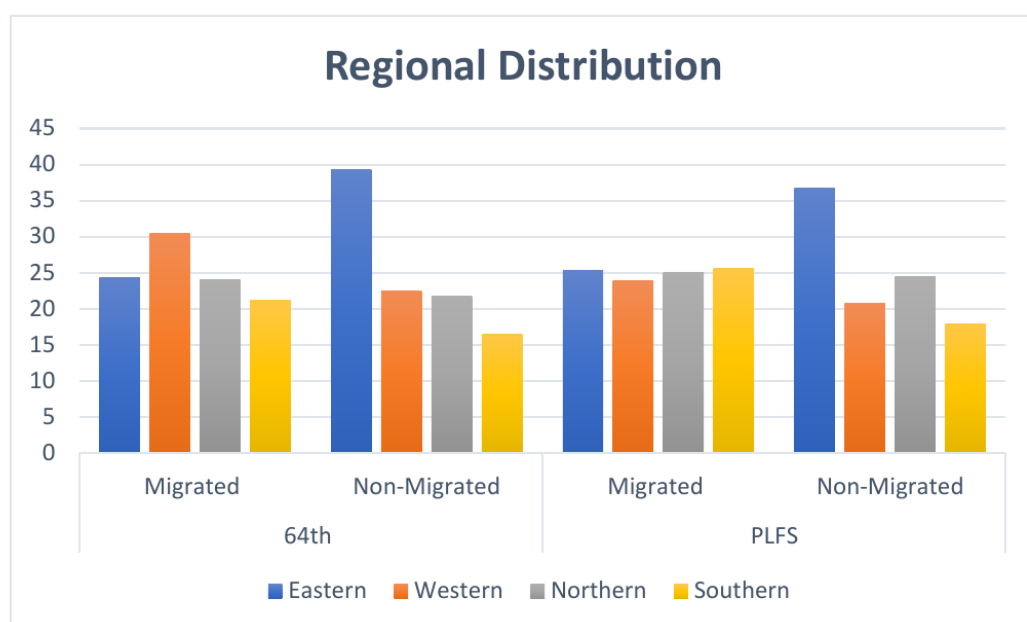
The check of the robustness of the logit model, confirms that the determinants of migration decisions are consistent over the 14 years covered by the NSSO 64th round and PLFS 2021 data. This robustness check helps establish confidence in the model's ability to accurately capture the factors influencing migration decisions in India

6.Results:

a: Descriptive Statistics:

Given the diversity of Indian society, sociodemographic factors have a role in influencing migration decisions. Consequently, a clear and succinct summary of the demographic changes, migratory patterns, and socioeconomic factors impacting these movements will be provided by an analysis of these variables. Analysing age, gender, marital status, education, religion, and geographical differences in the context of internal migration aids in understanding how educational possibilities and economic opportunities influence migration. The analysis also gives us the necessary information for specifying regression model in the following section of this paper.

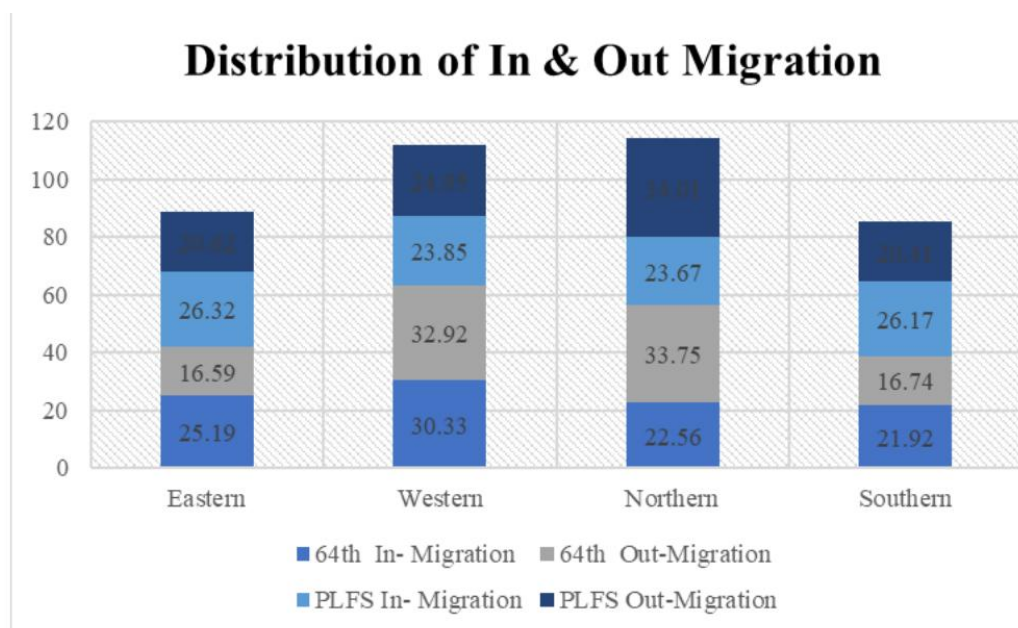
1. Regional Distribution of Migration.



Based on data from the NSSO (64th) and the PLFS, the regional distribution in percentage shows how migrated and non-migrated populations are distributed over four zones: eastern, western, northern, and southern. The number of non-migrated people decreased from 39.31% to 36.79%, while the percentage of migrated individuals marginally increased from 24.28% to 25.37% in the eastern zone during this period. Whereas in the western zone, there is a decreasing trend both among migrated and non-migrated people. The migrated population in the Northern Zone increased to some extent from 24.01% to 25.12%, while the non-migrated population increased from 21.74% to 24.47% in this period. But there are rising numbers of both migrated and non-migrated people in the southern part of India. Thus, considerable diversity is visible in migration during this period in different zones of this country.

The sectoral distribution of migration gives us the mobility direction of these migrants. In 2007–08, a significant segment of migrants, 67.24%, were from rural areas, while only 32.76% were from urban areas. By 2020–21, this distribution shifted substantially, with the rural migrant percentage decreasing to 51.77% and the urban migrant percentage increasing to 48.23%. This indicates a notable trend of migration moving towards urban areas over the period, reflecting changes in socio-economic conditions such as urbanisation, employment opportunities, and possibly improved living standards in urban settings. These will not contradict the classical theory of migration.

1.1 Dynamics of Migration:

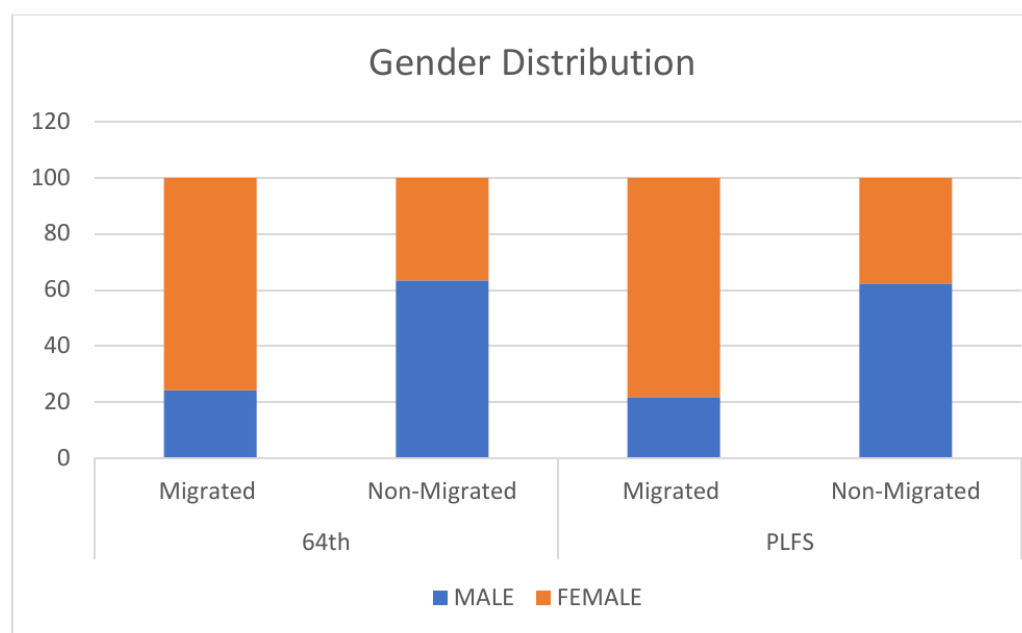


In this article, we only looked at two types of migration: In and Out-migration, as determined by the most current usual place of residence (UPR). In migration is defined as the people who migrated within their state of residence, and Out migrants are those who had to migrate into different states. The above figure will give us the distribution of In and Out migrants for different zones of India (Eastern, Western, Northern, and Southern). Migration in the Eastern Zone increased from 25.19% to 26.32%, while out-migration also showed similar trends, increasing from 16.59% to 20.62% in this period. A notable decline in In-migration from

30.33% to 23.85% and a reduction in out-migration from 32.92% to 24.95% are experienced by the Western zone.

The northern zone of India is showing a marginal rise in In-migration from 22.56% to 23.67%, but out-migration remains relatively stable, slightly rising from 33.75% to 34.01%. In this study period, it is worthwhile to notice that the southern zone showed a significant rise in In-migration from 21.92% to 26.17%, accompanied by an increase in out-migration from 16.74% to 20.41%. These trends indicate dynamic migration patterns, suggesting that while the Eastern and Southern zones have seen an increase in both in and out-migration, the Western zone has experienced a reduction in both. The northern zone remains relatively stable, with slight increases in both migration types.

2. Gender role in Migration:

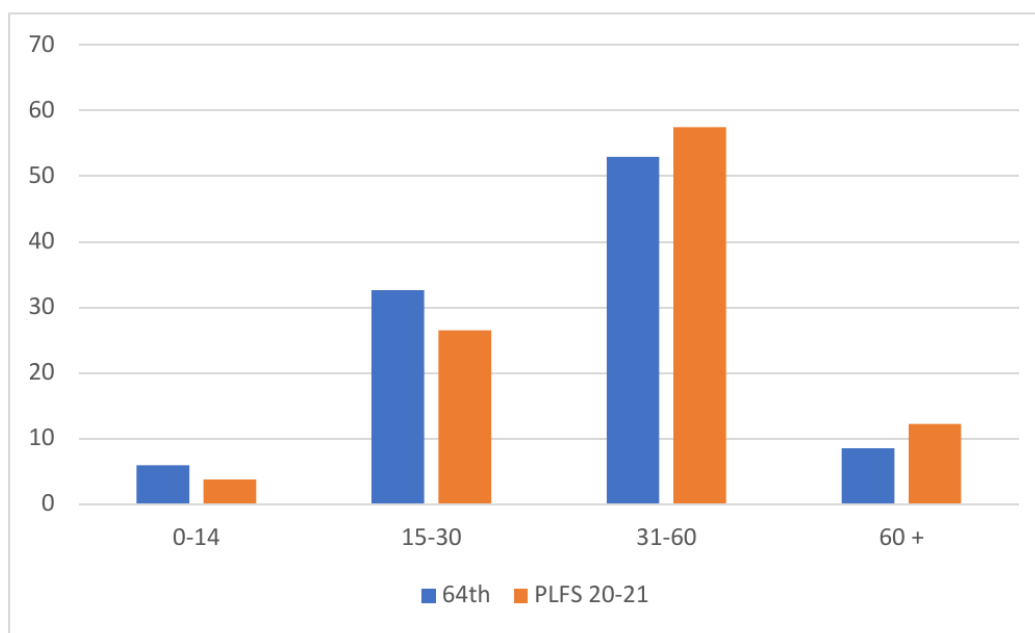


Gender inequality is widely seen in Indian society. While guys are the only ones who elect to transfer or switch their places of residence for various reasons, the current figure depicts the gender distribution in percentages between migrated and non-migrated populations based on the 64th survey and the PLFS (Periodic Labour Force Survey). During this time, the percentage of migrated males decreased significantly, from 24.23% to 21.81%. However, other gender females display radically distinct migratory tendencies. The percentages increased dramatically from 75.77% to 78.19% between the 64th NSSO and PLFS (20–21). It may be interesting that the two genders behave differently in migration decisions. The increase in the number of migratory females must be investigated thoroughly; the causes for migration may differ between males and females.

3. Migrants in Different Age Groups:

This paper has categorised four distinct age groups (0–14, 15–30, 31–60, and 60 and above). This section will give you an understanding of changes in migrants at different age groups. It

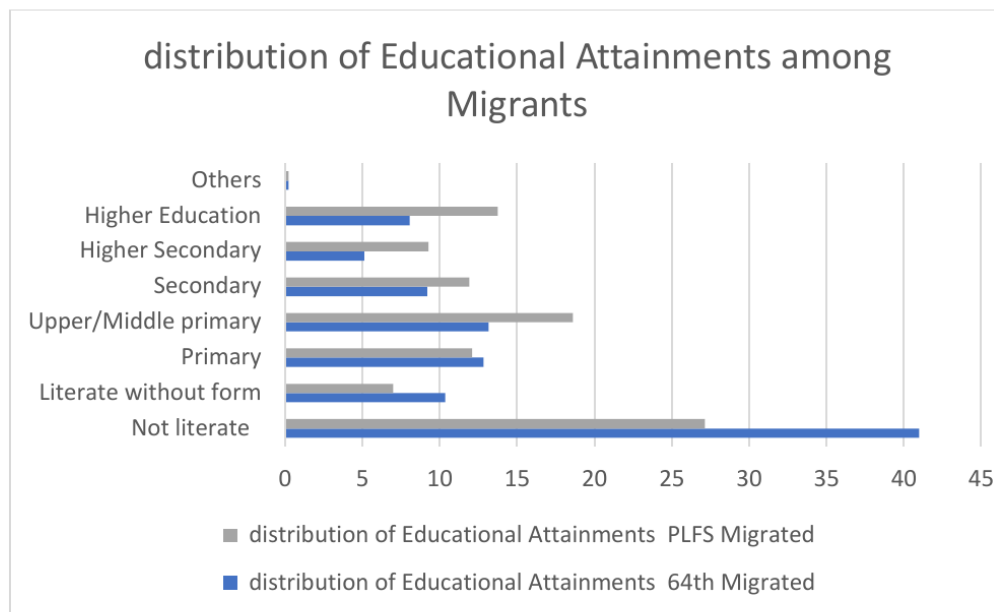
is critical to examine the dominant age group of migrants to understand their behaviour since age can be considered a proxy for experience at work.



This figure will explain the distribution of migrants across different age groups; it exhibits significant variations between the study period, from the 64th NSSO to the PLFS (20–21). In the first category of the age group (0–14), a noticeable decrease from 5.92% to 3.8% in this period is observed. This fall in migrants will give us insights into whether there is a reduction in family-based migration or if there is a possibility of an increase in focus on the migration of working-age individuals. A similar trend is also noticed in the second age group (15–30), a reduction from 32.61% to 26.52% in this period. A shift in the preferences of migrants between education and employment opportunities could be responsible for this decline in the percentage of this age group.

The remaining two age groups are exhibiting completely different trends. The 31–60 age groups have increased to 57.47% in 20–21 from 52.94% in the 64th round. The growing trend of migrants in this age group is possibly driven by employment opportunities, economic pressures, or lifestyle choices that necessitate relocation. The migrant population aged 60 and above is also showing an incremental trend. It increased to 12.21% from 8.53% in this period of study. Factors such as retirement, the search for better healthcare accessibility, or the need for support from family members could be the probable reasons for this rise in the percentage of migrants in this age group.

4. Educational Attainments among Migrants:



The table presents the distribution of educational attainments across different categories of migration status, comparing data from the 64th round and PLFS surveys. Across various educational levels, significant patterns emerge. Notably, among the non-migrated population, the majority falls under the "Not literate" category, comprising 30.73% in the 64th round and 20.21% in PLFS. Conversely, in the migrated population, this category is higher at 40.99% in the 64th round and 27.14% in PLFS. This suggests a higher proportion of illiteracy among migrants historically, with a slight improvement in recent data.

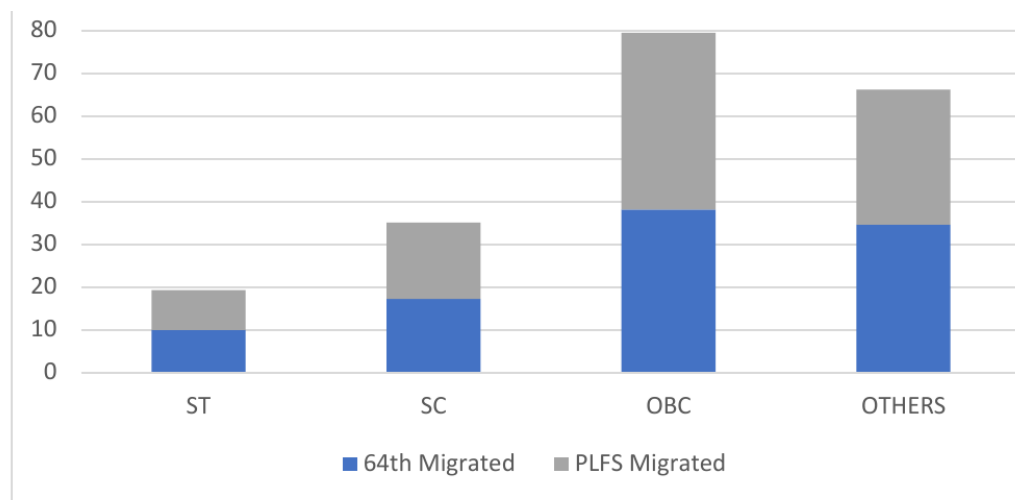
Moving to literate categories without formal education, there is a decline in both migrated and non-migrated groups from the 64th round to PLFS. Primary education shows consistency between migrated and non-migrated populations in both surveys, indicating universal trends in basic education acquisition.

Upper/Middle primary and secondary education levels show notable differences. In the 64th round, non-migrants have a slightly higher representation in upper/middle primary and secondary education compared to migrants. However, PLFS data reflects a reversal with migrants surpassing non-migrants in both categories, suggesting educational mobility among migrants over time.

Higher educational levels exhibit a similar trend, where migrants have made considerable gains in achieving higher secondary and tertiary education compared to non-migrants across both survey periods. This underscores the changing educational landscape among migrant populations, reflecting improved access and attainment levels in recent years.

The data illustrates complex dynamics in educational attainment influenced by migration status, highlighting both challenges and advancements in education among migrant communities.

5. Migration and Social Status:



The table compares the distribution of social groups among migrated and non-migrated populations according to the 64th round and PLFS data. Among Scheduled Tribes (ST), both datasets show a higher proportion of migration compared to non-migration, with 9.97% in the 64th round and 9.3% in PLFS for migrants, compared to 17.09% and 15.89% respectively for non-migrants. This suggests that STs are less likely to migrate compared to other social groups.

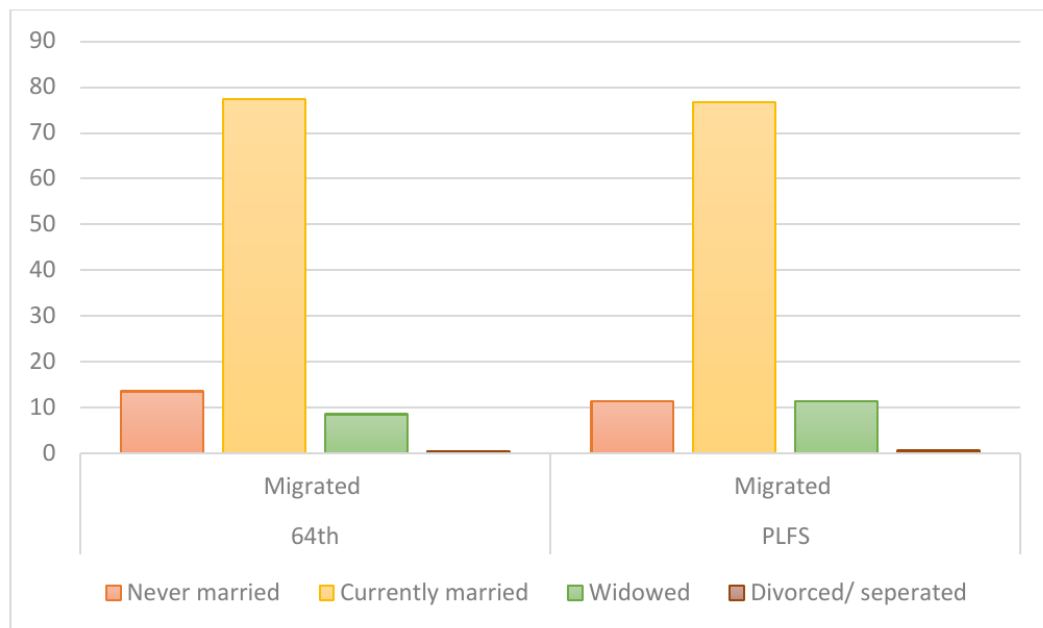
Scheduled Castes (SC), on the other hand, exhibit similar migration patterns between both datasets, with approximately 17-18% in both categories. This indicates a more stable migration rate across both rounds.

OBCs show a slightly higher migration rate in PLFS (41.29%) compared to the 64th round (38.16%), reflecting a potential increase in migration among this group over time. Non-migrants among OBCs also show a similar trend with 37.87% in the 64th round and 39.4% in PLFS.

The category "Others" includes non-SC, non-ST, non-OBC groups, which display a notable proportion of migration in both datasets, with 34.59% in the 64th round and 31.63% in

PLFS for migrants, compared to 28.2% and 26.82% respectively for non-migrants. This suggests a significant portion of migrants belong to this heterogeneous category.

6. Marital Status and Migration:



The distribution of migrants based on the table provided for the Distribution of Marital Status:

The table illustrates significant differences in marital status between migrants and non-migrants across the 64th round and PLFS datasets. Among those who have never married, migrants consistently represent a smaller percentage compared to non-migrants in both rounds—13.52% in the 64th round and 11.44% in PLFS for migrants, contrasting with 58.87% and 57.08% respectively for non-migrants. This indicates a higher proportion of unmarried individuals among non-migrants.

Regarding currently married individuals, the data shows a stark contrast with 77.45% of migrants in the 64th round and 76.66% in PLFS being currently married, compared to 37.66% and 38.91% respectively for non-migrants. This suggests that migrants are more likely to be currently married compared to non-migrants.

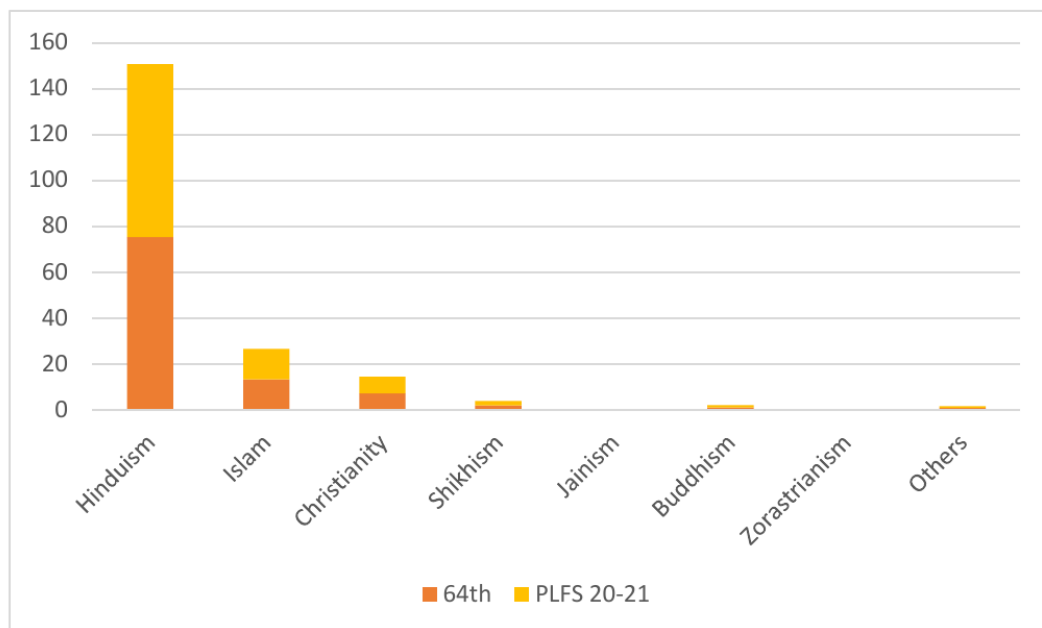
In the category of widowed individuals, migrants also show higher percentages in both datasets—8.52% in the 64th round and 11.37% in PLFS, compared to 3.16% and 3.69% respectively for non-migrants. This indicates a higher likelihood of being widowed among migrants.

The category of divorced or separated individuals shows minimal differences between migrants and non-migrants, with both groups representing very low percentages—0.51% and 0.53% for migrants in the 64th round and PLFS respectively, compared to 0.31% and 0.33% for non-migrants.

Overall, the data highlights distinct marital status distributions between migrants and non-migrants, with migrants showing higher proportions of currently married and widowed individuals, and lower proportions of those who have never married, compared to non-

migrants. These differences reflect varying demographic profiles and life stages among these groups.

7. Role of Religion in Migration Decision:



The figure shows the percentage distribution of migrants across various religious groups in both the 64th round and PLFS 20-21 datasets. Hinduism comprises the largest proportion of migrants in both datasets, with 75.33% in the 64th round and a slightly increased 75.43% in PLFS 20-21. This indicates a predominant presence of Hindu migrants among the sampled population.

Islam follows as the second largest group of migrants, with 13.24% in the 64th round and 13.36% in PLFS 20-21. This reflects a consistent proportion of Islamic migrants across both periods. Christianity constitutes a smaller but notable proportion of migrants, accounting for 7.3% in the 64th round and 7.14% in PLFS 20-21, showing a stable presence in migration patterns.

Sikhism and Buddhism show relatively smaller percentages of migrants, with Sikh migrants increasing slightly from 1.88% in the 64th round to 2.06% in PLFS 20-21, while Buddhist migrants decrease slightly from 1.1% to 1.06% over the same period. Jainism and Zoroastrianism exhibit minimal presence among migrants, with Jain migrants decreasing from 0.28% to 0.21% and Zoroastrian migrants being almost negligible in PLFS 20-21.

The category "Others" encompasses a diverse range of smaller religious groups, with 0.87% of migrants in the 64th round decreasing to 0.74% in PLFS 20-21.

The data indicates Hinduism as the dominant religious group among migrants, followed by Islam and Christianity, while smaller religions like Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism, and others

contribute to varying degrees to the migrant population. These trends provide insights into the religious composition of migrant communities sampled in the surveys.

6 b. Regression Analysis:

a) Educational effects on internal Migration:

Primary education had a positive coefficient in 1999–00 but was negative in subsequent years, with all p-values being significant. Upper/middle primary has negative coefficients consistently across the years. Secondary education and higher secondary education have a positive coefficient in the 55th NSSO round but have a negative coefficient in both the 64th round of NSSO and PLFS 20-21, indicating a lower likelihood of migration. Higher education shows positive coefficients, suggesting a higher likelihood of migration, and these coefficients are significant in all years. Other categories have mixed results across the years, with the coefficient being significant in the 64th NSSO (2007–08) and PLFS 2020–21. The trend in migration likelihood across educational levels emphasises how crucial educational attainment is to dictating patterns of migration. Reduced education levels appear to be associated with a reduced likelihood of migration, as indicated by the consistently negative coefficients in upper and intermediate primary schooling. Conversely, the constant positive coefficients in higher education suggest that people with more education have a larger propensity to migrate. These results emphasise the importance of education in influencing migration decisions and the necessity of policies that encourage higher education to foster economic opportunity and mobility.

Furthermore, studies have found that those with greater levels of education are more inclined to move in quest of better work prospects, further schooling, or access to better healthcare and social services. This trend is especially noticeable in developing countries, where people frequently migrate in search of better economic opportunities and a higher standard of living. Those with lower levels of education, on the other hand, may encounter difficulties such as a lack of work skills or language fluency, limiting their capacity to relocate to other regions. Therefore, level of education is critical in determining migration patterns and should be a priority in policymaking efforts to address migration concerns.

b) Age cohorts Effects:

Here we have considered three age groups, i.e., 15–30, 30–60, and 60 and above. The first age group is considered to examine the effects of relatively young personal migration decisions; the next age group covers middle- and relatively older individuals' effects on migration; and the last age group will explain older people's effects on migration decisions. All age groups (15–30, 31–60, and 60 and older) have positive and statistically significant coefficients, indicating that individuals in all age groups are more likely to migrate. The strongest effect is observed in the 15–30 age group. Individuals in the 15–30 age group are the most likely to migrate. The unique patterns of migration behaviour observed within each age group highlight how age plays a significant role in determining migration decisions. Understanding these patterns can provide valuable insights into demographic trends and societal changes.

One possible reason why individuals in the 15-30 age group are more likely to migrate is their pursuit of education and job opportunities. This age group may be more willing to relocate to further their careers or gain new experiences. Another factor that could contribute to the higher migration rates among younger individuals is their desire for independence and adventure. It is common for young adults to seek out new challenges and explore different places before settling down.

In contrast, older age groups may be more inclined to migrate due to reasons such as retirement or wanting to be closer to family members. These factors often drive individuals in the later stages of life to consider relocating.

c) Gender and Social Difference:

Being female has had a positive and statistically significant impact on migration in all years, suggesting that females are more likely to migrate. This increase could be attributed to factors like pursuing better educational or economic opportunities, fleeing gender-based violence, or relocating with family members who have already settled in metropolitan regions. Understanding the individual motives and problems that female migrants encounter might help policymakers design initiatives to meet their needs and promote more inclusive migration policies.

Furthermore, research has revealed that female migrants frequently confront challenges such as prejudice, limited access to healthcare, and an increased risk of exploitation. By addressing these concerns and offering targeted assistance, governments may foster a more egalitarian and empowering environment for all migrants, regardless of gender. Furthermore, increasing gender equality in migration might boost economic growth and social cohesiveness in communities. This emphasises the significance of a gender-sensitive approach to migration policy and programming to maximise the advantages for both individuals and society. While tackling gender inequities in migration is critical, focusing simply on gender equality risks overlooking other intersecting issues such as race, class, and nationality, which significantly influence migrants' experiences and prospects. It is critical to use an intersectional approach to guarantee that all marginalised groups in the migrant community are supported and empowered.

Negative coefficients across all social groups indicate a reduced likelihood of migration compared to the reference category. This hints at potential barriers or constraints faced by individuals belonging to certain social strata, hindering their mobility. All social groups have negative coefficients, indicating a lower likelihood of migration for these groups. The statistical significance indicates that these social groups have a considerable influence on migration. This highlights the significance of tackling systemic disparities and prejudice that may be inhibiting certain groups from pursuing migration possibilities. Understanding and tackling these hurdles allows policies and activities to be adjusted to better serve disadvantaged people in their pursuit of mobility and empowerment.

In addition, it's critical to take into account the intersectionality of various social groupings because different people may encounter different obstacles to migration depending on their financial level, gender, race, and other characteristics. We can provide more inclusive and equitable chances for everyone to pursue migration and improve their lives by tackling these interlocking kinds of prejudice. Furthermore, giving marginalised groups resources and support can aid in removing the structural obstacles that have traditionally kept them from taking advantage of possibilities for growth and mobility. By doing this, we can endeavour to build a society that is more equitable and just and in which everyone could benefitted.

d) Marital Status and Migration:

Currently married and widowed individuals are more likely to migrate, with positive and statistically significant coefficients. Divorced or separated individuals also show a positive impact on migration, but the coefficient value is lower compared to others.

Coefficients related to marital status categories indicate their influence on migration decisions. Currently Married, and Widowed individuals consistently demonstrate a positive correlation with migration across all years, indicating that marital status plays a crucial role in migration dynamics. The coefficient for divorced or separated individuals is also positive and statistically significant, particularly notable in 2007–08 (64th NSSO) and PLFS 2020–21, suggesting a heightened propensity for migration within this demographic during those periods. This suggests that marital status is a key factor to consider when analysing migration patterns. The findings highlight the importance of understanding how different marital statuses can impact migration decisions in various contexts.

Subsequent investigations need to explore greater depth into the causes of the higher migration rates among separated or divorced people at times. Policymakers seeking to address issues pertaining to migration and marital status may find significant insights from an understanding of the mechanisms driving this trend. Furthermore, investigating the relationships between marital status and other demographic variables like age and educational attainment may provide a more thorough picture of the dynamics of migration in India. Through an examination of the intricate correlation between migration and marital status, scholars can enhance the development of policies and interventions that facilitate individuals in making well-informed decisions regarding their mobility.

e) Regional Differences:

Individuals in the Western and Northern zones are more likely to migrate compared to the base category (the Eastern zone) in all years. The negative coefficient for the northern zone in PLFS 2020–21 suggests a lower likelihood of migration compared to the base category. Since India is a diverse country, not only in its natural endowments but also in development aspects, there are significant differences in investing in infrastructure and public services in underdeveloped areas, urban development, and businesses, and in providing incentives for skilled workers. These clouds lead to an imbalance in economic possibilities across regions. Thus, regional variation in migration decisions is a reflection of all such factors.

This trend could be attributed to a variety of causes, including employment opportunities, living costs, and the standard of living in each region. Patterns of migration decisions may also be influenced by social and cultural connections. Furthermore, sponsoring education and skill-building activities in areas with lower migration rates may help boost economic growth and improve citizen well-being. The cost of living in different locations influences people's decisions about where to live and work. Individuals, for example, may decide to relocate to location with higher living costs in search of better work possibilities and amenities.

Individuals who engage in education and skill-building projects in rural regions may be more likely to stay in their communities rather than migrate to urban areas. This could contribute to more sustained economic growth and increase the overall well-being of residents in certain areas. Furthermore, enacting policies that address economic disparity and provide affordable housing options in both urban and rural areas may help lessen the disparities that drive migration to specific places. Overall, a mix of targeted investments and policy actions. It may be important to establish more balanced and equitable migration patterns. Individuals may have greater reasons to stay in their communities if infrastructure and job prospects in rural areas are improved. This could result in a more equitable allocation of people and resources among regions, benefiting society.

7. Discussion:

The regression coefficients corresponding to different levels of education reveal their influence on migration patterns. Secondary and Higher secondary education have positive coefficients in the 55th round, but gradually became negative in the consequent two data sets (NSSO 64th and PLFS 2020-21), suggesting that the impact of secondary and higher secondary education curtails over time while opting for migration. Higher educational achievements, such as diploma, graduate, post graduate and above consistently exhibit a positive correlation with migration over the three-time period under our study. This trend implies that individuals with advanced education levels are more inclined to migrate, likely in pursuit of improved employment prospects or educational advancements.

Interestingly, the coefficient associated with "Primary" education level fluctuates across the years. While it shows a positive effect in 1999-00, it turns negative in subsequent years. Such variation might reflect changes in the labour market dynamics or educational infrastructure over time, impacting the migration tendencies of those with primary education.

The analysis of internal migration across different age cohorts 15–30, 31–60, and 60 and above reveals distinct patterns and motivations that significantly influence migration decisions. Each age group displays positive and statistically significant coefficients, indicating a higher likelihood of migration across all groups. However, the propensity to migrate is most pronounced among individuals in the 15–30 age group, highlighting the importance of age as a critical factor in migration behaviour.

The strong migration tendency within the 15–30 age group can be attributed to several key factors. Primarily, individuals in this age cohort are often in pursuit of educational and job

opportunities. Young adults are typically more willing to relocate to enhance their career prospects or to gain new experiences that can shape their professional trajectories. Additionally, this age group may also be driven by a desire for independence and adventure, which often motivates them to explore new places and opportunities before settling down.

The middle age group, 31–60, also exhibits a significant likelihood of migration, though the factors influencing their decisions may differ from those of younger individuals. People in this age range might migrate for career advancement, better job opportunities, or improved living conditions for their families. Migration in this cohort can also be influenced by family-related factors such as better education for children or reunification with family members who have already migrated.

For the 60 and older age group, migration decisions are often driven by different considerations compared to younger cohorts. Individuals in this age group may migrate due to retirement, seeking a more comfortable or desirable living environment, or wanting to be closer to family members, particularly their children and grandchildren. Health-related reasons, such as access to better healthcare facilities, can also play a significant role in their migration decisions.

Understanding the unique patterns of migration behaviour within each age group provides valuable insights into demographic trends and societal changes. These insights can inform policymakers in developing targeted strategies that address the specific needs and motivations of different age cohorts. For instance, policies aimed at the 15–30 age group might focus on improving access to higher education and job opportunities in less developed areas to reduce the need for migration. For the 31–60 age group, initiatives could include supporting career development and providing family-friendly amenities in both urban and rural areas. For the 60 and older age group, policies could focus on enhancing healthcare services and creating age-friendly communities to support their relocation needs.

The positive and statistically significant impact of being female on migration across all years highlights that females are increasingly likely to migrate. This trend can be attributed to several factors, including the pursuit of better educational and economic opportunities, escaping gender-based violence, or relocating with family members who have already settled in metropolitan regions. Understanding these individual motives is crucial for designing effective policies that cater to the specific needs of female migrants.

Female migrants often face unique challenges that need to be addressed to ensure their well-being and successful integration. Research indicates that female migrants frequently encounter prejudice, limited access to healthcare, and an increased risk of exploitation. These challenges underscore the need for targeted assistance and protection measures to create a more egalitarian and supportive environment for female migrants. By addressing these issues, governments can help foster a more empowering setting for all migrants, regardless of gender.

Promoting gender equality in migration is not only a matter of social justice but also a strategy that can enhance economic growth and social cohesion within communities. When women have equal opportunities to migrate and thrive, the economic benefits extend to their families

and the wider society. This calls for a gender-sensitive approach to migration policy and programming to maximize the advantages for both individuals and society.

However, it is important to recognize that focusing solely on gender equality may overlook other intersecting issues such as race, class, and nationality, which significantly influence migrants' experiences and prospects. An intersectional approach is essential to ensure that all marginalized groups within the migrant community are supported and empowered. This approach recognizes the multiple and overlapping forms of discrimination that individuals may face, allowing for more comprehensive and inclusive policy solutions.

To effectively support female migrants and other marginalized groups, policies must address systemic disparities and provide equitable opportunities for mobility. This includes ensuring access to quality healthcare, education, and employment, as well as legal protections against exploitation and discrimination. By tackling these interlocking forms of prejudice and providing resources and support, we can remove structural barriers that have historically limited the opportunities for growth and mobility for marginalized groups.

Negative coefficients across all social groups indicate a reduced likelihood of migration compared to the reference category. This hints at potential barriers or constraints faced by individuals belonging to certain social strata, hindering their mobility. The negative coefficients across all social groups indicate a reduced likelihood of migration compared to the reference category, suggesting that individuals from these groups face significant barriers or constraints hindering their mobility. The statistical significance of these coefficients highlights the substantial impact that social stratification has on migration patterns. This underscores the need to address systemic disparities and prejudices that inhibit certain social groups from pursuing migration opportunities.

To better serve disadvantaged individuals in their pursuit of mobility and empowerment, policies and activities must be tailored to understand and address these specific hurdles. It is essential to consider the intersectionality of various social groupings, as individuals may face different obstacles to migration based on factors such as financial status, gender, race, and other characteristics. By tackling these intersecting forms of prejudice, more inclusive and equitable opportunities for migration can be created.

Providing marginalized groups with necessary resources and support is crucial for removing the structural obstacles that have historically limited their access to opportunities for growth and mobility. This includes ensuring equitable access to education, healthcare, employment, and legal protections. By doing so, we can build a more just and equitable society where everyone has the chance to benefit from migration opportunities.

Analysis of coefficients about different geographic zones sheds light on regional variations in migration patterns. For instance, individuals in the Western and Northern zones exhibit a higher propensity to migrate compared to those in the Southern zone, as evidenced by positive coefficients. However, in 2020-21, the Northern zone displays a negative coefficient, implying a decline in migration likelihood relative to the base category (Eastern zone). This shift could

be attributed to factors such as economic downturns, policy alterations, or environmental considerations.

Coefficients related to marital status categories indicate their influence on migration decisions. Currently married and widowed individuals consistently demonstrate a positive correlation with migration across all years, indicating that marital status plays a crucial role in migration dynamics. The coefficient for divorced/separated individuals is also positive and statistically significant, particularly notable in 2007-08(64th NSSO) and PLFS 2020-21, suggesting a heightened propensity for migration within this demographic during those periods.

8. Conclusion:

Internal migration in India is influenced by complex socio economics variables. The effects of the level of education on internal migration in India reveal significant variations. Primary education positively influenced migration, but this turned negative in later years. Upper/middle primary education consistently showed negative coefficients, while secondary and higher secondary education transitioned from positive to negative impacts. Higher education consistently exhibited positive coefficients, indicating a higher likelihood of migration and emphasizing the importance of educational attainment in migration decisions. Thus, educational attainment plays a crucial role in determining migration patterns in India. The consistently negative impact of lower education levels on migration likelihood contrasts with the positive impact of higher education, underscoring the importance of promoting higher education to foster economic opportunity and mobility.

All age cohorts demonstrated a positive likelihood of migration, with the 15–30 age group being the most likely to migrate for education and job opportunities, whereas older individuals might migrate for retirement or family reasons. Gender differences show that females are more likely to migrate, driven by factors such as seeking better opportunities or relocating with family. the increased likelihood of migration among females highlights the importance of addressing gender-specific motivations and challenges. A gender-sensitive and intersectional approach to migration policy is crucial for creating inclusive and equitable opportunities for all migrants. By understanding and addressing the diverse needs and barriers faced by female migrants, policymakers can develop strategies that promote social equity, economic growth, and overall well-being.

Social groups face barriers to migration, while addressing the negative migration trends among social groups requires a comprehensive approach that considers the intersectional nature of barriers faced by different individuals. Policymakers must focus on creating inclusive policies and providing targeted support to marginalized communities to foster greater mobility and empowerment. By dismantling systemic barriers and offering equitable opportunities, we can promote social justice and economic growth for all.

Marital status also plays a crucial role, with currently married and widowed individuals showing a higher likelihood of migration, and divorced or separated individuals displaying a positive, though lesser, impact on migration. Regional differences indicate that individuals

from the Western and Northern zones are more likely to migrate compared to those from the Eastern zone, driven by disparities in infrastructure, economic opportunities, and living costs.

Addressing these diverse factors through tailored policies can enhance migration opportunities, economic growth, and social equity, making it crucial for policymakers to understand these motivations and barriers to develop effective migration and development strategies.

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