

International Migration from India and Inflow of Remittances

INTRODUCTION

Migration from India has taken place from the very dawn of civilization and there is hardly any part of the earth where Indians are not found today. But, never before in history had India witnessed such massive movements of people from country to other parts of the world as in the 19th and 20th centuries (Rajan, 2003). Since, independence, two distinct streams of migration have left India: people with professional expertise of technical qualifications emigrating to industrialised countries, and semi-skilled and skilled workers emigrating to the Middle East. Most of out-migrants are from Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Goa and Punjab. Remittances are main benefit of international out-migration, providing scarce foreign exchange and scope for higher levels of savings and investments. The World Bank estimates for 2008 put India in the lead at \$52 billion, with China and Mexico close behind at \$49 billion and \$26 billion, respectively (World Bank, 2009).

Although some studies have documented the pattern of emigration from India and inflow of remittances, but due to unavailability of national level data most of these studies are restricted to any particular state or districts. Therefore there is need to study the pattern and magnitude of emigration from India at macro-level. Recently released data of 64th round of National Sample Survey (2007-2008) has collected information of the out-migrants from households. It provides a good opportunity to explore the various aspects of emigration from India, such as pattern, estimates and socio-economic background of out-migrants and most importantly the inflow of remittances. Emigrants and out-migrants are interchangeably used in this study for international out-migrants from India.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The data on International migration in India is collected through the two government sources: the Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner and National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO). Indian census collects information of immigrants from other countries however, information on out-migration/emigration from India lacks in this particular data source. On the other hand NSSO the other major source, although collects immigration statistics since its 9th round (August, 1956 to January, 1957) as part of its employment and unemployment enquiries, but information regarding out-migration from India was absent till its 55th round (July, 1999-June, 2000).

Looking at the aforementioned lacunae the present study is designed which utilizes the Unit Level Data (unpublished) and published data (which is in the form of report) of 64th round (July, 2007-June, 2008) of NSSO, detailed information on various facets of migration through 'Employment-Unemployment and Migration' schedule (schedule 10.2) is also collected. This national representative survey was carried out in all the states and union territories of India. It has collected information about out-migrants and remittances, household-migration, return-migrants and seasonal short-term migrants. Any former member of the households who had left the household any time in the past, for staying outside the village/town, was considered as out-migrant, provided he/she was alive as on the date of survey. For all such members of the household, information was collected regarding present place of residence, period since leaving the household in years, reason for out-migration, whether engaged in economic activities, amount and frequency of remittances sent during last 365 days by such out-migrants to their former households, etc. Besides these, information on the purpose for which remittances, sent by the out-migrants, were used by the receiving households was also collected (NSS, 2010).

In the present study international out-migrants or emigrants from India to another country are defined as those who were out-migrants from the selected households and were residing in another country, i.e, whose current place of residence is outside India. Further, household members who have stayed away from the village/town for a period of one month or more but less than six months during the last 365 days for employment or in search of employment and during longest spell of migration they have stayed in another country, are considered as the temporary/short term labour out-migrants from India.

To study the pattern of out-migration from India, proportion of emigrants out of total population in a state has been provided, also state-wise estimated number of permanent and temporary labour out-migrants are computed. Distribution of emigrants according to various socio-economic and demographic characteristics like caste, religion, Monthly Household Consumer Expenditure Quintiles, age, sex and reason for migration is assessed. The study further provides the state-wise distribution and frequency of remittances during the last 365 days across the states.

RESULTS

Preliminary findings show that more than 80 percent of out-migrants have gone to other countries due to employment related reasons. Sex-wise analysis reveals that marriage is the

most important reason for the females to migrate whereas around 95 percent of males have out-migrated due to employment related reasons. It is also found that more than half of the emigrants had left country less than five years ago.

Results indicate that there were 44,42,245 emigrants living outside the country during the reference period of the survey, i.e, between July, 2007-June, 2008. With the 1.58 million out-migrants Kerala had contributed the one-third of emigrants from India followed by Tamil Nadu (4,98,327), Andhra Pradesh (4,37,404), Punjab (3,86,423) and Uttar Pradesh (3,83,625). The number of temporary labour out-migrants was around 1,10,150 persons in the reference year. They have out-migrated for employment purpose and hence this figure may provide some idea about the temporary labour mobility from India. Interestingly Delhi leads in the temporary labour out-migration with 28,164 labour out-migrants along with Bihar (19,690) and Kerala (18,003).

More than two-third of the emigrants belongs to age-group of 20 to 40. It suggests that out-migration of working age-population is high. Further sex-wise results show that women's proportion is almost negligible in international migration. Findings related to socio-economic background of out-migrants illustrate that majority of the out migrant are from Other Backward Classes and Others caste group. Moreover it is also found that prevalence of out-migration from households of Muslims is higher as compared to Hindus and other religion. Households with higher economic status, for which Monthly per Capita Consumer Expenditure (MPCE) quintiles is taken as proxy, have higher number of international out-migrants migrants, and the households belonging to the highest quintiles of MPCE have more than one-third of the total emigrants.

Results also reveal that percentage of sending remittances was higher among male out-migrants from rural areas (82 percent) than their urban counterparts (69 percent). On an average Rs. 52,000 was remitted in the reference year of survey by emigrants from rural areas, while this figure is Rs. 73,000 for emigrants from urban areas. We have also found that in last 365 days country had received remittances of Rs. 57,100 per out-migrant and among states Delhi is the leading receiver with remittances of Rs. 2,40,400 in the reference year. Moreover, we found that in rural areas percentage of households reporting receipt of remittance did not vary much with increase in MPCE as found in case of urban areas.

Table 1: Proportion, Estimated Number of Emigrants and Temporary Emigrants (short duration) and Remittance per Out-migrant during Last 365 Days in India and States

State	Proportion of emigrants ¹ (emigrants per thousand population)	Estimated number of emigrants ²	Estimated number of temporary labour out-migrants ³	Remittance per out-migrant (Rs. 00) ⁴
Andhra Pradesh	5.8	4,37,404	7,873	544
Arunachal Pradesh	0.1	109	0	537
Assam	0.1	2,725	0	203
Bihar	1.4	1,04,562	19,690	510
Chhattisgarh	0.3	6,716	392	122
Delhi	0.5	7,033	28,164	2404
Goa	12.2	17,597	3,291	1774
Gujarat	3.8	1,85,780	240	572
Haryana	2.3	50,227	220	1061
Himachal Pradesh	2.4	15,115	130	399
Jammu & Kashmir	0.7	5,674	36	374
Jharkhand	0.7	17,402	0	328
Karnataka	2.5	1,22,767	221	516
Kerala	53.0	15,83,232	18,003	576
Madhya Pradesh	0.4	23,499	14	473
Maharashtra	2.4	2,28,577	860	735
Manipur	0.2	327	0	430
Meghalaya	0.4	847	0	1128
Mizoram	0.1	102	0	354
Nagaland	0.1	93	0	200
Orissa	0.7	24,765	0	459
Punjab	16.2	3,86,423	3,718	992
Rajasthan	3.7	2,14,481	1,429	480
Sikkim	4.2	2,190	10	186
Tamil Nadu	8.1	4,98,327	7,343	487
Tripura	1.0	3,317	2,313	405
Uttarakhand	1.2	9,958	125	336
Uttar Pradesh	2.2	3,83,625	9,035	329
West Bengal	1.0	81,997	6,784	447
India	4.4	44,42,245	1,10,150	571

Sources: Unit level data of 64th round of National Sample Survey (Schedule 10.2) and NSS report “Migration in India: 2007-2008”

Notes: ¹ Proportion of out-migrants is the ratio of total international out-migrants to the total population of concerned area during the reference period of the survey, i.e, 2007-2008

² Number of emigrants is estimated using the appropriate multipliers/weights provided in the Unit Level Data of NSS

³ Temporary or short-term emigrants are defined as the household member who has stayed away from the village/town for a period of one month or more but less than six months during the last 365 days for employment or in search of employment and their during longest spell of migration they have stayed in another country

⁴ Information regarding the remittances is taken from the NSS report and these do not consider the temporary emigrants