

Impact of Rural-Urban Migration on Urbanization



Abhay Kumar Sinha

Assistant Professor,
Deptt. of Geography,
Vinoba Bhave University,
Hazaribag

Abstract

The phenomenon of population movement has been a part of human history since time immemorial, and man restlessly migrate from one place to another as part of a process of adaptation to his social, economic, cultural and ecological environment. In modern times, migration from the rural to urban areas is accelerating, making internal and international migration potentially one of the most important development and policy issues of the 21st century. Migration is an important factor in changing the size and structure of the population. Besides all other factors, migration from rural areas to the urban centres has been the driving force behind the population growth which has created serious impact on the environment in these urban centers besides causing strain on the limited urban services and infrastructure and increase in urban poverty and unemployment levels. As elsewhere, even in Hazaribag (a District of Jharkhand State), the phenomenon of migration from the rural areas has contributed to the growth of urban population. Therefore, the present study is an attempt to evaluate the ongoing process of rural-urban migration and its impact on the urban environment and quality of life in Hazaribag.

Keywords: Migration, Urban Centres, Rural to Urban Migration, Urban Environment.

Introduction

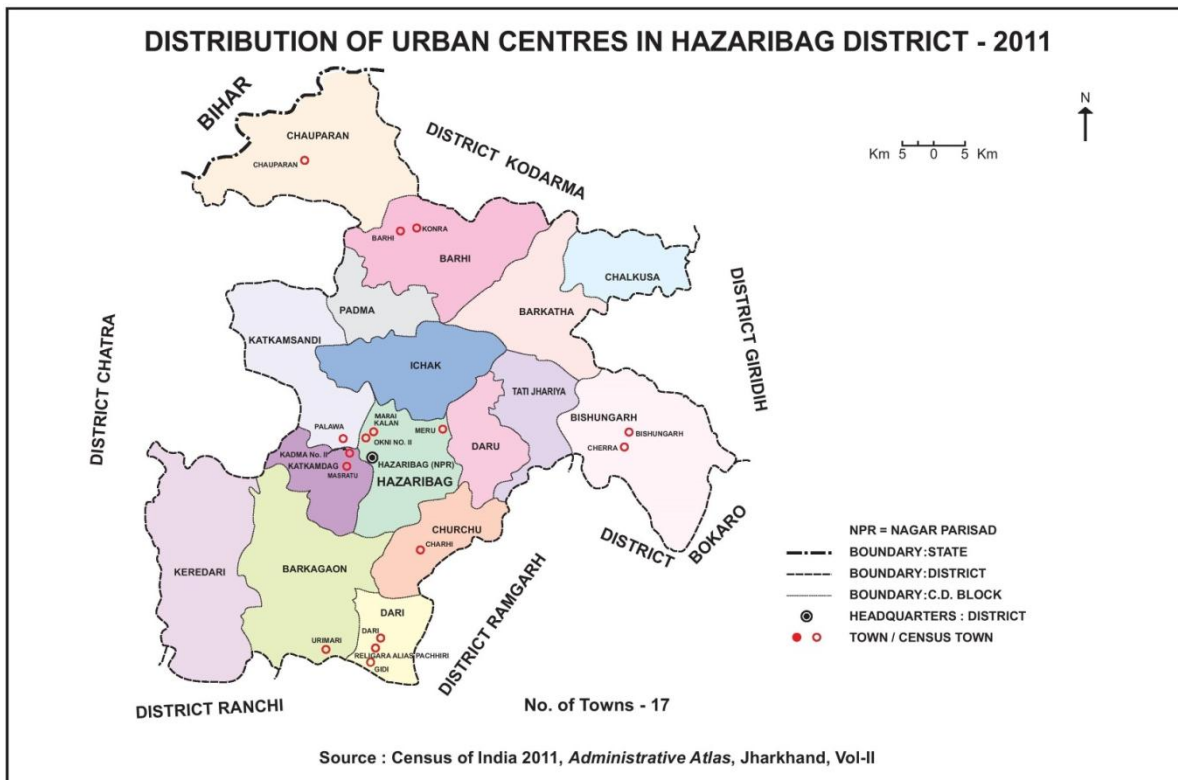
The term migration means the settlement or shifting of individual or a group of people from one place to another, more or less permanently. Defined as a permanent and semi-permanent shift of residence across boundaries of administrative and settlements units, migration is one of the most important correlates of modernization. It is an instrument of cultural diffusion and social interaction, and is a necessary element of population redistribution. The study of migration is of special interest to geographers as it is closely related to the spatial distribution of population. A large number of studies have been conducted by various social scientists regarding migration in India.

Aim of the Study

This paper aims to analyse migration as the geographical process of urbanization.

Study Area

Hazaribag (23.5° North to 24.4° North and 85.1° East to 85.9° East) district forms the central portion of the North Chotanagpur Division of Jharkhand state. Owing to its several reorganizations and assuming that there is absence of pull factors of urbanization, erratic and sluggish change is noticed. The lower percentage of urban population is unevenly distributed in the district. The rural centres being even more difficult in terms of civic facilities, development indicators and law & order issues that people are compelled to leave their rural homes in quest for better quality of life and destinations become the immediate urban centres which provide intervening opportunities to them.



Data and Methodology

The study is based on the district level primary/secondary data from 2001 to 2011 obtained from Census of India reports/sources and survey. The analysis made here follows statistical methods as well as qualitative methods.

Patterns of Urban Growth of Hazaribag

Hazaribag registered a large number of towns over the period. Mining belts in the district developed small urban mining units and they also attracted small manufacturing establishments. From three towns in the district in 1931 it rose to 22 towns in 1971. However, owing to its reorganization, and due to more rigorous tests applied after 1961 to determine whether a place qualified to be treated as town or not, some of its urban centres were declassified or merged with other towns and hence, the number of towns declined to ten (10) in 1981 and this fluctuating trend has the reflection even till the census of 2011.

Why People Migrate ?

Migration processes have been existent throughout all times and in all region of the world. It is triggered by push-pull forces. The push factors of migration are overpopulation, economics, politics, racial or religious conflicts, land tenure, changes in agriculture, etc. The pull factors could be excitement & vitality, jobs, housing, entertainment, social mobility, power, specialization of professions, etc. The original triggering of migration in former times had been primarily the search for more favorable conditions. Patterns of migration over the years have undergone many changes particularly since the age of industrialization. Towns and cities attract the 'surplus labour' from nearby or far-off villages; thereby they become the pivotal centres of attraction. In rural areas the burgeoning poverty, meager employment

opportunities, low and uncertain/irregular wages, lack of education and health facilities act as push factors and induce people to migrate to the urban places.

The migration process affects the areas to which migrants have moved in and areas from which they have moved out. Migration is construed as one of the most potent geographical processes impacting urbanization.

The decadal growth rate of population in Hazaribag during 2001-2011 is 25.79 % indicate that the growth is largely due to in-migrant population as evident from the qualitative analysis. This trend of continuous immigration is related to conditions in the rural areas where the life is not that comfortable. Hazaribag, the small administrative block and headquarters have been steadily growing in population as more and more people migrate from the surrounding villages in search of jobs, education, health care, safety & security (due to Naxalism-Maoist Violence/left wing extremism) and various other amenities/lifestyles that are not available in the villages. Subsequently, the small townships and hamlets have been expanding and growing in complexity, congenial to the growth of population. Judging by the number of people living in rural areas constituting 85.13 % of Hazaribag's population in 2011, as against 76.77 % in 2001, it should not be inferred that it is an indication of out migration in the district. In fact, after 1991 the sluggish pace of urbanization and negative growth trend are due to the combination of factors such as declassification of some urban centres and reorganization of the district.

Impact on Urban Areas

In 2011, Hazaribag city experienced a very high degree of district level **primacy**, as more than fifty per cent (51.76%) urban population of the district

resided there and no town qualified for either Class – II or Class – III civic status.

The pre-eminence of Hazaribag Town/City as the administrative headquarters of the North Chotanagpur Division and the District has propelled it towards district level urban primacy. Further, lack of urbanization, urban infrastructures, several reorganizations of the district and the poor connectivity and transportation facility have aided in the erratic and sluggish pace of urbanization of Hazaribag.

Whereas, the topography and the geology of the plateau, nature of the district and very poor connectivity in terms of transport present a limitation to the expansion and development of the urban areas, the influx of migrants particularly from the rural areas is seen to have been contributing to the growing urban population. This heavily takes toll on the existing infrastructural facilities and the amenities as well. The majority of the migrant population in Hazaribag is drawn from the rural areas, and the phenomenon of continued out-migration essentially tells upon the conditions in the rural areas, making the life increasingly difficult. More than 80 per cent of the rural population is dependent on agriculture. But the low rate of investment in agriculture, inequalities in the distribution of land and other productive assets, institutional mechanisms which discriminate in favour of the owners of wealth, coupled with natural calamities (droughts) lead to increasing unemployment and poverty of the rural population. In fact, the unemployment and poverty of the rural population are the main causes of out migration to the urban centres of the district and to other states as well. Unemployment pushes migrants towards areas with greater employment opportunities where they engage themselves in petty livelihood practices.

Though agriculture still remains the main occupational activity in rural Hazaribag, agricultural production is mostly subsistence in nature restricted to only one cropping season. Due to lack of infrastructural facilities such as connectivity, market linkages, facilities for storing and value addition for the agro products, the creation of opportunity for sustained employment and income generation is insufficient. This situation is further aggravated by the growing naxal violence / left wing extremism. Problems are also cropping up as a result of out-migration in the place of origin, and in the place of destination. It distorts the demographic structure of both the place of origin and destination. Some of the emerging problems are closely related to environment, apart from the others such as infrastructural strain, poverty, social tensions and crime.

Environmental Implications

Urbanization has historically been associated with declining birth rates, which reduces population pressure on land and natural resources; higher population densities mean lower per capita costs of providing energy, health care, infrastructure and services. Despite all these positive impacts, almost all major cities of the region are increasingly plagued by environmental problems. Some major aspects, as a direct result of urbanization, are as follows:

1. Great threat to health and safety in the towns due to water and air pollution, especially at the households and community levels. Waterborne diseases are found most commonly in low-income neighborhoods as a result of inadequate sanitation, drainage and solid waste collection services. Health risks, especially to the poor, are also posed by pesticides and industrial effluents.
2. The loss in productivity due to traffic congestion and air pollution includes the total productive time wasted in traffic and the associated increase in the costs of operating and maintaining vehicles such as wear and tear as a result of idling in traffic and frequent acceleration and braking. In the field of sanitation, the urban centres have not been able to do much either. Hazaribag, since January 2016 has been upgraded to Municipal Corporation and will enjoy the benefits of AMRUT City.

The transport sector, too, has seen a substantial growth in the last decade, particularly with an increase in personal transport. There is lack of public transport in Hazaribag. This phenomenon has made traffic congestion and snarls a common feature in the market/commercial areas of Hazaribag.

Suggestions

Accommodation of rural population in the ever complex expansion of the townships is going on unabated. Whereas growth and development are positive change, with regard to urban living such growth almost always is accompanied by multiple problems and opportunities. The need to address the growing infrastructural and social needs of the increasing urban population on one hand and the problems of land acquisition, issues of public safety and environmental protection on the other are the crucial areas requiring judicious urban planning and development.

To achieve an enduring solution to the problems of migration and urbanization measures should be adopted to do away with the conditions which generate such problems.

Conclusion

Providing Urban Amenities Rural Areas (PURA) and the development of the rural areas in all spheres of life will definitely be an answer to the overwhelming outflow of rural population to the urban centres. However, there are counter views to this. The growth dynamics of cities need not be contained, but it should be managed in sustainable manner. At the same time, the agenda of rural development should be pursued vigorously.

Urban and rural growth should be seen as complementing to each other rather than competing against each other. This will not only create more intervening opportunities but also convert population migration into population mobility, thereby paving the way for sustainable development.

References

1. Census of India, 1981, District Census Hand Book, Hazaribag, India.
2. Census of India, 1991, Primary Census Abstract, Bihar (CD), India.
3. Census of India, 2001, District Census Hand Book, Hazaribag, India.

P: ISSN NO.: 2394-0344

E: ISSN NO.: 2455-0817

4. Census of India, 2011, Primary Census Abstract, Jharkhand (CD), India.
5. Kaur, G. (1996): *Migration Geography*, Anmol Publications Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi.
6. Krishan, G. (1989): New Themes in Population Research, Demography India, Vol.18.
7. Migration in India 2007-2008, NSS Report No. 533: *Migration in India: July, 2007-June, 2008*, National Sample Survey Office, Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation, Government of India, June 2010.
8. Nees, Gayl D. and Talwar, Prem P. (eds.), (2005), *Asian Urbanisation in the New Millennium*. Heian International Berkely.

Remarking

Vol-II * Issue- IX* February- 2016

9. Singh, Ravi S., (2005), *Paths of Development in Arunachal Pradesh*. Northern Book Centre, New Delhi.
10. Sivaramakrishnan, K.C., Kundu, Amitabh, and Singh, B.N., (2007), *Handbook of Urbanization in India*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
11. Verma, Vinita Sinha, (2006), *Urbanization in Jharkhand Past and Present*. Indian Geographical Foundation, Calcutta.
12. Sinha, B.R.K. (2005): *Human Migration-Concepts and Approaches*, http://www.mtafki.hu/konyvtar/kiadv/FE2005/FE20053-4_403-414.pdf