

# Patterns of In-Migration from West Bengal to NCT of Delhi

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Received: September 15, 2018

Accepted: October 26, 2018

## ABSTRACT

*Geographers with their concern for spatially expressed processes are attracted to the study of relocation of people. For a city like Delhi, serving as a nation's capital as well as the union territory of India, the study of migration has become all the way more important as it helps in understanding the dynamics of the society better. Delhi has been receiving population through international and national migration so much so that, today's more than one third of its total population is accounted as migrant population. Today, the composition of population in Delhi ruminates the perfect cosmopolitan image. Due to this high rate of in-migration Delhi has become one of the fastest growing cities in the world. The continuous flow of in-migrants to Delhi is mainly due to constant inter-state migration from seven states including Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana, Uttaranchal, Rajasthan, Punjab and West Bengal. Thus, it is necessary to understand the patterns of migration in the national capital territory of India. The objectives of the present study are to study (i) inter-state patterns of migration in Delhi; (ii) population characteristics of these migrants; (iii) reasons for their migration; (iv) select attributes of in-migrants from West Bengal. The study highlighted that the process of in-migration plays a significant role in increasing the overall growth of population in the NCT of Delhi. The inter-state migration in Delhi tends to occur mainly from the neighboring states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana, Uttaranchal, Rajasthan, and Punjab with an exception of West Bengal from where the far off migration is taking place. It was also observed that even though West Bengal is at the seventh position in terms of sending migrants to the NCT of Delhi yet it is the only state sending sixty per cent of its migrants from the urban areas. Moreover, Bengali after Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu is the fourth most widely spoken language in NCT of Delhi.*

## Keywords:

## Introduction

Geographers with their concern for spatially expressed processes are attracted to the study of relocation of people. For a city like Delhi, serving as a nation's capital as well as the union territory of India, the study of migration has become all the way more important as it helps in understanding the dynamics of the society better. Delhi has been receiving population through international and national migration so much so that, today's more than one third of its total population is accounted as migrant population. Today, the composition of population in Delhi ruminates the perfect cosmopolitan image. Due to this high rate of in-migration Delhi has become one of the fastest growing cities in the world. The continuous flow of in-migrants to Delhi is mainly due to constant inter-state migration from seven states including Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana, Uttaranchal, Rajasthan, Punjab and West Bengal. Thus, it is necessary to understand the patterns of migration in the national capital territory of India.

## Objectives of the study

In view of the above discussion, the present study tries to give an overview of in-migration in Delhi in respect to following objectives: (i) to study inter-state patterns of migration in Delhi; (ii) to examine the population characteristics of these migrants; (iii) to find out the reasons for their migration; (iv) to explore the select attributes of in-migrants from West Bengal.

## Data Sources and Methodology

The present study is based on secondary data published by Census of India. Due to unavailability of 2011 migration tables, data for 2001 has been analysed elaborately to know the trends, patterns and characteristics of in-migrants in NCT of Delhi. Mathematical techniques such as rates, percentages have been calculated and data is processed and presented in the tabulated form.

## Analysis and Discussion

The process of in-migration plays an important role in the overall growth of population of the NCT of Delhi. The continuous flow of in-migrants to Delhi is mainly due to constant inter-state migration from seven states including Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana, Uttaranchal, Rajasthan, Punjab and West Bengal. The capital city of Delhi with 39 per cent migrant population to its total population presents an important case to study not only the demographic and economic characteristics of its migrants but also the effects of their various socio-economic and cultural backgrounds on the process of in-migration in Delhi. Delhi, with a huge in-

migrant population has shown a great variation in the pattern of inter-state migration over the year 2001. The Census of 2001 recorded that from all the above mentioned seven states, Uttar Pradesh alone accounted for more than 2/5<sup>th</sup> (43.1 per cent) of the total migrant population in Delhi which is followed by Bihar (13.6 per cent) Haryana (10.4 per cent), and other states as shown in (Table 1).

Table 1  
NCT of Delhi: Pattern of Inter-State In-Migration, 2001

States	Share of Migrant Population to Total Migrant Population in NCT of Delhi
Uttar Pradesh	43.1
Bihar	13.6
Haryana	10.4
Uttaranchal*	5.7
Rajasthan	5.2
Punjab	4.8
West Bengal	3.2
Others	14.0

Source: Computed from D-3 Migration Tables of NCT of Delhi, Census of India, 2001  
\* Known as Uttarakhand as per Census of India, 2011

Traditional geographers recognize the process of migration in the light of a decaydistance relationship stating that the frequency of migration among people decreases with the increase in the distance (Zipf, 1946) thereby, proposing that migration is only favorable from within or nearby areas. However, in case of NCT of Delhi; the observations are interesting. The study reveals that the in-migrants of Delhi are in-migrating not only from different districts of nearby states but also from far off places in the states of West Bengal, Kerala, Tamil Nadu etc. From amongst these far off states sending migrants to different parts of the country, West Bengal witnessed the highest percentage of long distance out-migrants going to NCT of Delhi and accounted for 3.2 per cent of the total migrant population in Delhi.

**In-Migration from Top Seven States to Individual Districts in NCT of Delhi, 2001**

Census 2001 revealed that the NCT of Delhi received migrants from almost all the states of the country. It is interesting to note that seven states out of the total 34 States and Union Territories had sent 86 per cent of the total migrant population in NCT of Delhi in 2001. It was also seen that in every district, the largest percentage was of migrants from Uttar Pradesh except in North district of Delhi where the largest percentage of migrants was from Rajasthan and not Uttar Pradesh.

Table 2  
NCT of Delhi: In-Migration from Top Seven States to Individual Districts, 2001

Districts of NCT of Delhi	Percentage of Migrants in NCT of Delhi from various States of Origin					
	Rank					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
North	Uttar Pradesh (33.2%)	Haryana (13.9%)	Bihar (12.4%)	Rajasthan (4.4%)	Punjab (4.4%)	Others* (31.7%)
West	Rajasthan (37.8%)	Uttar Pradesh (13.1%)	Uttaranchal (7.1%)	Chandigarh (6.9%)	West Bengal (4.2%)	Others (30.9%)
North	Uttar Pradesh (28.7%)	Bihar (12.3%)	Haryana (10.9%)	Punjab (8.5%)	Rajasthan (5.8%)	Others (33.8%)
South	Uttar Pradesh (28.5%)	Haryana (14.4%)	Bihar (12.5%)	Uttaranchal (6.1%)	Rajasthan (5.8%)	Others (32.7%)
West	Uttar Pradesh (44.8%)	Bihar (10.80%)	Uttaranchal (6.5%)	Haryana (5.4%)	Punjab (4.5%)	Others (28.0%)
East	Uttar Pradesh (31.2%)	Bihar (15.5%)	Haryana (5.5%)	Rajasthan (4.9%)	West Bengal (4.1%)	Others (38.8%)
Central	Uttar Pradesh (68.2%)	Bihar (6.8%)	Uttaranchal (4.4%)	Haryana (3.0%)	Punjab (1.8%)	Others (15.8%)
North East	Uttar Pradesh (29.9%)	Uttaranchal (9.5%)	Bihar (9.1%)	Haryana (4.2%)	Rajasthan (3.4%)	Others (43.9%)
New Delhi	Uttar Pradesh (38.5%)	Bihar (14.5%)	Uttaranchal (6.1%)	Haryana (5.6%)	West Bengal (4.9%)	Others (30.4%)
South	Uttar Pradesh (38.5%)	Bihar (14.5%)	Uttaranchal (6.1%)	Haryana (5.6%)	West Bengal (4.9%)	Others (30.4%)

Source: Computed from D2 Migration Tables of NCT of Delhi, Census of India, 2001  
\* Remaining States and Union Territory

North East district of Delhi exhibited the highest percentage of migrants (68.2 per cent) from Uttar Pradesh followed by East district with 44.8 per cent of the migrants from Uttar Pradesh. One of the possible reasons for high magnitude of migration from the state of Uttar Pradesh towards these two districts in NCT of Delhi was close proximity of the state which may tempt the migrants to relocate themselves closer to

their homes. Similarly, Haryana which contributed to 10.4 per cent migrants in Delhi (Table 1) also had majority of its migrants settled in South-west, North-west and West districts of Delhi since Haryana borders the NCT of Delhi from the three sides (Table 2).

Though the majority of the interstate migrants in the NCT of Delhi are coming from the neighboring states of Haryana, Bihar, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttaranchal yet more than 4 per cent of the migrant population in each of the three districts of North, South and Central in Delhi belonged to the far off state of West Bengal.

#### **Male-Female Composition of In-Migrants in NCT of Delhi**

Though there is not a wide gap in the percentage of male migrants and female migrants in different districts in Delhi yet the two districts where male migrants are far more than female migrants are Central and South districts of Delhi; which accounted for 57.9 per cent and 57.1 per cent of male migrants respectively (Table 3). The sex ratio of these two districts is, thus, less than the state average. In the districts of North West and South West of NCT of Delhi, the sex ratio of migrants is higher than the state average. The possible reason for a higher sex ratio of migrant population in these districts could be the in-migration of more female migrants than male migrants for marriage purposes from the bordering state of Haryana (Census of India, 2001).

Districts	Male (%)	Female (%)
North West	54.5	45.5
North	56.4	43.6
North East	54.7	45.3
East	55.4	44.6
New Delhi	56.7	43.3
Central	57.9	42.1
West	56.0	44.0
South West	54.3	45.7
South	57.1	42.9

Source: Computed from D-2 Migration Tables of NCT of Delhi, Census of India, 2001

#### **Reasons for Migration of In-Migrants in NCT of Delhi**

As per the Census of India 2001, the seven reasons for migration to take place included 'employment', 'business', 'education', 'marriage', 'moved after birth', 'moved with households', and 'others'. However, in order to have a more comprehensive overview regarding the reasons for migration in Delhi it has been studied under two heads i.e. migration for all duration of residence and migration during 1991-2001. Migration for all duration of residence included all the migrants staying in Delhi for all the duration till the census 2001 while in-migration during 1991-2001 included those migrants who migrated to the NCT of Delhi only during the decade 1991-2001.

The main reason for migration to the NCT of Delhi during the decade 1991-2001 was 'employment'. It was followed by 'moved with household', 'marriage', 'education', 'moved after birth' and 'business' which accounted for 36.78 percent, 13.80 percent, 2.68 percent, 2.35 per cent and 0.54 percent of the migrants respectively. Thus, 'employment' and 'moved with household' are the most dominating factors accounting for approximately, 75 per cent of the migration to Delhi during 1991-2001. The share of migration due to 'employment' is 36.42 per cent for all duration of residence while it was 37.56 per cent during the decade 1991-2001. Similarly, the share of migrants due to 'education' was 2.68 per cent during 1991-2001 as compared to 1.48 per cent for all duration of stay. While the share of migrants for the reason 'moved with household' was 36.78 per cent during 1991-2001 as compared to 33.73 per cent for all duration of stay. The migrants arriving to NCT of Delhi for the reason due to 'marriage' during 1991-2001 was 16.12 per cent it was 13.80 per cent from the category of migration for all duration of residence.

#### **In-Migrants from West Bengal to NCT of Delhi and their Distribution**

Delhi, the most preferred destination among the migrants, accommodated 39 per cent of its population as migrant population in 2001. It is interesting to note that majority of inter-state migration tends to occur from the neighboring states of Delhi but, the only far off state initiating a similar pattern of migration is West Bengal (Table 1). Though the share of the migrant population from the state of West Bengal is much less than that from the neighboring states, yet its importance could be amicably calculated in respect to the distance over which such a migration is taking place.

One of the foremost factors which make the study of in-migrants from West Bengal significant is the pattern of migration taking place from rural and urban areas amongst the six migrant sending states of India to NCT of Delhi (Table 4). As far as the pattern of in-migration in NCT of Delhi is concerned, it is important to note that the top seven states such as Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttaranchal, Haryana, Punjab and West Bengal are together contributing 86 per cent of the inter-state migration in Delhi (Table 1). Though West Bengal is at the seventh position in terms of sending migrants to NCT of Delhi yet it is interesting to note that

States	Percentage of In-Migrants	
	From Rural Areas (%)	From Urban Areas (%)
Bihar	81.06	18.94
Uttar Pradesh	71.96	28.04
Rajasthan	66.04	33.96
Uttaranchal	65.89	34.11
Haryana	65.54	34.46
West Bengal	42.09	57.91

Source: Computed from D2 Migration Tables of NCT of Delhi, Census of India, 2001

it is the only state which is sending about sixty per cent of its migrants from urban areas (Table 4) as compared to the other top five states, each one of which accounted for less than 35 per cent migration from the urban areas. This supports the fact that in all probability migrants coming from the urban areas of West Bengal are likely to be better skilled, highly qualified and professionally more competent than the migrants originating from the rural areas.

Moreover, when seen in terms of distance covered, Kolkata, amongst the top twenty districts proposing migration, is the farthest district from where migrants are arriving in Delhi covering a distance of 1461 km. It is worth noticing that in spite of being a metropolitan city with history and facilities guarding its importance, the reason that still manages to pull large population from this far off place to the NCT of Delhi further probes and adds to the significance of its selection. Furthermore, when the position of West Bengal is compared with the far off states in India in relation to the patterns of the inter-state migration it is revealed that West Bengal holds a prominent position among all the other far off states in India. West Bengal contributed 3.2 per cent of the total migrants to the NCT of Delhi in comparison to the other far off states such as Kerala and Tamil Nadu which accounted for only 1.3 per cent and 1 per cent respectively of the total migrants. Above all, out of the 22 listed languages that are spoken in the NCT of Delhi, the Bengali language is the fourth most widely spoken language after Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu. Therefore, all the above mentioned factors and features accentuate the relevance of studying the patterns, reasons and traits of the migrants relocating themselves from the state of West Bengal to the NCT of Delhi. It also helps in understanding why and how a state with a migrant population of 3.2 per cent in Delhi is still important to be studied.

## Conclusion

It can, thus, be concluded that the process of in-migration plays a significant role in increasing the overall growth of population in the NCT of Delhi. The inter-state migration in Delhi tends to occur mainly from the neighboring states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana, Uttaranchal, Rajasthan, and Punjab with an exception of West Bengal from where the far off migration is taking place. Furthermore, the reasons of migration within these top seven states varied differently; where on the one hand, 'employment' occurred to be the major reason of migration for states such as Bihar and West Bengal and on the other hand, reason for 'moving with the household' was prominent among the states of Rajasthan, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Uttaranchal. It was also observed that even though West Bengal is at the seventh position in terms of sending migrants to the NCT of Delhi yet it is the only state sending sixty per cent of its migrants from the urban areas. Moreover, all districts, included in the top seven states excluding the state of West Bengal, from where large number of migrants are originating are either backward or having agricultural background. In West Bengal major portion of migration is occurring from the metropolitan city of Kolkata. Besides this, what is worth noticing is that in spite of being a metropolitan city with a literacy rate of 87.14 per cent Kolkata is the farthest district from where migration is taking place to the NCT of Delhi. Moreover, Bengali after Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu is the fourth most widely spoken language in NCT of Delhi.