

Navigating Dreams: The Impact Of Globalization On Mumbai's Informal Sector Youth Migrants

Vijay Ramdas Nair^{1*}, Prof. (Dr.) C.K. Singh²

¹Ph.D. Scholar, Department of Humanities, Chhatrapathi Shivaji Maharaj University, Panvel Maharashtra.

nairvijaynair1@gmail.com

²Dean, Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Communication, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj University, Panvel, Navi Mumbai. Maharashtra, cks0655@gmail.com

Abstract

Migration is an age-old phenomenon, rich with complexity and profound significance in human life. It shapes identities and influences destinies, as every individual embarks on journeys driven by myriad reasons, both major and minor. This study delves into the transformative experiences of youth migration, particularly in the context of socio-economic changes brought about by globalization in Mumbai. By collecting primary data of 400 young migrants from various parts of India, this research covers the realities faced by these individuals. It highlights the effects of urban life on their socio-economic conditions and the psycho-social vulnerabilities they encounter. The findings are crucial not only for understanding the challenges that youth migrants face but also for informing social work interventions aimed at promoting their well-being. Furthermore, the study offers practical, actionable solutions for society, NGOs, governmental bodies, and thought leaders to support this vulnerable population.

Keywords: *Youth, Migration, Globalization, Informal Sector, Socio-Economic Impact*

Introduction -

Migration often involves a selective process driven by the pursuit of better economic opportunities in urban areas with strong social networks. However, the term "migrants" encompasses a diverse group with varied characteristics. Evidence suggests that migrants are generally younger and healthier than the populations in their home communities. Migration has been integral to human survival and prosperity, as people have historically moved to escape insecurity, poverty, and seek new opportunities. Economist J.K. Galbraith described migration as "the oldest action against poverty". <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200304/cmselect/cmintdev/79/7905.htm> Migration exposes individuals to diverse socioeconomic, environmental, and cultural contexts. It is more than just physical movement; it is also a socially, economically, and politically mediated Experience Migration reflects shifting socioeconomic and political conditions at multiple levels and highlights the disparities between places of origin and destination. Typically, migration is age and sex-selective, with younger and working-age groups being more represented.

With this an eye opening scenario of migration, in India the major causes of youth migration are unemployment, competitive labour market and enhanced livelihood prospects in the destination district or state. The migration of youth from rural parts of the country is closely related to economic endeavours leading to inter and intra state migrations. Rural people in India are still dependent on the agricultural sector as the primary source of employment. The farm sector in India is closely associated with seasonality, and thus the sector's cycle also determines a main element of migration within the rural-urban migration stream.

As per push-pull theory migration is a complex phenomenon, where 'macro', 'meso' - and 'micro' -factors act together to inform the final individual decision to migrate, integrating the push-pull theory. Among the 'macro-factors', the political, demographic, socio-economic and environmental situations are major contributors to migration. These are the main drivers of forced migration, either international or internal, and largely out of individuals' control which are Major Phenomenal Events of Youth who are migrating to metro youth to explore their social-economic life upliftment.

Literature Review –

(Thite, 2012), has conducted a study to identify the socio-economic characteristics of rural migrants, through the study author has also attempted to focus on the pull and push factors of migration in India. Author has focused on the major factors that are responsible for the rural youth migration. These factors are – economic factors and demographic factors, socio-cultural factors, political factors and some other factors such as, education, great vitality, individual attitudes etc. Through the study author has observed that, the main reason of rural youth migration is to improve standard of living and to achieve good public services. Author has pointed out that, rural people cannot enjoy the same public services as urban people enjoy and therefore, there are huge migration trends among the rural youths in India.

(Sali & Astige, 2015), have also attempted to focus the causes and consequences of youth migration in India. Authors have described the factors that contribute the migration of youth from rural areas to urban areas. Authors have also focused on the phenomenon of labour migration as migration has become a universal and dynamic process. Lack of employment opportunities, lack of basic facilities, lack of water, etc. are some of the major reasons of youth migration, observed by authors. Apart from this, authors have focused on the problems and challenges of migrant youth in urban areas.

(Namarata & Kiran, 2016), have conducted a study to identify the main reasons of youth migration from rural areas to urban areas. Through the study authors have observed that, the young people belonging to age group of 21 to 30 years are the major migrants and these migrants are belonged to the nuclear families. To search employment, to improve standard of living to overcome the problems of natural disaster (drought, floods,) shortage of feed and fodder etc. are some of the major causes of youth migration in India. Authors have concluded that, to overcome the problem of rural youth migration, there should be efforts by government to provide socio-economic amenities and facilities to rural youth and also provide employment to them at their native places.

(Tripathi & Dixit, 2018), have conducted a study to capture the interests of rural youth and their thoughts that are forcing them for urban migration. Through the study authors have observed that, youth interest in farming is reducing due to their increased attraction towards urban areas or cities. Lack of recreational opportunities and attractive life styles in metro cities are also some of the major causes for rural youth migration. Authors have concluded that, profitable farming is crucial for retaining rural youth in the agricultural sector. Authors have suggested that there should be provision of reward/incentives for innovative farming and there should be encouragement for agro-based industries which may cause to remain youth in rural areas.

(Jha, 2018), has conducted a study with a view to understand the rate of return migration. This study is related to the south Indian states like Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. Through the study author has explained the concept of return migration, which is defined as – voluntary movement of migrants back to their native place. The study revealed that, return migration is caused not only by economic factor but many others like social, political, cultural, environmental, health factors. All these factors are played vital role in the return migration process. Author has concluded that, return migration process has not received much attention till now. In the opinion of the author there is a requirement to focus on the return migration of rural youth and other related socio-economic issues which they face while re-adjusting in the community.

(Food and Agriculture organization of United Nations (FAO'S Report), 2020), has highlighted the root causes of migration and harnessing its potential for development, through the report the key role of agriculture and rural development for migration has discussed. Apart from this, there is a detailed discussion regarding various challenges and opportunities of migration for rural areas. The report has pointed out that poverty, food insecurity, lack of job opportunities; natural calamities, change in climate and environmental degradation etc. are some of the major root causes of migration. This report has also focused on the various dimensions of migration and the contribution of food and agricultural organization (FAO) in removing the challenges of migration.

Objectives:

- 1) To study socio-economic and educational status of the youth migrants.
- 2) To identify and list out the factors that is responsible for youth migration.
- 3) To analyze the impacts of metro city life on youth migrants.

Research Methodology:

The present study is exploratory in nature. A survey method was employed to collect the required primary data. The primary data was gathered through a questionnaire administered to youth migrants aged 18 to 29 years living in Mumbai. A simple random sampling method was used for sample selection. Secondary information was collected from research papers and articles published in national and international journals, periodicals, etc. The collected primary data was analysed using a simple percentage method. Data analysis was conducted using a Bivariate method.

Results and Discussion:

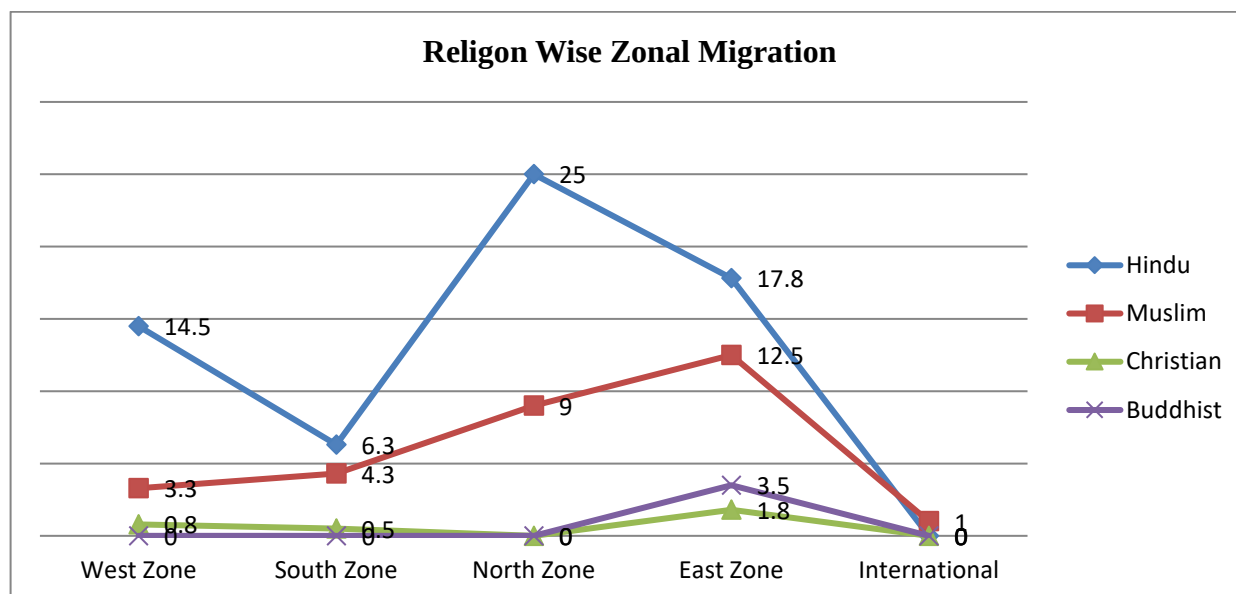
Table-1 describes the demographic profile of migrated youth. The marital status analysis of 400 migrated youth revealed that 63% were "Ever Married," while 37% were "Unmarried." Age-wise, majority 43% were within the 26-29 age group followed by 29% in the 22-25 age bracket, and 28% in the 18-21 age group. Educational attainment indicated that 39% had completed primary education, 34% had completed secondary education, 21% reached higher secondary, and a minimal 5% attained graduation. Notably, despite governmental efforts to improve educational access, illiteracy persists among youth in the nation. Religious affiliation predominantly comprised Hindu 63%, followed by Muslim 30%, with smaller proportions identifying as Buddhist 3.5% and Christian 3%. Occupational analysis showed that 49% were engaged as daily wage laborers, 39% as industrial laborers, and 12% as self-employed. Job stability was low, with 79% of youth holding temporary positions, 11% on a contract basis, and only 10.5% in permanent employment. In terms of economic conditions, majority 59% reported an annual income range of Rs.1.20 to 1.80 lakh, followed by 32% earning 1 lakh to 1.20 lakh, and 9% with an annual income of 1.80 lakh to 2.40 lakh.

Table-1 Demographic Profile of Migrant Youth

Background Characteristics		Migrant Youth in Mumbai					
Marital Status	%	N					
Ever Married	63	251					
Unmarried	37	149					
Total		400					
Age							
18-21	28.0	112					
22-25	28.7	115					
26-29	43.3	173					
Education							
Illiterate	0.8	3					
Primary	39.3	157					
Secondary	34.0	136					
Higher Secondary	21.3	85					
Graduation	4.8	19					
Religion							
Hindu	63.5	254					
Muslim	30.0	120					
Christian	3.0	12					
Buddhist	3.5	14					
Nature of Occupation							
Industrial Labour	38.8	155					
Daily Wage Labour	49.3	197					
Self-Employed	12.0	48					
Nature of Job							
Permanent	10.5	42					
Temporary	78.8	315					
Contract Basis	10.8	43					
Income (Yearly)							
1 Lakh-1.20 Lakh	32.5	130					
1.20 Lakh-1.80 Lakh	58.8	235					
1.80 Lakh-2.40 Lakh	8.8	35					
Ownership of Assets							
House in Native Place							
Yes	60.5	242	36.5	146	97.0	388	
Agricultural Land in Native Place							
Yes	13.8	55	18.8	75	32.5	130	

Source: Field Study Data

Ownership of Assets: The majority 97 %of Youth reported they have House in their native place. 32 %of youth reported they have Agricultural land in Native Place.



Graph No.1 portrait the situation of Religion wise Zonal Migration.

Region wise Demographic Characteristics: Religion Wise majority of 63% of the youth were Hindu among them majority 25% of them are migrated from North Zone, followed by 18% from East Zone, 14% from West Zone and 6% from South Zone. Next major 30% of Migrated youth were from Muslim religion among them Majority 12% of youth migrated from East Zone, 9% from North Zone, 4% from South Zone, 3% from West Zone and 1% from International Country (Nepal) and very less than 3.5% youth were Buddhist religion among them majority are from East Zone and 3% of youth belongs to Christian religion among them majority were from East Zone and very less than 1% are from South and West Zone.

Table-3 Current area of Accommodation and Availability of Type of Civil Facility

Accommodation	Availability of Type of Civil Facility				
	Toilet	Water	Hospital	Transport	Good Road
Area	%	%	%	%	%
Slum area	50.2	45.5	15.0	34.0	6.5
Semi Slum area	42.5	43.0	30.0	38.5	18.0
Posh area	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8
Nature					
Temporary shelter with tin sheets	2.5	5.0	1.0	1.5	1.0
Chawl Room	77.0	73.5	42.8	63.7	24.0
Room in slum area	15.3	12.5	4.0	10.0	2.3
Other	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
Type					
Owned	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
Rented	62.5	63.2	40.3	55.0	26.8
Shared	32.8	27.3	7.5	20.3	0.5
Other	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0

Source: Field Study Data

Table No 3. Talks about the current Situation of residential status of migrated youth in Mumbai: Majority 69 % of Youth reported they are staying in Rented House, followed by 34% of youth reported staying in a Shared house, and very less 1% of youth reported have owned a house in Mumbai. **Housing Condition:** The majority 79 % of Youth reported that they are staying in Chawl Rooms, followed by 15% reported staying in Chawl slum areas, and 5% reported staying in temporary shelters with tin sheets. **Area of Accommodation:** The majority 53% of Youth reported that they are staying in slums as an area of accommodation in Mumbai, followed by 44% reported they are staying in Semi slum areas, and only 3% reported they are staying in a posh area in Mumbai.

Table No. 4 shows that the reasons for migration and factors impacted positively after migration, The Major reasons for migrations are indebtedness, to get a better job opportunity, for improving quality of life, and for economic development.

Table-4 Factors Responsible for Migration and Factors impacted positively after migration

Factors Responsible for Migration	Only Yes	Factors impacted positively after Migration				
	N		Financial Condition %	Standard of Living %	Personality %	Work Skills %
Indebtness	164	Y	39.3	21.0	16.3	32.8
		N	1.8	20.0	24.8	8.3
Better Job Opportunity	372	Y	89.0	69.5	28.2	75.3
		N	4.0	23.5	64.8	17.8
Improving Quality of life	326	Y	81.3	61.8	28.0	68.3
		N	0.3	19.8	2.8	9.3
Economic Development	117	Y	27.5	20.3	16.8	23.5
		N	1.8	9.0	12.5	5.8

Source: *Field Study Data*

Indebtedness: 41% has reported migrating due to indebtedness, among them 39% has reported a positive impact on financial condition, 21% has reported living standards improved positively, 16% has reported Positive impact and 29% reported Negative impact on Personality development, and 33% has reported an impacted positively on Work Skills.

Better job opportunity: 93% reported migrating to get better job opportunities, among them 89% has reported a positive impact on their Financial condition, 69% has reported their Living Standard improved positively, 28% has reported their Personality developed positively, 75% has reported impacted positively on Work Skills. It shows that reason for migration which is to get better job opportunities has impacted positively in terms of financial condition, Standards of Living, Work Skills, and Personality development of Youth.

For improving quality life: 81% reported migrating for improving quality of life, among them 100% reported a positive impact on Financial condition, 62% has reported Living Standard improved positively, 28% has reported Personality developed positively, 68% has reported impacted positively on Work Skills. It shows that reason for migration is to improve quality of life has much impacted positively on Youth.

For economic development: 29% reported migrating For economic development, among them 27% reported a positive impact on Financial condition, 20% reported Living Standard improved positively, 17% reported Personality developed positively, 23% has reported an impact positively on Work Skills.

Findings and Conclusion –

This analysis reveals that marital status among male youth significantly influences migration patterns. In line with Indian cultural norms, a married male is traditionally seen as the primary breadwinner, responsible for meeting the needs of both current and future family members. However, even among unmarried youth, there is a notable trend toward migration, often driven by the need to support family finances. Numerous social and cultural norms, regulations, and traditional practices encourage youth to migrate in pursuit of better opportunities and aspirations.

Age-wise marital trends show that 43% of married youth fall within the 26-29 age group, 16% within 22-25, and 4% in 18-21, with 63% of youth marrying between 18-29 years, raising concerns about potential child marriages. Migrants predominantly retain native homes but lack agricultural land, resulting in a high percentage living in rented slum accommodations in Mumbai. Economically, they are engaged mainly in daily wage labor, earning Rs. 1.2 to 1.8 Lakh annually. Although migration offers economic upliftment for some, with improvements in financial stability, skills, and personal growth, many continue to experience debt and rising expenses.

Socially, migration presents mixed impacts. Many migrants report increased income opportunities, elevated social standing, and greater family respect. However, they also face social discrimination, cultural adaptation challenges, and negative social interactions in the urban setting. On a personal level, positive outcomes include enhanced self-confidence and behavioral maturity, while negative consequences involve increased addiction, mental health challenges, chronic fatigue, and illnesses like skin diseases, hypertension, and diabetes.

In conclusion, migration has economically benefited young migrants, yet it presents substantial physical and mental health risks, often exacerbating vulnerabilities. Economic motivations remain a central factor in shaping the well-being of migrant youth, with a dual impact on their socio-economic and health status.



Recommendation:

- 1) NGOs and State Governments should proactively engage with migrant laborers to establish a comprehensive database.
- 2) Public health services should be tailored to meet migrant workers' needs, ideally extending or linking health facilities directly to workplaces to improve accessibility.
- 3) The Migrant Welfare Board and its services should effectively reach migrant workers, ensuring optimal utilization of available resources and support.
- 4) Social science research institutions should delve deeper into migration as a phenomenon to inform social work interventions aimed at enhancing migrants' well-being.

References

1. Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations (FAO'S Report). (2020). Migration, Agriculture and Rural Development: Addressing The Root Causes of Migration And Harnessing Its Potential For Development". Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations.
2. Jha, S. K. (2018). Return Migration of Rural Youth: A New Trend in Rural India. *Journal of Global Communication* , 11 (2).
3. Namarata, K. B., & Kiran, M. (2016). Reasons for Migration of Rural Youth to Urban Areas. *International Journal of Science Environment and Technology* , 5 (5).
4. Tripathi, H., & Dixit, V. B. (2018). An Analysis of Causes For Rural Youth Migration. *Indian Journal Of Extension Education* , 54 (3).
5. Thite, K. K. (2012). Factors Responsible For Youth Migration. *Kurukshetra* , 3 (10).
6. Sali, R. S., & Astige, S. B. (2015). Causes and Consequences of Migration in India – A Sociological Perspective. *Golden Research Thoughts* , 4 (7).
7. <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200304/cmselect/cmintdev/79/7905.htm>