

MIGRATION IN SOUTH ASIA

Anu Priya

Assistant Professor (Guest Faculty)

Dept. of Political Science

Mahatma Gandhi Central University

Motihari, Bihar

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- Human society has always been accompanied by migration. Historically, migration may have been forced as in the case of slavery, or colonialization or looking for a new world.
- Earlier human migration was accompanied by expectation, enthusiasm, and fright, the fracturing of long-standing social relationships, heartaches, tensions and even bloodshed between the migrants and the local people, and the agreeable or reluctant exchange of ideas, skills and attitudes.



- In the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, it was the extensive industrialization, urbanisation and globalization across the world that gave rise to huge waves of international migration.
- Due to demographic imbalances and economic inequalities among nations, migration for many becomes not a choice but an economic necessity.





“Home is conceptualized in fluid terms as being neither here or nor there...rather, itself, a hybrid, it is both here and there — an amalgam, a pastiche, a performance.”

- Rapport and Dawson
(1998)



INTRODUCTION

- Migration is a constant but dynamic global phenomenon with movements both within the countries and internationally across borders.
- It is influenced by a number of factors like socio-economic imbalances, political dynamics at local and national levels, demographic disparities, advanced new social networking avenues and also the effects of environmental changes, sudden climatic events and calamities.
- ❖ Migration is a cyclic behavior that involves the regular, seasonal or annual journey from one place to another and back again.



In the twenty first century, migration touches the lives of more people than ever before with more than 160 million people estimated to living outside their country of birth. Almost no country is untouched by international migration or immune to its effects.

“Today the number of people living outside their country of birth is larger than at any other time in history. International migrants would now constitute the world ‘s fifth most populous country if they all lived in the same place.”(UNFPA)



DETERMINANTS OF MIGRATION



- While human mobility is not a new phenomenon, a systematic understanding of the diversity of the underlying reasons still does not exist.
- Circumstances in which people decide to leave their homes differ, for instance, in their urgency and/or degree of voluntariness, and hence these people deserve different levels of protection and assistance.
- It is important to deepen the understanding of the determinants of mobility to facilitate human movements that improve individual and societal outcomes, to reduce those that decrease well-being and to provide adequate support and protection.



A myriad of favourable, unfavourable or neutral factors cause migration.

- **Pull factors** : The favourable attributes of a location which attracts a person.
- **Push factors** : The unfavourable attributes operating at a location which force or compel a person to move away.



Economic Factors

- Prospect of higher wages
- Better employment opportunities
- Prospect for wealth creation
- Desire to escape the domestic social and political situation of their home region



Socio – Political Factors

- Family conflicts and unifications
- The quest for independence
- Ethnic, religious, racial and cultural parameters
- Warfare
- Threat of conflicts
- Slavery or bonded labour
- Political instability
- Inadequate or limited urban services and infrastructure(including healthcare, education, utilities, transport and water)



Ecological Factors

- Climate change
- Availability of natural resources
- Crop failure and scarcity of food



TYPES OF MIGRATION

By political boundaries

- ❖ Internal migration
- ❖ International migration

By movement patterns

- ❖ Step migration
- ❖ Circular migration
- ❖ Seasonal migration (mostly in agriculture)
- ❖ Chain migration



By decision making approach

- ❖ Voluntary migration
- ❖ Involuntary migration
 - Reluctant/impelled/imposed migration
 - Forced migration {Refugee, asylee, IDP (internally displaced person)}



IMPACT OF MIGRATION ON AREA OF DESTINATION



POSITIVE IMPACT

Economic

- Cheap and surplus labor
- Minimizes gaps in skills

Social

- Multi-ethnic society
- Increased tolerance
- New services from country of origin

Political

- Push for inclusive policy making
- Integrated development



NEGATIVE IMPACT

Economic

- Increase in remittances leading to native unemployment and increased capital and risk constraints on local production with reduced investments

Social

- Stress on urban services and social infrastructure
- Xenophobia
- Cultural dilution
- Problem of assimilation and integration
- Safety and security concerns



Political

- Stricter immigration norms
- While national government oversee international migration to a region , the state leaders are those who are most affected by their government's decisions and who must address uncontrolled migration into their states.
- Controversy over language
- NRC
- Problem of Doubtful voters (D-voters)



MIGRANTS : VULNERABILITIES, EXPLOITATION, AND DISCRIMINATION



- Managing human mobility is one of the greatest challenges for destination places worldwide.
- Migrants are subjected to serious exploitation and human rights abuse both during the migration process and after reaching the destination areas.
- Migrant workers face discrimination in wages, work quality, and working conditions.
- Differential access to government supported food security and health programmes, such as delays in issuing beneficiary cards, have also been reported.



GENDER AND MIGRATION

- Historically, women were thought to migrate primarily for marriage or family reunification, both internally and internationally.
- Now, women are increasingly migrating on their own, often to enhance economic opportunities by seeking jobs or education.
- This trend is commonly referred to as the “*feminization of migration*”.



HEALTH AND MIGRATION

- Relationships between migration, population mobility and health have been acknowledged at various levels.
- Psychological health may be affected by the process of leaving family and coping with job insecurity, legal problems , unfamiliar language and culture.
- Stigma associated with tuberculosis and HIV can be exacerbated in the case of migrants who are already socially isolated and fear further stigma, discrimination and marginalisation.



- Since the end of the 20th century, there has been a constant stream of newly identified pathogens and an increasing occurrence and reoccurrence of pandemic threats to global health.
- At present, the outbreak of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) has led the government in many jurisdictions to implement a range of temporary immigration related measures in order to prevent the spread of the virus. This pandemic is on the track to exacerbate the vulnerabilities of millions of international migrants worldwide.
- When migrants and displaced communities are excluded from national response, plans and services, particularly health care, everyone is at stake.



CROSS- BORDER MIGRATION

- The major issues related to cross-border migration in South Asia are illegal migration and trafficking.
- Illegal migration is very high between India and Pakistan, Bangladesh and India, Afghanistan and Pakistan.
- Likewise other regions of the world, India is also a migrant host nation with an estimated 6.1 million migrants, mostly from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka in 2001.



- The Bangladesh – India migration corridor is the fourth largest among the migration corridors in the world (World Bank 2011).
- Continuous irregular migration from Bangladesh into India, and the presence of a large number of Bangladeshi illegal/undocumented migrants in the border states of India such as West Bengal, Assam and Tripura, creates social and political tension in the region, and is one of the major current security concerns for India.



HUMAN TRAFFICKING

- An environment in which trafficking flourishes is created by conflict, forced migration due to the climate crisis and inequality, the sex trade, the demand for cheap labour and the profits that can be made by criminals.
- India and Pakistan are zones of origin, transit and destination of trafficked women and bonded labour.
- Cross-border migration between Nepal to India cannot be considered as illegal migration because of the Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1950 between the two countries. But it is one of the main routes of human trafficking in South Asia.



MIGRATION : PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

- Migration poses a big challenge for many countries, both in terms of magnitude and variety of migration patterns and processes.
- Brain drain – loss for the place of origin but profitable for the destination places.
- If poorly managed, migration can result in various social, cultural, economic and political difficulties.
- In contrast, appropriately managed migration can greatly benefit the individual as well as his/her origin and destination places.



AN ONGOING DISCUSSION...

The topic of migration raises important and challenging normative questions about the legitimacy of the power, the boundaries of political membership, and justice within and across state borders. States exercise power over borders, but what, if anything, justifies this power? Is it morally permissible for legal democratic states to prevent their citizens from exiting the country and exclude prospective migrants from entering? If liberal democratic states are justified in excluding some and accepting others, how should they decide whom to admit?



CONCLUSION

- ❖ Migration is the focus of intense political debate across the world. These debates increasingly generate smoke and heat, but precious little light for the evidence or focus on the substantive questions that demand answers.
- ❖ A better understanding of the economics of migration, its social impact and the associated political dynamics is urgently needed.



THANK YOU...

