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Labor Migration from Rural Jharkhand: Analyzing Trends and Patterns

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ARTICLE DETAILS

ABSTRACT

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The study aims to examine the complex dynamics of internal migration in Jharkhand, a state marked by socio-economic challenges despite being rich in natural resources. Leveraging data from the 2001 and 2011 Census of India, the paper explores the trends, and patterns of migration, focusing on the significant out-migration from rural areas. The research reveals that migration in Jharkhand is predominantly rural-to-rural, particularly influenced by marriage and employment opportunities, with a substantial portion of the workforce engaging in seasonal or short-term migration to cope with agricultural uncertainties. A detailed district-wise analysis shows varying migration trends, reflecting the diverse socio-economic landscape of the state.

INTRODUCTION

Over the years, the intensity of international migration from developing to developed countries has been reduced. The average annual rate of change in the international migrant decreased from 2.3 percent between 1990-2005 to 1.9 percent between 2005-2010 in the developed regions (United Nations, 2019). The integration of less developed or developing countries with the global economy led to trade openness and increased capital flows (Haller, 2016; Narula & Dunning, 2000). Globalization and the third industrial revolution led MNCs to expand in low-wage, labor-intensive countries such as India and China, which played a vital role in employment generation (Hamdi, 2006). Consequently, the economic structure of the developing countries is changed (Sharma, 2014), and a conducive environment is



provided for internal migration (Ray & Dutta, 2019). Due to COVID-19 and 4IR(industrial revolution), the traditional concept of "people to work" has changed to "work to people," and the world has moved towards becoming a gig economy (Burgess & Connell, 2020). Therefore we can say that international migration is no longer an economic necessity and internal migration appears a more viable option. The magnitude of the internal migrants is greater than the international migrants - Internal migrants account for almost two and a half times that of international migrants (World Bank, 2020).

In India, there were 450 million internal migrants as per the census of 2011, constituting 37 percent of the total population – it is expected to be about 600 million in 2020 (Rajan et al., 2020). In post-independence, India was an agrarian economy, and the share of agriculture in the country's GDP was around, on average, 50 percent from the late 1950s to the 1970s (Tripathi & Prasad, 2010). Agriculture is heavily dependent upon the climate, and subsistence farming methods make it non-remunerative. As a result, people are pushed out of the agricultural sector and avail the option to migrate. The movement took place from the traditional sector to the modern sector due to economic disparities and wage differential (Fei & Ranis, 1961; Lewis, 1954). Before globalization, intra-country migration was low (Lusome & Bhagat, 2006; Raman & Bhagat, 2021). With globalization, India opened up its door to the world, and the entry of MNCs has intensified urbanization which increased the movement within the country (Bhat et al., 2015; Kundu, 2007).

Globalization and the digital revolution led to the expansion of the service sector (L. Das & Raut, 2014). India has emerged as an IT hub and the fastest growing service sector globally which increased the demand for highly skilled workers (Madhani, 2009). Technological advancement has negatively influenced the demand for semi-skilled and unskilled workers and led to widening income inequality in the labor market. The capacity of the urban dwellings to absorb the influx of semi-skilled and unskilled workers has been exceeded, leading to urban unemployment, which results in the development of the informal sector (Kundu, 2011). Around 90 percent of the workforce is engaged in the informal sector (ILO, 2019). The fourth industrial revolution contributed significantly in the expansion of gig economy, which resulted in the advent of digital platforms such as zomato, ola, swiggy, uber etc. Gig economy allows laborers to be employed in the informal sector to gain new skills and enhance their living standard. They were devasted by the pandemic because they lacked employment security. Due to the nationwide lockdown and shutdown, most of them became unemployed and decided to return back to their home region. When things are normal, returnees may be involved in the migration process or prefer



to stay in their home region (FAO, 2021). The pandemic has drastically changed the dynamics of migration. Therefore, the present study will focus on the internal migration.

Jharkhand is a state undergoing significant socio-political and economic transformation in the 21st century. Historically, Jharkhand has ranked low on various development indicators, including education, economy, and health (Gupta et al., 2019; Singh et al., 2018; Sinha, 2017). Within Jharkhand, the levels of development indicators vary considerably across different districts (IIPS & ICF, 2018). Given this disparity, an assessment of internal migration, particularly inter-state out-migration, is essential. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the patterns of inter-state out-migration in Jharkhand, providing insights into the socio-economic dynamics of the state.

DATA AND METHODS

Migration data in India is mainly sourced from the Census of India and the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO). The Census provides information based on the place of residence and place of birth, while NSSO data reflects changes in residence. However, only the Census offers inter-district migration data based on place of birth. For this study, the 2001 and 2011 Census data were used. A migrant is defined as someone who moves permanently or semi-permanently between geographical areas, such as from one village or town to another. The study focuses on out-migration in Jharkhand.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The state was carved out of Bihar in November 2000 due to cultural, political, geographical, and economic differences. The anti-tribal policies and exploitation of natural resources from the tribal inhabited areas by the government of Bihar led to unrest among the tribals, which took the form of the "Jharkhandi Movement" demanding a separate autonomous state (Chamberlain, 2014). Even after parting away from its parent state, the state failed to witness the development mainly due to political instability and corruption. The paradox is that the state is socio-economically backward despite being a resource-abundant.

The table 1 below reflects the socio-economic condition of the state pre and post its formation. Notably, according to the NITI Aayog report 2021, Jharkhand is the second poorest state in India; about 42.16 percent of the state's population is poor, and 47.99 percent are malnourished. The socio-economic backwardness forces the individual to move out of the state. The table 2 below shows the outmigration



rate (total number of migrants divided by the total population) and migration reasons among the major migration state. Migration takes place from underdeveloped states to developed and industrialized states.

Table 1: Socio-economic condition

Socio-economic indicators	Jharkhand			India
	1994	2005	2012	2012
Poverty and inequality				
Poverty rate	61	47	37	22
Gini Coefficient	0.25	0.26	0.27	0.32
Income and growth				
Real GSDP per capita	16043	20453	27779	42647
Education				
Literate(%adults)	39	52	62	70
Secondary education and above	14	17	28	32
Health	2001	2006	2013	2013
Maternal mortality ratio (per 1,00,000 live births)	400	312	208	167
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	62	49	37	40

Source: WORLD BANK REPORT 2016

Table 2: State-wise out migration

STATES	OUT-MIGRATION (2001)	OUT-MIGRATION (2011)
BIHAR	6.34	7.18

HARYANA	8.24	8.9
JHARKHAND	5.46	5.16
PUNJAB	6.72	6.28
UTTAR PRADESH	5.57	6.17
RAJASTHAN	4.62	5.47
CHHATTISGARH	4.13	2.71

Source: Census of India 2001, 2011

Jharkhand is among the major contributor to internal migration. Thus it becomes important to understand the extent and magnitude of migration from and within the state. The total number of rural out-migrants during 2001-11 was 48,25,215, out of which rural –rural migrants account for 42,71,571, and rural-urban migrants account for 5,53,644. Most rural-rural migration is intrastate and female-dominated for marriage or family-related issues (Bhattacharya, 2000; K. C. Das & Saha, 2001; Rajan, S.I., & Neetha, 2018), whereas males migrate in search of employment in the agricultural field.

Table 3: Reason for state-wise migration in India.

STATES	WORK/EMI	EDUCATION						
	2001	2011	BUSIN	ESS	2001		MARRL	AGE
			2001		2011		2001	
			2011				2011	
BIHAR	36.04	30.38	2.74	1.96	1.47	1.58	30.8	32.8
CHHATTISGARH	25.7	22.5	0.55	0.76	1.20	1.27	30.19	37.9
HARYANA	14.98	13.41	1.35	8.88	1.004	1.05	46.76	47.89
JHARKHAND	24.10	19.85	1.25	1.09	1.62	1.77	40.43	47.7
PUNJAB	18.53	16.39	1.52	1.39	1.07	1.28	33.19	37.38
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RAJASTHAN	19.77	17.75	5.05	3.89	0.87	0.89	35.75	36.6
UTTAR	34.22	30.3	1.49	1.14	0.96	1.04	24.27	24.09
PRADESH								

Source: Census of India 2001, 2011

Around 75.8 percent of the intrastate migration in Jharkhand between 2001 to 2011 was from rural to rural. Moreover, Rural to urban migration is mainly male-dominated and is undertaken due to the economic inequalities and wage differentials between the regions (Fei & Ranis, 1961; Harris & Todaro, 1970; Lewis, 1954). Between 2001-2011, the state lost its 5 million working-age population to urbanized and industrialized states such as -Maharashtra, Delhi, Punjab, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Kerala (Economic Survey, 2017). The major source districts were Ranchi, Dhanbad, Lohardaga, Gumla, and Hazaribagh during this period. For interstate migrants, the flow is mainly toward urban areas. The total urban migrants were 3,39,658, and urban-rural migrants were 1,04,765, and urban-urban migrants were 2,34,893. The urban to urban migration is linked with step migration (IOM, 2005). The urban to rural migration is mainly return migration. The different combinations of push and pull factors influence the nature of migration in which individuals will be involved.

With globalization, the state experienced urbanization. The extent of urbanization influences migration. The state experienced a high annual growth rate and pace of urbanization after globalization. The table below shows the trend, pattern, and tempo of urbanization. The districts such as Dhanbad (52.36 %in 2001,58.13 % in 2011), Bokaro (45.26% in 2001,47.70% in 2011) Purbi Singhbhum (55.02% in 2001, 55.56% in 2011) and Ranchi (35.10 % in 2001 and 43.14% in 2011) had high rate of urbanization. Being an industrial and mining hub, these districts attract laborers from rural areas within and from other states. Urbanization mainly favor the skilled and better-off section of the society and promote the semi permanent and permanent nature of migration (Kundu, 2007).

After its separation from the Bihar, the pace of urbanization declined drastically though the level of urbanization in Jharkhand (22.4 percent in 2001 and 24.05 percent in 2011) was more than its parent state Bihar (10.46 percent in 2001 and 11.29 percent in 2011 (Kumar & Reshmi, 2018) but less than the national average of 31.16 in 2011. The districts Bokaro (0.53), Dhanbad (1.1), Ranchi (2.29) and purbi Singhbhum (0.09) with high level of urbanization had experienced low speed of urbanization between 2001-11. Thus, the level of urbanization in state is very low and failed to offer the livelihood



opportunities to the disadvantaged section of the society as a result of which they out migrate from the state took place.

Table 4: Urbanization in the state of Jharkhand compared with the India

	YEAR	URBAN	URBAN-	ANNUAL	TEMPO OF
		POPULATION	RURAL	EXPONENTIAL	URBANISATION
			RATIO	URBAN GROWTH	
				RATE	
	1991	4.5	26.2	4.3	2.1
JHARKHAND	2001	6.0	28.6	2.8	0.7
	2011	8.0	31.8	2.8	0.8
	1991	215.8	34.2	3.0	0.9
INDIA	2001	286.1	38.5	2.8	0.9
	2011	377.1	45.3	2.8	1.2

Source: Kumar & Reshmi, 2018

The state has experienced long-term migration (semi-permanent and permanent) and short-term migration (seasonal/circular/ temporary). Short-term migration is seen as a strategy to diversify the household income and minimize the risks to cope with agricultural distress (Giles & Mu, 2007; Protik & Kuhn, 2006; Stark & Bloom, 1985; Sucharita, 2020). Individuals migrate in the agriculturally lean season and return back to their village during the agriculture season (Giles & Mu, 2007; Protik & Kuhn, 2006; Stark & Bloom, 1985; Sucharita, 2020). In Jharkhand, around 80 percent of the rural population depends on agriculture. The uncertainty involved in agriculture is due to its dependence on weather, low investment, low productivity, and inadequate irrigation facilities, which are likely to accelerate rural outmigration. The table 5 shows the land use pattern of the state. About 37.30 percent of the land is cultivable, out of which around 92 percent of the land remains un-irrigated. Around 2 percent of land constitutes water bodies, and the availability of water resources is 2,87,810 lakhs m³, out of which only 47,360 lakh m³ of water in the state is used for irrigation purposes which mainly includes 39,640 lakh m³ of surface water and 7,720 lakh m³ of groundwater. The availability of water resources for



agriculture is not sufficient. Hence, the state lacks irrigation facilities, which is one of the reasons for the non-uniformity of crop yields, as shown in the table below. The districts such as chatra, kodarma, Bokaro, Dhanbad, Sahibganj and Lohardaga have low net sown area.

Table 5: Land use pattern of the state Jharkhand

CATEGORY	AREAS IN LAKH	AREAS IN PERCENTAGE
	HECTARE	(PERCENTAGE)
CULTIVABLE AREA	29.74	37.30
FOREST AREA	23.92	30
WATER BODIES	1.59	2.0
WASTELAND	7.17	9.0
SCRUB FOREST	4.38	5.50
BUILT UP AREA	3.99	5.00
OTHER	8.93	11.20

Source: Jharkhand economic survey

Agriculture is dependent upon the monsoon and mono cropping is predominant in the state due to which farmers remain jobless during agricultural lean period which forces them to take up seasonal or temporary migration.

Table 6: Area, production and yield of kharif crops

FINANCIAL YEAR	TOTAL AREA	TOTAL PRODUCTION	YIELD
2015-16	1889.484	2955.701	1564
2016-17	2020.040	5420.628	2683
2017-18	2042.932	5729.153	2804
2018-19	1798.451	3350.864	1863

2019-20	1623.521	4121.792	2539
2020-21	1938.162	4581.954	2369

SOURCE: ECONOMIC SURVEY OF JHARKHAND, 2020-21.

Table 7: Area, production and yield of rabi crops

FINANCIAL YEAR	TOTAL AREA	TOTAL PRODUCTION	YIELD
2015-16	161.724	296.507	1833
2016-17	221.444	443.159	2001
2017-18	231.096	489.330	2117
2018-19	169.791	313.879	1849
2019-20	222.424	455.444	2048

SOURCE: ECONOMIC SURVEY OF JHARKHAND, 2020-21.

Between 2007-and 08, Jharkhand (36 migrants per population) had the second-highest short-term migrants after Bihar (50 migrants per population). Around 62.1 percent of short-term movement was from rural to urban areas, 37.2 percent was rural to rural, 0.2 percent from urban to rural, and about 74.3 percent of movement was interstate during 2007-08. The total number of short-term rural migrants during 2007-08 was 4,31,464, which increased to 5,96,190 in 2013.

Table 8: District-wise number of migrants in the state

DISTRICT		RURAL-	RURAL-	RURAL	URBAN-	URBAN-	URBAN
		RURAL	URBAN	TOTAL	RURAL	URBAN	TOTAL
GARHWA	INTERSTATE	18,491	2,045	20,536	1,375	1,833	3,208
	INTRASTATE	2,11,959	8,147	2,20,106	3,541	3,011	6,552



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PALAMU	INTERSTATE	34,921	5,620	40,541	3,334	4,529	7,863
	INTRASTATE	3,93,281	13,320	4,06,601	8,614	7,369	15,983
CHATRA	INTERSTATE	19,461	1,571	21,032	1,311	1,201	2,512
	INTRASTATE	1,45,913	3,810	1,49,723	3,311	2,204	5,515
HAZARIBAG	INTERSTATE	21,153	61,293	82,446	5,896	23,941	29,837
	INTRASTATE	4,19,535	89,709	5,09,244	13,532	30,335	43,867
KODARMA	INTERSTATE	9,695	8,642	18,337	1,518	3,966	5,484
	INTRASTATE	92,808	11,832	1,04,640	2,717	3,429	6,146
GIRIDIH	INTERSTATE	11,122	4,443	15,565	2,468	5,007	7,475
	INTRASTATE	4,14,527	12,141	4,26,668	8,422	6,031	14,453
DEOGHAR	INTERSTATE	21,353	14,992	36,345	2,040	11,260	13,300
	INTRASTATE	2,18,105	13,801	2,31,906	3,381	6,001	9,382
GODDA	INTERSTATE	47,346	2,792	50,138	2,432	1,471	3,903
	INTRASTATE	1,88,428	8,712	1,97,140	2327	1041	3,368
SAHIBGANJ	INTERSTATE	31,131	10,199	41,330	3,138	6,837	9,975
	INTRASTATE	1,46,958	4,426	1,51,384	2,771	1,728	4,499
PAKAUR	INTERSTATE	19,324	3,242	22,566	1,419	2,320	3,739
	INTRASTATE	1,17,064	3,199	1,20,263	1,732	1,307	3,039
DUMKA	INTERSTATE	35,833	11,866	47,699	3,514	8,572	12,086
	INTRASTATE	3,66,363	14,341	3,80,704	4,476	4,525	9,001
DHANBAD	INTERSTATE	68,132	2,15,921	2,84,053	7,679	54,916	62,595
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	INTRASTATE	2,22,788	1,05,958	3,28,746	12,388	45,359	57,747
BOKARO	INTERSTATE	30,136	1,68,426	1,98,562	2,436	35,076	37,512
	INTRASTATE	1,87,932	84,670	2,72,602	6,475	27,969	34,444
RANCHI	INTERSTATE	20,723	97,461	1,18,184	5,209	66,066	71,275
	INTRASTATE	3,54,578	71,699	4,26,277	11,414	42,053	53,467
LOHARDAGA	INTERSTATE	971	1,564	2,535	426	1,451	1,877
	INTRASATE	66,766	7,693	74,459	2,381	3,335	5,716
GUMLA	INTERSTATE	17,064	3,631	20,695	1,593	2,968	4,561
	INTRASTATE	2,44,675	12,997	2,57,672	4,389	5,109	9,498
WEST	INTERSTATE	36,655	38,003	74,658	3,415	18,977	22,392
SINGHBHUM	INTRASTATE	3,24,025	41,181	3,65,206	8,423	18,676	27,099
EAST	INTERSTATE	46,859	1,33,631	1,80,490	3,641	67,387	71,028
SINGHBHUM	INTRASTATE	1,55,866	46,008	2,01,874	4,471	25,411	29,882
S							

Source: Census 2001

The analysis of migration patterns in Jharkhand's major districts between 1991 and 2001 reveals significant trends across different streams of movement—rural-rural, rural-urban, urban-rural, and urban-urban. Hazaribag recorded substantial intrastate migration, totaling 5,09,244 individuals. This includes significant movements from rural to urban areas (89,709) and within urban areas (30,335), highlighting the district's role as a magnet for internal migration driven by urban economic opportunities and development. Dhanbad exhibited notable urban-urban migration, with 62,595 individuals relocating within urban areas. This reflects the district's status as an industrial hub, attracting internal migrants seeking employment in its coal mining and related industries. Ranchi witnessed substantial urban-urban migration (71,275) alongside rural-urban migration (97,461), indicating its dual role as a destination for both rural migrants seeking urban amenities and urban residents consolidating within the city. East



Singhbhum reported significant urban-urban migration (71,028), driven by industrialization and urban growth in areas like Jamshedpur, reflecting the district's economic magnetism and employment opportunities. West Singhbhum showed substantial intrastate migration (3,65,206), characterized by movements between rural and urban areas within the district. This suggests a regional pattern influenced by local economic activities and demographic shifts.

CONCLUSION

The analysis underscores the critical role of migration in shaping Jharkhand's socio-economic landscape. The state's economic disparity, coupled with resource exploitation and inadequate infrastructure, drives substantial internal migration. Migration predominantly serves as a livelihood strategy for rural populations, addressing seasonal agricultural employment gaps and seeking better opportunities in urban centers. However, this migration poses challenges, including demographic imbalances, strain on urban infrastructure, and socio-economic vulnerabilities. Addressing these issues requires integrated policy frameworks that enhance rural livelihoods, promote sustainable urbanization, and ensure inclusive growth across the state. The findings highlight several policy implications for addressing migrationrelated challenges in Jharkhand. First, households should invest in agriculture and rural infrastructure to create sustainable livelihoods, reducing dependency on migration for income diversification. Second, state should focus on improving the urban amenities and infrastructure in destination cities to accommodate increasing migrant populations and ensure inclusive urban growth. Third, the implementation of skill development programs tailored to rural youth to enhance employability and reduce out-migration driven by lack of local opportunities At last, state should introduce social security schemes for migrants to safeguard their rights, ensure access to healthcare, education, and housing in destination areas.

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