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**SHORT DURATION MIGRATION IN INDIA: AN  
APPRAISAL FROM CENSUS 2001**

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## ABSTRACT

Short duration migration has played a crucial role in enabling rural people to cope with the consequences of agrarian distress and devastated rural economic conditions. Seasonal migration, in particular, has always been a phenomenon guided by the needs specific to time. Studies on short duration or seasonal migration are region and context specific due to this very reason seasonal migration has no broad associated characteristics at the macro level. Hence, this paper tries to focus on the method to assess the magnitude of short/seasonal migration based on its broad characteristics. It attempts to analyse the contrasting characteristics of short duration and permanent migration. The study applies the widely recognised demographic technique of Parity Progression Ratio to measure the magnitude of short duration migrants. The study reveals that short duration migrants are largely concentrated in rural areas and basically migrated in search of work/employment towards urban and other prosperous rural areas. Also, short duration migration is more common in the case of male migrants, while permanent migration is more common among female migrants. Short duration migrants are primarily illiterate and less qualified and belong to either the older age group or that below 14 years. While short duration migrants are impelled to migrate for work/employment, and permanent migrants seek better opportunities. The predominant streams of migration are urban to rural and rural to rural and the tendency is to migrate to other districts and states for work/employment in both rural and urban areas.

**Keywords:** Short-duration migration, Temporary migration, Seasonal migration, Circular migration, Employment, Wage rates, Occupation, Destination, Earnings, Economic activity.

**JEL Classification:** J6, J31, J38, J62, J64.

## **1. Introduction**

Migration of people from one place to another is a complex phenomenon. It has multiple dimensions and differs according to class and social groups in developing countries. The process of migration is changing very fast, particularly in globalisation era which is characterised by structural changes and consequent alterations in the economy as a whole and in rural economy in particular. Hence, the nature, pattern and magnitude of migration have been evolving over time. At present, probably more than at any time in the past, movements of labour are fuelling the Indian economy. Such migration is not only a sign of dynamism, but also a reflection in increasing inequalities, agrarian crisis and inadequate livelihood generation in many parts of the Rural India. Now, the whole spectrum of migration varies - from commuting on a daily basis to nearby places on the one hand and to permanent shift of residence to distant places on the other. Since the rural migrants are not a homogeneous group, the nature, characteristics and patterns of movement also vary from one population group to another (Karan, 2003). The major driving forces behind migration are better employment opportunities and a better living standard away from home. Bhagwati (1972) argue that the migration process carries human capital to regions of destination, involves investment in the employment of migrants, enables acquiring of new skills and emphasises the economic cycle. Short-term or seasonal migration has played a crucial role in allowing the rural populace to cope with the consequences of agrarian distress and devastated rural economies in many parts of India. Chandrasekhar

et al. (2007) argued that short-term migration is distress-led, driven by the complete collapse of rural employment generation, the economic difficulties of cultivation and also inadequate employment opportunities in towns. Short-term migration for work has evidently increased rapidly in recent times in India, but our statistical systems are currently not adequate to capture such flows of labour.

Previous studies have indicated a slow decline in the overall migratory population mobility in India (Kundu and Gupta, 1996). However, these findings have been contested in a few other studies, which have argued that existing surveys or data sources do not capture labour movements well (NCRL, 1991). This has been found to be true particularly for short duration/seasonal migration. Inter-state inequality in several dimensions of economic and social development has not declined and has, in fact, gone up in certain dimensions (Srivastava, 2003). The broad argument of these studies implies that the under-reporting of internal migration data is mainly on account of seasonal and circulatory migrants who are concentrated at the lower ends of the labour market spectrum (Srivastava, 1998).

## **2. Review of Literature**

Kundu (2008) argues that the major problem currently faced by several developing countries is linked to stagnation and volatility of agriculture, India being no exception to this. Hence, the possibilities of creating livelihood opportunities outside agriculture in rural areas seems to be limited, since much of the growth in non-farm employment in many of the states has been witnessed as poverty induced. This is especially true in the case of seasonal migrants (Kundu, 2007). Further, he also argues that seasonal migration cannot be attributed to push factors but is due to short duration transfer of regular workers, temporary posting of marketing and extension workers, etc. A large segment among the seasonal migrants could be those adopting a coping strategy or making temporary arrangements in the lean season for a livelihood.

On the other hand, micro studies on migration in India suggest that push factors like inequality in land ownership, poverty and agricultural backwardness as being mainly responsible for out migration (Srivastava, 1998). Migration, though, a part of active livelihood strategies, is also determined by social context, norms and structures, household composition/size, gendered ideologies, caste structure and social contracts and networks which determine who migrates and who can profit from opportunities arising elsewhere (Bora, 1996). Concentration of institutional and other economic activities in the urban areas attracts people to the urban areas. People increasingly invest in urban areas due to economies of scale. Thus, prosperity-push, poverty-push and prosperity-pull type of migratory movements are evident in various regions of the country. Among the four migration streams, the rural to urban migration stream is dominant, and also restricted to short distance movements as compared to other migration streams. Neighbouring states account for a large number of inter-state migrants. In contrast, in poorer states like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa and Rajasthan, a larger proportion of short duration migrants head to prosperous states like Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat and Maharashtra (Chand, 2005).

In India, the population Census and National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) are the major secondary data sources on migration. However, these data sources severely underestimate seasonal/temporary migration as they only capture permanent and semi-permanent migration in the country (Srivastava and Gill, 1998). Census data is destination-based and does not explain the deeper process of out-migration at the source areas. Though NSS provides data on out-migration, its coverage is seriously restricted as it treats out-migrants as only those persons who have to stay outside the state during the last five years (Kundu and Gupta, 1996). There is a statistical difficulty in capturing short-duration migration. One reason for this is that the Indian statistical system is not really designed to capture short-term/seasonal/circular migration, as a

result, policy makers may remain unaware of the sheer extent and likely increase in this phenomenon. Therefore, these secondary data sources are unable to capture the extent of short-duration and recent migrations that takes place primarily for employment and other livelihood purposes (Chandrasekhar and Ghosh, 2007).

The findings of the National Commission on Rural Labour (NCRL, 1991) indicated increasing trends of short-duration or seasonal or temporary migrants over the years. The Commission concluded that such exodus from rural India is mainly because of the lack of opportunities, absence of employment, inadequate resources and prolonging backwardness of the regions. Most of these migrants temporarily (short stay) make a trip into prosperous regions. The study further notes that the duration of migration primarily depends on the household characteristics, economic necessity, employment availability and individual preferences to stay at the working place. In this regard, there are quite a number of empirical studies based on field surveys that tried to define and explain the process of migration in various dimensions and its socio economic implications on the rural economy.

In this perspective, NSS defined short-term migrants as those who had stayed away from the village/town for a period of one month or more, but less than six months during the last 365 days for employment, or in search of employment, thus such persons can be/have been called (referred) as short-term migrants. It may be noted that these short-term migrants do not change their Usual Place of Residence but undertake short-term movements (NSS Report No. 533: Migration in India: July, 2007-June, 2008). With regard to seasonal migration, Konseiga (2002) in his study referred that in seasonal economic migration, the migrant member of the household stays less than a year in the destination place or region or country. Seasonal labour migration includes a wide variety of movements usually short-term, repetitive or cyclical in nature, but all having in common the lack of any declared intention of permanent or



long-lasting change in residence (Hugo, 1982). A short-term or seasonal migrant is one who migrates in the lean season into urban areas to get employment, wherein the rural migrants do not settle permanently in the destinations but continue to maintain close links with their areas of origin, where they return regularly and remit a substantial part of income from their earnings (Rani and Shylendra, 2001).

On the contrary, Census contains two broader definitions of migrants. According to the Place of Birth (POB) criteria a person is defined as a migrant if the place of birth of the person who is enumerated at a village/town at the time of the Census is different from his/her place of birth. In accordance with Place of Last Residence (PLR) criterion, it defined a person as a migrant, if the place in which he/she is enumerated during the Census is other than his/her place of immediate last residence is considered as migrant (Census, 2001). This aspect is more consistent than that of place of birth and gives more accurate and recent information on migration flows in the country and at the same time excludes the permanent migrants.

Though there is lack of direct information on short duration or seasonal migrants in Census data, it is vital to capture short duration migrants from the existing surveys, i.e., the Census. It is imperative to understand the broad characteristics of short duration/seasonal migrants at the macro level in the country. Against this background, the prime motivation of the paper is to measure the magnitude of short duration migration and distinguish short duration and permanent migration in the country on a macro level. It attempts to analyse the contrasting characteristics of short duration and permanent migration for attributing specificity of short-term migration. This study tries to capture the magnitude of short duration migration indirectly from Census migration 'duration' data. Thus it tries to establish and considers/treats those persons who stayed for 'Less than one year' at destinations as short duration/seasonal labour migrants. It may be noted that, since Census lacks

information on seasonal migration the present study considers short duration migration as seasonal migration alternatively. Though it may seem to be an inappropriate consideration but it remains the most fitting thought. The present paper is divided into six sections including the introduction. Section 2 provides a brief review of literature, section 3 discusses data and methodology, section 4 talks about the magnitude of short duration migrants and section 5 analyses the characteristics of short duration migrants. The final section contains the summary and conclusions of the study.

### **3. Data and Methodology**

The study employs the Census 2001 information for analysing short duration migrants for India. The Census provides information on duration, reasons, education status and economic activity of migrants. The present study takes 'migrant's duration of stay' as its base and conducts analysis based on the other associated characteristics such as reasons, streams, destinations, education level and economic activity of migrants. This analysis has been presented for total, rural and urban areas as per male and female migrants. Here, the study analysis is carried out based on 'less than 1 year' and 'more than 1 year' for probing short duration migration.

In order to assess short duration migration, we try to approximate short duration migrants based on the information on Place of Last Residence (PLR) criterion collected from the Census. It has categorically segregated the duration of migration as less than 1 year, 1-4 years, 5-9 years, 10-19 years, 20+ years and 'duration not stated'. In this background, the present study's main focus is to assess short duration migrants by considering the information on least duration, i.e., less than one year. Whilst duration information is cumulative in nature, a period observation on the same is used to estimate the progression probability for persons to become longer duration migrants. Such estimation is carried out on the lines similar to that of Parity Progression Ratio (PPR).

PPR is widely used in fertility analysis to estimate progression probability of women progressing to higher parities or birth order. Such progression probability is also computed based on a period observation of the distribution of women of different parities. Corresponding to this concept, in this study we determine 'Duration-specific Progression Probability' (DPR) of migrants of less than one year duration to become longer duration migrants. The complement of the same progression probability informs on the non-progression to longer duration migrants, which in turn, will become migrants who do not continue at the destination.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{PPR for parity } i, a &= \frac{\text{Women of parity } (i + 1) \text{ and above}}{\text{women of parity } i \text{ and above}} \\ &= \frac{\text{No of women of at least } (i + 1) \text{ parity}}{\text{No of women at least } i \text{ parity}} \end{aligned}$$

The proportion of women going for at least three children in the population =  $a_0 \times a_1 \times a_2$

Where  $a_0, a_1, a_2 \dots a_i$  are defined as

$$a_0 = \frac{w_{1+}}{w_{0+}} \quad a_1 = \frac{w_{2+}}{w_{1+}} \quad a_2 = \frac{w_{3+}}{w_{2+}} \quad \dots \quad a_i = \frac{w_{(i+1)+}}{w_{i+}}$$

Here  $w_{1+}, w_{2+} \dots w_{i+}$  are the percentages or proportion of women in a year having at least 1, 2, ..., i children respectively, and  $a_0, a_1, \dots, a_i$  are the parity progression ratios corresponding to parities 0, 1, 2, ..., i respectively. It should be noted that PPR is always less than one and it can help to assess the propensity of women in any population to go for higher order births. Here we are adopting the same equation to assess the short duration migrants by considering different categories of duration. The duration categories of 'less than 1 year', '1-4 years', '5-9 years', '10-19 years' and '20+ years' are denoted as p1, p2, p3, p4 and p5 respectively, and we approximate the probability of non-progression to longer duration using the following equation:

$$(1-(p_2+p_3+p_4+p_5)/ (p_1+p_2+p_3+p_4+p_5))=K_1$$

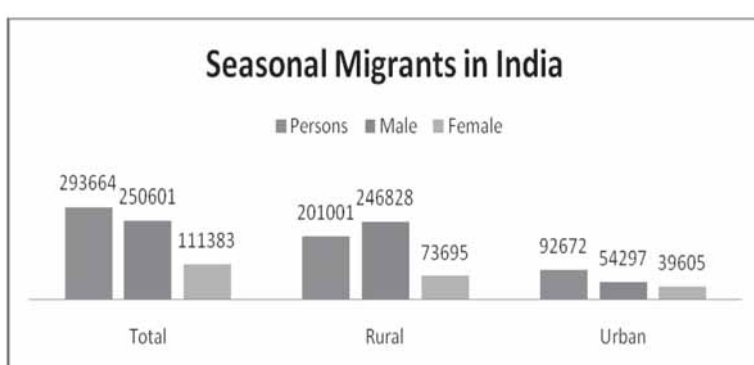
On multiplication of this non-progression probability to the number of migrants of less than one year duration, i.e.,  $p_1$ , we approximate the magnitude of short duration migration given by  $p_1 * k_1$ . Such an approximation of short duration migration could very well be questioned in many ways, such as whether this method is suitable for estimating short duration migrants or whether the estimated numbers/proportions will represent actual proportion of short duration migrants. However, it remains the only way to estimate the macro picture of short duration migration, which is derived from the number of migrants with the less than one year of stay at the destination. In assessing short duration migrants, this method remains one of the best possible methods to appraise short duration or seasonal migrants on a macro level.

#### **4. Magnitude of Short Duration Migration**

In this section, the study discusses the estimated short duration migration for India as well as for major states. The result may not be accurate or represent the true picture, but it gives some idea about the proportion of short duration migrants. More importantly, the pattern of short duration migrants for the states replicates reality and is equally comparable with many micro studies. The estimation made here is, by and large, reasonable in assessing the actual picture/pattern of short duration migrants.

Graph 1 shows the duration progression ratio (DPR) using the duration of migration information. Here, we estimated short duration/seasonal migrants according to total, rural and urban destinations for India. On the whole, the number of short duration migrants who could not reside for more than one year at destinations to which they migrated is estimated to be 2, 93,664. These migrants stayed less than one year at the destination and could not continue further. The number of short duration migrants from rural areas is about 2, 01,001 and in urban areas,

**Graph 1: The Estimated Duration Progression Ratios of Short Duration Migrants based on Census-2001's Place of Last Residence Criteria for India**

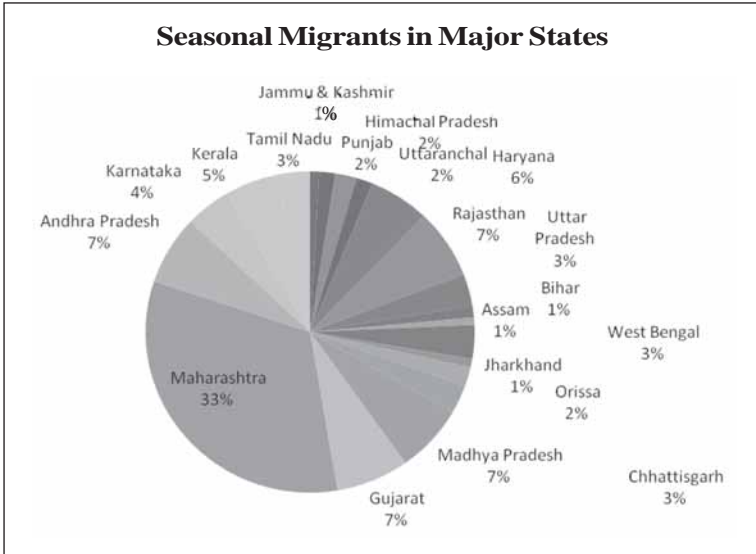


Source: Cumulated figures based on Migration Tables (D-Series), Population Census of India, 2001.

these migrants numbered 92,672. This could be interpreted as meaning that rural poor populations are more prone to stay less than one year at the destination to which they migrated for work. This, in turn, could be because most of the rural migrants engaged either in their own cultivation or were in the agricultural labour market as daily wage earners during the agricultural season. Employment opportunities are likely to dwindle or disappear after the agricultural harvest season in rural areas, leading to the migration of rural labour to other prosperous regions of the country to make use of lean season by working in other places. If we look into the gender perspective, the number of male short duration migrants in our country is greater than that of female migrants. This is more or less the same in the case of rural areas where male migrants are predominantly more as compared to female migrants. In urban areas, apparently, there are more male migrants, but the gap between the number of male and female migrants is less as compared to that in the rural areas. This implies that, unlike in rural areas, female migrants in the urban areas are more prone to temporarily migrate for work, employment, earnings and other livelihood purposes.

In this regard, it is significant and pertinent to mention the revelation of NSS's latest report relating to short-term migration which confirmed a very small proportion of persons, in both the rural and urban areas had undertaken short-term migration and it was mainly the males who had undertaken short-term migration. It exposed at the all-India level the rate of short-term migration was 1.7 per cent in the rural areas and almost negligible (much less than 1 per cent) in the urban areas. Moreover, in the rural areas, the rate was nearly 3 per cent for the males and less than 1 per cent for females (NSS Report No. 533: Migration in India: July, 2007-June, 2008). Thus it vindicates the present study results which are almost comparable to that of NSS with reference to short-term or seasonal labour migration in India.

**Graph 2: Estimated Proportion of Duration Progression Ratios of Short Duration Migrants based on Place of Last Residence for Major Indian States**



Source: Same as for Graph 1.

Note: DPR - Duration Progression Ratio (in-migration).

Similarly, Graph 2 depicts the duration progression ratio in proportions for major Indian states according to total, rural and urban destinations. The short duration migrants were predominantly more from states like Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Kerala and Karnataka. This could be interpreted in two ways: first is that short duration migrants are mainly from less developed states where employment opportunities in the agricultural sector are low or absent particularly in the agricultural off-season. And second possible reason could be that employment opportunities are more in the cities and towns of these developed regions of the Indian states. There is a positive relationship between employment opportunities and migration. If the development activities in urban areas increase then the probability of rural people migrating to urban centres increases. If we look into rural areas, short duration migrants are largely found in states like Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and West Bengal. On the other hand, the urban areas of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh account for a large number of these migrants. Interestingly, Maharashtra tops the list as the state which receives the most short duration migrants in both the rural and urban areas. States like Gujarat, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh also figure consistently with a large number of short duration migrants. It is very complex to draw a single conclusion to explain why some of the developed states are reported to have more short duration migrants. One explanation could be intense ongoing development activities in developed/semi-developed states which attract a large number of migrants both from within and outside the state. Another striking observation here could be that in the case of the urban destinations, the southern states have reported a large number of short duration/seasonal migrants. This could be on account of the software and health sector which is largely concentrated in these states and attract more skilled

and educated population seeking employment in these fields. In contrast, booming urban real estate and construction sector also demands and attracts a large number of manual and unskilled labour force from the rural countryside. If we look at the overall gender aspect in rural and urban areas, the male migrants outnumber the female migrants. It has been put forward that male migration is of short duration and more economic-reason driven, meaning that it is stimulated by the goals of employment, earnings and survival during the lean agricultural seasons.

### **5. Characteristics of Short-Duration Migration**

In this section, we focus on the characteristics of short duration/seasonal migrants by considering the data for India on the whole, based on different indicators like reason, education status, age, sex and economic activity on the one hand, and, on the other, attempting to distinguish between short duration and long duration migrants in terms of these characteristics. Table 1 depicts that the most predominant duration is 20 and above years and opposite to this is less than one year duration. It is noticed that if migrants stay for longer period at destinations, the proportion of the migrants who stay becomes permanent or leads to longer duration. In contrast, migrants who stay for less than one year do not want to settle permanently, instead they seek work/employment only in the lean season. This could be the reason why the extent or proportion of their duration of stay is lower as compared to other migrants.

Similarly, when we look at the gender aspect, female migrants are seen to be moderately dominating the situation with longer duration of residence at destinations as compared to male migrants. In the case of short duration migration there are predominantly more male than female migrants. The reason for this could be that migration of males is primarily stimulated by economically motivated factors whereas the movement of female is largely because of marriage and propelled by non-economic factors. The same tendency can be seen in rural and urban areas, though there are slight variations in terms of proportional increase/decrease.



**Table 1: Proportion of Migrants according to their Duration of Residence at Destinations for India**

Duration	Less than 1 Year	1-4 Years	5-9 Years	10-19 Years	20+ Years	Duration Not Stated
Total						
Persons	3	15	13	22	32	15
Males	4	18	13	18	21	26
Female	2	14	14	24	37	10
Rural						
Persons	3	14	13	22	35	13
Males	6	17	11	15	18	33
Female	2	13	13	24	40	8
Urban						
Persons	3	18	15	22	26	17
Males	3	18	14	21	24	19
Female	2	17	15	23	27	15

Source: Population Census of India-2001, D-Series, Migration Tables.

Table 2 illustrates the distribution of percentages between ‘less than 1 year’ and ‘+1 year’ duration of migrants’ residence at destination in terms of reasons for migration to other places. Here the study considers only migration induced by economic factors and excludes non-economic reasons from the analysis. This is done because our main focus is to study the characteristics of labour migrants who migrate for work/employment and other economic related reasons and this is presented in total, for rural and urban areas respectively. If we look into total migration with less than one year duration of residence, the major reasons for migration are ‘moved with households’ and ‘work/employment purposes’ with 31 and 24 per cent respectively. In this, the proportion of short duration migrants stands at 24 per cent and that of migrants staying for longer durations at 11 per cent. Migrants who move out with households

are of two categories: one section of migrants go for work/employment with the whole family and return after a few months to their place of origin, while the other section of households migrate only to settle permanently in other places. For example migrants from Mahabubnagar District of Andhra Pradesh migrate to places throughout India every year are short duration/seasonal migrants (Smita, 2007; Deshingkar, 2009).

If we look at the category of rural and urban area we can find almost similar results like to total migration category both in case of 'less than one year' and '+ 1 year' duration of stay. However, the chief difference between rural and urban areas is that the proportion of people who migrate for business is predominantly more in urban areas. If we examine the gender aspect, except for reasons like 'moved with households', male migrants are predominantly greater in number than female migrants in all other reasons which have large economic implications. In addition, in the rural areas, the proportion of male migrants is predominantly greater in the case of economic-related reasons, while in case of the urban areas, there is a slight difference in terms of their proportion. In this regard, it is noteworthy to cite the NSS's latest report which states that those who had undertaken short-term migration was considered for employment related purposes only. Moreover, persons with lower consumption and income level undertook short-term migration as one of the livelihood strategies (NSS Report No. 533: Migration in India: July, 2007-June, 2008).

### **5.1. Streams of Migration**

Ironically Table 3 revealed that short duration migrants who migrated for work/employment purposes predominantly moved from urban to rural, rural to rural, urban to urban and rural to urban migration streams respectively. The possible explanation for this phenomenon could be that most of the urban migrants move towards rural areas either to work as government employees or as part of their service transfers. Migrants who moved with households predominantly migrated towards

**Table 2: Percentage Distribution of Less than 1 Year and More than 1 Year Migrants Duration of Stay at Destination according to Reasons for Migration for India**

Reasons	Work/employment			Business			Moved with household		
	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F
Total	24	38	11	1	2	1	31	27	35
Less than 1 Year	11	38	2	1	4	0	15	24	11
All duration	10	28	2	1	3	0	14	19	11
Rural									
Less than 1 Year	24	38	12	1	2	1	30	28	31
+ 1 Year	4	24	1	0	2	0	9	25	6
All duration	4	17	1	0	2	0	9	18	6
Urban									
Less than 1 Year	24	39	7	1	2	0	35	26	44
+ 1 Year	24	47	4	2	4	0	27	24	30
All duration	20	38	3	2	3	0	24	21	27

Note: Proportions only for above reasons and other reasons are not presented.

Source: Same as for Table 1.

urban to urban, urban to rural, rural to rural and rural to urban streams respectively. For business purposes, most of the migrants migrated equally to all the four migration streams. When we look at the gender aspect for migrants who moved with households, in this female migrants were predominantly more in most of the migration streams except in the rural to rural stream in which the proportion of male migrants is higher than that of female migrants. Further, in other streams male migrants are predominately greater. If we look into permanent migrants streams, those who go for work/employment purposes predominantly migrated from urban to rural and urban to urban, rural to rural and rural to urban areas respectively. In this category, male migrants were predominantly greater than female migrants. Those who moved out for business purposes primarily moved from urban to urban and rural to urban streams respectively; in this case also, predominantly more male migrants moved than female migrants. A similar kind of pattern can be seen in the case of migrants who moved with households. They also predominantly moved out from urban to urban and urban to rural streams respectively and here also, male migrant moved more than female migrants. When we differentiate between these two durations according to work/employment purposes, short duration migrants were seen to be moving more from urban to rural and rural to rural streams, whereas for longer durations, most of the migrants moved from urban to rural and urban to urban streams, indicating that short duration migrants prefer rural areas more than urban destinations, whereas urban migrants show a tendency towards both urban as well as rural streams. In order to interpret the reasons for this and to understand this sort of pattern in the migration process, one needs to do a more in-depth study.

**Table 3: Percentage Distribution of Migrants Streams between Less than 1 year & More than 1 year Duration of Residence according to their Reasons for Migration**

Reasons	Less than 1 Year Duration of Residence						More than 1 Year Duration of Residence											
	Work/ Employment		Business		Moved with Households		Work/ Employment		Business		Moved with Households							
Streams	P	M	P	M	P	F	P	M	P	F	P	M	F					
Rural-Rural	20	34	10	1	2	1	29	30	28	3	22	1	0	2	0	7	25	5
Rural-Urban	14	23	5	1	2	1	28	23	33	8	21	2	1	3	0	17	23	14
Urban-Rural	23	36	8	1	2	0	34	26	41	22	48	4	2	5	0	24	23	25
Urban-Urban	16	29	4	1	2	0	36	30	42	17	36	3	2	4	0	29	30	29

Source: Same as for Table 1.

Note: Same as for Table 2.

## 5.2. Destinations of Migrants

This section discusses the migrant's destinations according to reasons for migration. Table 4 shows that short duration migrants' destinations for employment is to inter-state, inter-district, intra-state and intra-district. While in the case of migration for business, there is no exact specific destination which attracts them, but there is a greater probability towards inter-state and inter-district migration. Migrants who moved with households predominantly migrate towards inter-state destinations followed by inter-district, intra-state and intra-district destinations respectively. But when we view the gender aspect of migrants going for work/employment, we find that large proportions of male migrants predominantly migrated to inter-state, inter-district, intra-state and intra-district destinations respectively. The picture was similar for female migrants also, with the difference being that proportion of male migrants greatly outnumbered the female migrants. Male migrants who moved with household members migrated to intra-district, intra-states inter-district and inter-states destinations respectively. In this case, female migrants mainly migrated to inter-state and inter-district destinations. Thus, in the case of both rural and urban destinations, by and large, the results/patterns were similar. When we distinguish rural and urban destinations, male migrants are predominantly higher in rural destinations, and migrated for work/employment. Here male migrants travelled longer distances than female migrants. At this juncture, we can point out that female migrant movements are typically confined to short-distance places.

Similarly, in the case of more than one year duration of stay for work/employment, migrant movements were inter-state, inter-district, intra-state and intra-district. The migrants who moved with household migrated in the direction of inter-state, inter-district, intra-district and intra-state respectively. In migration of longer duration, the proportion of male migrant outnumbered female migrants both in rural as well

**Table 4: Percentage Distinguish between Less than 1 Year and More than 1 Year Duration of Residence of Migrants according to Destinations under different Reasons for India**

Destinations		Less than 1 Year Duration of Residence						+ 1 Year Duration of Residence											
		Work/employment			Business			Moved with HH			Work/employment			Business			Moved with HH		
		P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F
Total		19	32	9	1	2	1	30	29	32	8	32	1	1	3	0	13	25	9
Intra-State		14	25	6	1	2	1	28	29	28	5	25	1	1	3	0	10	26	7
Inter-District		27	41	14	1	2	1	34	29	39	14	42	2	1	4	0	18	25	15
Inter-State		39	54	19	1	2	1	35	25	48	28	57	4	2	4	0	24	20	26
Rural																			
Intra-State		19	32	10	1	2	1	29	29	29	4	21	1	0	2	0	8	24	5
Intra-District		13	25	6	1	2	1	26	28	25	3	18	1	0	2	0	7	24	5
Inter-District		29	43	18	1	2	1	34	30	37	6	30	1	1	2	0	11	27	8
Inter-State		43	56	26	1	2	1	35	26	47	15	47	3	1	4	0	16	24	13
Urban																			
Intra-State		20	33	6	1	2	0	34	28	41	20	42	3	2	4	0	26	26	27
Intra-District		16	26	5	1	2	0	34	29	40	16	36	3	2	5	0	26	29	24
Inter-District		23	38	8	1	2	0	34	27	42	23	47	4	2	4	0	27	24	29
Inter-State		33	52	9	2	2	0	36	24	51	34	59	4	3	4	0	27	19	37

Source: Same as for Table 1.

Note: Same as for Table 2.

urban destinations, and the movements were inter-state and inter-district. However, in rural destinations migrants who moved with household moved to inter-state and inter-district destinations. But, interestingly, here the proportion of male migrants is very large and difference between them is extremely large. We can conclude by saying that the short duration migrants are also more prone to migrate longer distances for work and employment purposes whereas permanent migrants are moving longer distances not only for work/employment purposes, but also for other reasons as well. In this regard, it is worth noting NSS's latest report which exposed that majority of the short-term migrants, had moved within the same State for employment purposes, here male were predominant than female migrants (NSS Report No. 533: Migration in India: July, 2007-June, 2008).

### **5.3. Migrants Educational Status**

In this section we discuss the migrant's educational status according to prime age groups. One of the important factors which make people move out to another working place is educational status and level of education. These factors play an important role in the decision to migrate and even for selecting of work and destination. Table 5 describes that in the case of migrants with less than one year duration of stay, most of the migrants are illiterate. On the whole, a large proportion of illiterate migrants are in the age groups of 40-59 years and 35-39 ages and constitute 49 per cent and 48 per cent respectively. Literate migrants are largely in the age groups of 20-24 years and 25-29 years and comprise 69 and 61 percent respectively. Rural migrants with less than one year duration are outnumbered by illiterate migrants. Sixty per cent of the illiterate migrants are in the age group 40-59 years and 57 per cent in the age group 35-39 years. In the case of literate migrants, the most predominant age groups are 20-24 years and 25-29 years, with 63 per cent and 53 per cent respectively. Similar results can also be seen in the case of urban migrants.



Migration of more than one year duration is predominantly more for literate migrants for total, rural and urban areas. It is greater in the 20-24 and 25-30 age groups for rural, as well as urban areas. Thus migrants of less than one year duration are mostly recognised as illiterate migrants, whereas migrants of longer duration are recognised as literate migrants. The main difference between rural and urban areas is that in rural areas, proportion of illiterates is more, whereas this group has declined in urban areas. In other words, urban migrants are more literate than rural migrants. This is by and large the same for 'more than one year' duration of residence migrants. Thus, this supports our basic argument that rural illiterate migrants were predominantly short/temporary migrants. Also aged illiterate migrant are short duration and younger age literate migrants are permanent migrants.

Table 6 illustrates on the whole, that the number of male migrants with 'less than one year' duration of residence is predominantly greater than that of female migrants. Further, there are more migrants in the age group of 40-59 and 35-39 years, with males making up 60 per cent and 59 per cent respectively, and 20-24 and 25-29 years for female migrants with 63 per cent and 56 per cent respectively. This indicates that if the age of male migrants increases, the probability of migrating increases, and for females, it is the reverse. This means that, the probability of migration is high for young persons and that it decreases as age advances. If we examine the trends for rural areas according to their educational status, female migrants are found to be more illiterate than male migrants. The illiterate male migrates are more among 40-59 and 35-39 year age groups and it is same for females, though the proportions differ. In the urban areas literate migrants are predominantly more among 20-24 and 25-29 year age groups for male and this is also the case with female migrants.

In the case of more than one year duration of migration, as a whole, females migrated predominantly more than males. In the case of

**Table 5: Percentage Distribution of Migrants according to Prime Working Age and Education Status among Less Than 1 Year and + 1 Year Duration of Migrants for India**

Age group	Less than 1 Year Duration of Residence			+ 1 Year Duration of Residence		
	Total Persons	Illiterate Persons	Literate Persons	Total Persons	Illiterate Persons	Literate Persons
Prime Age						
20-24	100	31	69	100	38	62
25-29	100	39	61	100	42	58
30-34	100	44	56	100	47	53
35-39	100	48	52	100	50	50
40-59	100	49	51	100	55	45
Rural						
20-24	100	37	63	100	43	57
25-29	100	47	53	100	47	53
30-34	100	53	47	100	53	47
35-39	100	57	43	100	56	44
40-59	100	60	40	100	62	38
Urban						
20-24	100	12	88	100	13	87
25-29	100	14	86	100	15	85
30-34	100	16	84	100	17	83
35-39	100	19	81	100	19	81
40-59	100	20	80	100	20	80

Source: Same as for Table 1.

illiterate migrants also, female migrants are predominantly more, while the literate migrants are mainly male. In the case of illiterate male migrants, there are more migrants who were in the 40-59 and 35-39 age groups. Here the case is the same for female migrants. In the case of literate migrants it is 20-24 and 25-29 years for males and the same is for females. The results are similar for rural and urban areas. However, the main difference between these two areas is that illiterate migrants were more in rural areas and literates more in the urban areas. Rural illiterates were dominated by female migrants and this is also the case for the urban areas, but the difference is that there are more literates. The proportion of literate migrants was more in the urban areas and this is very high for both male and female migrants. Thus, this indicates that the literacy level encourages the migration level of female migrants and their migration would be towards the urban areas of the country. This suggests that illiterate migrants might tend to move towards rural areas though there are growing opportunities in urban areas.

#### **5.4. Economic Activity of Migrants**

Whilst when we look into the overall migrants' duration of residence and economic activity, wherein non-worker proportion was predominant followed by main workers and marginal workers. The large proportion of non-workers could be because children and aged family members who also accompany their parents/son to the urban destinations. The main workers are mostly in the age groups 35-39 and 40-59 years, whereas the marginal workers are chiefly in the age groups are 15-19 and 25-29 years. In the marginal worker category, there are more job seekers in the age groups between 30-34 years. In case of non-workers, the migrants were below 14 and above 60 years. In rural areas, the proportion of non-workers is more than main workers and marginal workers. Interestingly, the proportion of main workers has increased and that of non-workers and marginal workers has come down in contrast to overall migration (see Table 7). Taking their age groups, the proportion

**Table 6: Percentage Distribution of Male and Female Persons according to Education Status and Prime Working Age between Less Than 1 Year and + 1 Year Duration of Migrants for India**

Total	Less than 1 Year Duration of Residence						+ 1 Year Duration of Residence												
	Total migrants			Illiterate			Literate			Total			Illiterate			Literate			
	M	F		M	F		M	F		M	F		M	F		M	F		
20-24	37	63		26	35	74	65	74	65	21	79	11	45	89	55				
25-29	44	56		30	47	70	53	70	53	19	81	14	49	86	51				
30-34	53	47		34	55	66	45	66	45	20	80	17	55	83	45				
35-39	59	41		39	60	61	40	61	40	22	78	19	58	81	42				
40-59	60	40		39	65	61	35	61	35	24	76	19	67	81	33				
Rural																			
20-24	35	65		31	40	69	60	69	60	17	83	14	49	86	51				
25-29	43	57		37	55	63	45	63	45	16	84	17	53	83	47				
30-34	52	48		42	64	58	36	58	36	17	83	20	60	80	40				
35-39	58	42		47	70	53	30	53	30	19	81	23	63	77	37				
40-59	59	41		49	76	51	24	51	24	20	80	23	72	77	28				
Urban																			
20-24	42	58		11	12	89	88	89	88	38	62	5	17	95	83				
25-29	49	51		12	16	88	84	88	84	32	68	7	19	93	81				
30-34	58	42		13	21	87	79	87	79	35	65	8	22	92	78				
35-39	62	38		14	26	86	74	86	74	36	64	9	25	91	75				
40-59	64	36		14	30	86	70	86	70	43	57	8	29	92	71				

Source: Same as for Table 1.

of rural migrants is by and large similar to overall migration. In the case of urban areas also, one can find a more or less similar kind of trend in migrant proportions as compared to rural destinations. However, the important difference between rural and urban destinations is that main workers and marginal workers were more in rural areas, and most of them are male migrants; in the case of marginal workers, more are female migrants. Non-workers and work seekers were more in urban areas, and in this the female migrant proportion is predominantly more than male migrants. Short duration migration is mostly of main workers, though the proportion of non-workers is also high. The reason for this could be that though migrants mainly go for work due to non-availability of work they have to remain unemployed at destinations (Kundu, 2007). In this regard, it is worth mentioning that NSS data also shows a similar pattern like Census and confirms that the majority of rural male and female short-term migrants were workers (NSS Report No. 533: Migration in India: July, 2007-June, 2008).

If we look into the overall scenario of economic activity by age and sex, non-workers are significantly more, followed by main workers and marginal workers. In the case of main workers, the predominant age groups are 35-39 and 40-59 years. Interestingly, if the migrant are young, the proportion of main workers decline. For marginal workers, the predominant age groups are 25-29 and 30-34 years. In this category, job seekers are more in age groups of 20-24 and 25-29 years. Non-worker migrants largely belong to the age groups of 20-24 and 25-29 years. In this category, there are more job seekers in the age groups 20-24 and 25-29 years. If we look into rural destinations also, the proportion of non-workers is more than that of main workers and marginal workers. But the proportion of main workers has increased and non-worker and marginal workers proportions have declined in contrast to overall migration. In the case of urban destinations also, we come across results similar to that of rural migration destinations. If we look into the gender aspect on the whole for all ages, female migrants are predominantly more than male

**Table 7: Percentage Distribution of Migrants with Less than 1 Year Duration of Residence by Economic Activity, Age and Sex for India**

Age-group	Less than 1 Year Duration of Migrants Residence																	
	Total Migrants			Main workers			Marginal workers work			Seeking/ available for			Non-workers			Seeking/ available for work		
	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F
Total	100	37	63	39	67	22	14	13	15	5	8	4	47	20	63	11	8	12
20-24	100	44	56	52	80	30	15	13	16	5	7	4	33	8	53	7	4	9
25-29	100	53	47	62	84	38	14	12	17	6	6	4	24	4	46	4	2	6
30-34	100	59	41	67	84	41	14	12	17	6	6	5	20	4	42	3	2	5
35-39	100	60	40	64	82	36	13	11	15	4	5	4	23	7	48	2	2	3
40-59	100	32	68	42	73	27	18	15	20	6	9	5	40	12	53	8	5	10
20-24	100	41	59	54	81	36	19	15	21	6	8	5	27	4	43	5	2	7
25-29	100	52	48	65	83	45	17	14	22	6	7	6	18	3	33	3	1	4
30-34	100	58	42	69	83	50	17	14	22	7	7	6	14	3	29	2	1	3
35-39	100	60	40	67	82	45	16	13	20	5	6	4	17	5	34	1	1	2
40-59	100	45	55	32	58	11	7	11	4	3	6	1	61	31	85	15	13	16
20-24	100	50	50	48	77	18	7	10	5	4	6	2	45	13	77	10	7	14
25-29	100	57	43	58	85	22	7	9	6	4	5	2	35	7	72	6	3	9
30-34	100	60	40	61	85	24	8	8	7	4	5	2	31	6	69	5	3	7
35-39	100	61	39	58	83	20	6	7	5	3	3	2	36	10	75	3	2	4
40-59	100	45	55	32	58	11	7	11	4	3	6	1	61	31	85	15	13	16

Rural

Urban

Source: Same as for Table I.

migrants. In the category of main workers, male migrants are predominantly more than their counterpart female migrants. However, while in the marginal and non-worker category, the percentage of female migrants is predominantly higher than that of male migrants, within this category of employment seekers pattern, the percentage of male migrants is quite high compared to that of female migrants. The main difference between rural and urban destinations is that main workers and marginal workers are more in rural areas, and the main worker category is largely dominated by male migrants and that of the marginal workers, by female migrants. Non-workers and work/job seekers are more in urban areas and here, the proportion of female migrants is much higher than that of male migrants (see Table 8).

### **5.5. Reasons for Short Duration Migrants at State Level**

Table 9 shows the percentage distribution of migrants with 'less than one year' duration of stay according to the reasons for migration in major Indian states. The main motives for migration are 'work/employment' and 'moved with household and businesses. Here, work/employment and business reasons for migration can be interpreted as being influenced by economic factors. Socio-cultural factors and other related aspects could also stimulate these movements, and in such cases, economic factors may not have any role to play. Short duration migrants for work/employment purposes are more in Maharashtra, West Bengal, Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Kerala (in this order). If we consider the gender aspect, male migrants were stimulated mainly by work/employment purposes followed by business purposes. Migration for work/employment could be from the most deprived regions and comprise people who are forced to move out of their homes in search of livelihood. The well developed states could be attracting more migrants as they provide more employment opportunities in both the agricultural and industrial sectors. Another main characteristic of short duration migrants is that they might own agricultural implements and livestock.

**Table 8: Percentage Distribution of Migrants with + 1 Year (above 1 year) Duration of Residence by Economic Activity, Age and Sex for India**

Age group		+ 1 Year / More than 1 Year Duration of Residence																
		Total Migrants			Main workers			Marginal workers			Seeking/ available for work			Non-workers			Seeking/ available for work	
	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F
Total	100	100	100	21	79	29	61	21	77	20	4	4	53	32	59	10	15	8
20-24	100	100	100	19	81	35	83	24	18	6	20	4	4	48	10	56	7	6
25-29	100	100	100	20	80	39	90	27	18	5	21	3	4	43	4	53	5	2
30-34	100	100	100	22	78	43	92	29	17	5	20	3	3	40	3	51	4	1
35-39	100	100	100	24	76	42	90	27	16	4	19	2	2	42	6	54	2	1
40-59	100	100	100	11	89	28	63	24	23	11	24	5	7	5	49	26	52	7
20-24	100	100	100	10	90	32	82	27	23	10	25	5	6	5	45	9	48	6
25-29	100	100	100	10	90	36	88	30	24	8	25	4	5	4	40	4	45	4
30-34	100	100	100	12	88	39	89	32	23	8	25	4	4	4	38	3	43	3
35-39	100	100	100	13	87	37	87	30	21	7	24	3	3	3	41	5	47	2
40-59	100	100	100	45	55	32	60	9	4	5	3	2	3	1	64	36	87	15
20-24	100	100	100	40	60	41	84	12	4	5	4	2	3	1	55	11	84	10
25-29	100	100	100	42	58	47	92	15	4	4	4	2	2	1	49	4	81	6
30-34	100	100	100	43	57	50	94	17	4	4	5	2	2	1	46	3	78	5
35-39	100	100	100	48	52	53	91	17	3	3	4	1	1	1	44	6	79	3
40-59	100	100	100	48	52	53	91	17	3	3	4	1	1	1	44	6	79	3

Rural

Urban

Source: Same as for Table 1.



**Table 9: Percentage Distribution of Migrants with Less than 1 Year Duration of Residence according to Reasons for Major Indian states**

Reasons States	Less than 1 Year (In-Migration) Total											
	Work/employment						Business					
	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F
Jammu & Kashmir	30	49	9	0	1	0	58	40	79			
Himachal Pradesh	45	61	15	1	1	0	31	19	53			
Punjab	45	63	19	1	1	0	35	24	50			
Uttaranchal	39	56	11	1	1	0	38	25	58			
Haryana	43	59	25	0	0	0	41	32	51			
Rajasthan	28	41	11	1	1	0	35	25	48			
Uttar Pradesh	42	52	32	0	1	0	35	29	40			
Bihar	23	32	12	1	1	0	21	15	28			
Assam	36	51	12	6	10	1	32	19	51			
West Bengal	45	53	34	1	2	0	34	26	44			
Jharkhand	23	38	7	1	1	0	37	28	47			
Orissa	30	38	16	5	7	2	26	17	42			
Chhattisgarh	32	51	10	1	2	0	38	27	53			
Madhya Pradesh	28	45	10	1	1	0	38	29	47			
Gujarat	35	47	18	11	14	6	40	28	56			
Maharashtra	45	62	21	1	1	0	34	22	50			
Andhra Pradesh	37	52	20	2	3	1	31	23	40			
Karnataka	37	52	17	1	2	0	31	21	43			
Kerala	43	55	25	1	2	1	27	18	41			
Tamil Nadu	27	42	11	1	2	1	27	20	35			

Note: Proportions only for above reasons and other reasons are not presented (In-Migration).  
Source: Same as for Table 1.

Therefore the intention of such migrants may not be to migrate permanently. Instead, they undertake migration as a temporary income source to supplement their overall household income by migrating during the lean agricultural season (Mamgain, 2003; Reddy, 2003).

## **6. Summary & Conclusions**

Since, there are no studies which analyse the magnitude and characteristics of short duration migration by using Census data at macro-level information, in this paper we have tried to analyse the magnitude and characteristics of short duration migrants. Our effort is a small step in this direction. The study demonstrated the patterns of short duration migrants which are similar and comparable with those primary studies on seasonal migration. Nonetheless, the major findings of the study are as follows: around three lakh migrants were short duration migrants who could not stay more than one year at destinations. It means these migrants stayed less than one year and could not continue for a longer period but returned to their place of origin. Hence, the study articulated these migrants as short duration/seasonal migrants. In the case of rural area the study showed that the short duration migrants are around two lakhs. In case of urban areas, the corresponding figure is around one lakh. This indicates that rural migration is growing and that people in rural areas are migrating to other states for seeking work and livelihood purposes. And these short duration migrants are predominantly male migrants. The major short duration migrant-receiving states are Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana, and Kerala. The study also demonstrated the major reason for migration is work/employment (excluding marriage migration) and that this is dominated by males. There are some interesting findings in case of migration destinations, particularly migrants who moved for work/employment. In this case, the migration movement is mostly inter-state and inter-district. The situation is similar in rural and urban destinations also. In the case of females, the migration process took place towards

intra-district and intra-state streams. Thus their movements were restricted to short durations, whereas male migration was for longer durations and to far off places. Taking reasons such as business and education, male migrants outnumbered females and indicates that females do not prefer longer distances. The study reveals that most of the migrants largely migrated from urban to rural, rural to rural, urban to urban and rural to urban respectively, and by and large this is same for rural and urban areas, the only difference being in proportions and gender. The rural to rural stream is dominated by males and most of the urban streams are dominated by female migrants. The study also found that rural migrants are illiterate male migrants, whereas in urban areas, literate female migrants outnumbered male migrants. In the case of economic activity, non-workers are the highest in number, followed by main workers and marginal workers. The rural area is dominated by main and marginal workers, while urban areas are largely dominated by the non-workers. In this case, rural main workers are dominated by male migrants and marginal workers, by female migrants. The trend is the same for urban destinations. However, female workers dominate the non-worker category in both rural and urban destinations. While examining short duration migration the study established that these migrants could be seasonal migrants, but there is a need for information on short, seasonal and temporary migrants at the aggregate level. This is very important when analysing the pattern, impact and economic implications of internal migration flows in this country to understand the problems pertaining to seasonal labour migration. This can also help law makers to make suitable policies to deal with the exodus of labour migrants. Suitable policies would help seasonal migrants to overcome the risk involved in the migration process as they can seek protection under inter-state migration laws.

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