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# Dynamics of Changing Rural Demography (A Case Study of Villages in National Capital Region –Delhi)

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## Abstract

Migrants preferring to settle in the villages abutting urban centers avoiding slums and ghettos in metropolitan cities influences and changes rural demographics as migrants outnumber the host denizens who shift to the cities to leverage urban amenities for quality life and convenience. In this context of new dynamics in the rural socioeconomic setup the focus of the paper is to highlight positive factors which entice migrants towards villages and local denizens shifting to the cities. The study elucidates contributions of migrants in making rural economy vibrant and thriving with myriad new avenues for the host communities to prosper. In spite of being the harbinger of dynamism in rural landscapes, migrants are deprived of socio economic amenities and denied roles in local governers by supremacist thinking dominant status and local hierarchy. The need is to address there denied rights for inclusive and harmonious rural societies. Keywords: Dynamics, Migration, Demographics, Prosper Friction

**Keywords:** Rural Demography, Delhi, Villages

## 1. Introduction

Migration is an escape from century old penury and hope for assured availability of food, cloth and shelter for families. Rural India comprising 0.6 million villages and particular its changing rural demographics needs attention in the context of developmental policies as these rural landscape hold immense resources and potential and inhabitants have strong urge to participate and collaborate in developmental process for equitable and inclusive growth sine quo non for peaceful, progressive and harmonious societies. Migration in India from villages reflects three different demographic changes and repercussions. Firstly, villages in far off Border States where mass out-migration results in ghost villages with a few families residing. Secondly, central Indian states where outmigration is very high but it is circular so the village economies do not suffer rather thrive and grow. Thirdly, the villages on the national highways and abutting the metropolitan cities and in the national capital region –Delhi, which is the subject matter of this study entice people from all over India to come and become permanent residents and affluent host communities shift to adjoining towns and cities with wider and deeper impact on rural demographics. Industrialization around metropolitan cities fuels the development of modern housing projects, commercial hubs and new amenities and opportunities for self-employment and employment abounds both in formal and informal sector enticing migrants from other states for reliable, ready, quality and better remunerative job in cities. As per 2011 census, 45 crore Indians (37% of population) were internal migrants. The National Capital Region-Delhi

(henceforth NCR) comprises 19 districts of states of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Rajasthan and national capital territory of Delhi attracts migrants from all part of the country. The present study has chosen district Faridabad, one of the major satellites cities abutting Delhi and it is the most populous in the state of Haryana having 413 towns and villages in its vicinity and draws attention as it is an industrial hub of northern region home to mega industrial and infrastructure projects culminating into generating interrelated and interdependent activities breeding employment opportunities for all. The open spaces between the national capital Delhi and Faridabad and the land around the villages in the district have tremendous scope and potential for development and the state government acquired and sold these land for industrial and commercial projects and that inculcated dynamism in the villages abutting these land areas. These migrants require a shelter place for their families with minimum basic necessities and that too near to the place of work, The slums and ghettos in NCR or the so called Jughli-Jhopari (Temporary huts) colonies are over crowded and living their comes at a cost in terms of insecurity, risk and poor hygiene and the costs and hassle of dally commute to the work place are very high. The only escape for them is to settle in the villages which are in close proximity to industrial, real estate and infrastructure projects and provide safe, secure and hygienically conditions along with the prospect of availability of housing, primary health facilities, water and education for children. The increasing concentration of migrants in villages culminates in growth of informal sector to provide goods and services conveniently to the masses. The affluent host communities no longer avail rural services as the family members can afford to commute to the cities to avail better amenities or the family gradually shifts to the nearby towns to avail urban amenities for quality life. This in and out migration changes rural demographics which is both challenge and opportunity for gram panchayats (Village Council) for leveraging it for inclusive and harmonious growth of the rural economy. The present work shall address following issues In the light of changing rural demographics

- 1 What are the forces which changes rural demographics and its socio economics repercussions?
- 2 Do the migrants get their due political, economic and social rights for quality lives and livelihoods?

## 2. Literature Review

India, a populous agrarian economy needs to nurture and leverage rural development for sustainable growth. The pace and level of rural development in Third World Countries would continue to define their overall socioeconomic development as sovereign states (Adisha Rashid, 2012). The process of people migrating to urban industrialised area is an age old practice. The assessment of the effect of migration on rural areas is very necessary to know as it influences socio culture and political fabric of the villages. The effect of rural urban migration on rural communities is catalytic (Chuwuedozie & Patience, 2013). The complexities and diversities of rural lives are usually underpinned and consequently undervalued and so there is a need to understand the microenvironments within the rural context (R chamber, 2008). Migration is an age old human instinct to move way from place of birth to other areas for availing new opportunities and this comes under the category of voluntary migration. Migrants can be agents of development and it brings both opportunities and challenges to rural are in the countries of origin, transit and destination (FAO Reopt, 2016). Infrastructures development projects that directly induce population displacement and resettlement for those who migrate to become permanent residents (Mc Dowell 1996). Favourable condition shall be created for the population to use migration to grow not only to grow but develop also, so that they will ultimately become settlers (EPRDF 1995). Ravenstein (1885) points out that migration accelerates with growth in means of transport and communication and expansion of trade and commerce.. Domestic trade and the adequacy and efficiency of infrastructure are the backbone of mutually beneficial rural-urban relationship (Tacoli, 1998). The labour contractors also encourage settlement of these migrants in villages. Employers also prefer migrant labours to local labours, as they are cheap (Pandey 1988). Once the share of emigrants in the total population increases they become aware of dividends of political empowerment. Rural demography changes due to migrants. (Portes, 1995) argues that migrant networks are sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants and non migrants in origin and destination areas through ties of kinship, friendship, share communities origin. Rural societies become multicultural and multiethnic as a result of new settlers. Yadav et .al (1996) finds that migration affects a number of socio-economic, cultural, demographic and political factors both at the place of origin and destination. Rural rich and aware visualise a bright and rewarding future in urban amenities. Education and other amenities available at the origin acts as a

hindrance in out-migration while at the destination attract the in-migration (Greenwood,1969). Migrants are mostly young people. Most migrants are young adults and their out-migration changes the demographic pattern of both the areas (Peterson, 1975). Development pattern influence national and worldview the kind of government elected the way natural and financial resources are used and the development of transportation system ( Herbers, 1986) Migration is the result of the interplay of political, social, economic, legal, historical, cultural, and educational forces at both ends of the migratory axis (Mejia et al. 1979). These forces can be classified as either 'Push' or 'Pull'. The push factors are those life situations that give one reason to be dissatisfied with one's present locale; while the pull factors are those attributes of distant places that make them appear appealing (Dorigo & Tobler, 1983). The inter-state migration of workers in India has increased substantially to 90 lakh annually between 2011-2016 compared to previous years The largest recipient of migrant workers was the NCR-Delhi region, which accounted for more than half of migration in 2015-2016 Uttar Pradesh and Bihar together accounted for half of total outmigration in 2015-2016 (The Economic survey 2016).

### 3. Methodology

The study was conducted in July 2022 just a few months before the Gram Panchayat elections in Haryana. The five villages chosen for the survey are in close proximity to the national high way no 10 and are abutting the industrial estates set up by government of Haryana and concomitantly growth of mega residential and commercial projects. The finding draws on the sentiments and views of rural denizen's through a structured questioner. The households were randomly chosen so as to get true and unbiased views from both settlers and host communities. The demography data was taken from the website of block development offices, Government of Haryana.

### 4. Changing Rural Demography

#### 4.1 In-Migration

As per the Land Acquisition Act, the government of Haryana through its designated agencies acquires the private land for Industrial and housing projects with a fair compensation to the landowners and the income is exempted from income tax as per Income Tax Act 1961. The cumulative effect is that the land on the periphery of the village is now most sought after with high premiums. Most of these villages being in close proximity to the railway stations, Metrorail or on the national highways attract migrants to settle. The survey covers the five villages namely Sikri, Asoti, Tatarpur, Jharsetli and Harphola in Faridabad district of Haryana. Table1 shows the proximities of the villages to railway stations and national highway.

Table 1: Geographical Location of the villages

Village	Population	Distance from railway station (in kms)	Distance from National Highway (in kms)
Sikri	5320	5	0
Asaoti	5945	0	5
Tatarpur	1018	3	3.5
Jharsetli	4258	3	0
Harphola	3145	2	2

Source: State Census 2011 (/states.php)

The increasing concentration of mega construction and infrastructure projects, housing projects, industrial estates creates the demand for labour both unskilled and semi skilled. Migrants flocking to these projects for work prefer to settle in nearby villages with their families. The National capital region of Delhi which is one of the world largest agglomeration with the population of 47000000 (census 2011) comprising Delhi as well as area surrounding it in states of Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan witnessing a phenomenon where rural urban connectivity is a major factor influencing the economic development and shared amenities and prosperities. National capital region

–Delhi , has witnessed a vast transformation from a agrarian region with sporadic industrial regions two decade ago to a land of opportunities where large number of industrial and commercial hubs have mushroomed and concomitantly infrastructure development has been given top priority by both the central and state governments Real estate developers have invested huge amount of capital to earn profits in future. The round the clock commercial and passenger vehicles criss-crosses the national highway abutting these villages and industrial and housing projects.NCR is transient point for transporters from various states. It is because of these reasons that villages land is most sought after and the opportunity cost is high. The way to any housing projects or industrial estate passes through these villages and hence metalled roads were laid by developers.

The migrants coming to NCR-Delhi and settling in nearby villages change composition of village population and its effect on culture, economic and political fabric of villages is palpable. The villages in NCR region present a unique scenario which segregates them from far off villages all over the country. There are a number of pull factors at work to entice the migrants to settle in villages. Firstly, in the national capital region, urban rural integration is seamless and effective as these villages are having road and rail connectivity. Secondly, the shelter in urban areas is becoming difficult due to strict municipalities rules which proscribes new ghettos or encroachment and settlements in new colonies on the outskirts. Thirdly, the living conditions in villages are relatively more safe, hygienic and protective in all weather conditions as compare to slums in urban regions. The reasons for this which shall be discussed later in the paper are availability of pucca houses constructed by local landlords with all basic amenities. Fourthly, family members find an easy source of employment by engaging themselves in informal activities ranging from street vending to providing various kinds of services of various kinds. Fifthly, basic facilities and social amenities like schooling for children, health facilities, water from hand pump sets, essential items through public distribution shops Besides, MGNREGA (Mahatama Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) a flagship programme of Government to provide employment to rural folks) is a convenient and reliable source of employment .Real estate developers purchases agricultural land from villagers with high premium and later on get conversion of land use (CLU) certificates from government. In a number of cases the wealthy villagers develops colonies themselves on the outskirts of village and get CLU certificate through political manoeuvring and sells plots to migrants and settles the labours from outside. These colonies are becoming vote banks for vested interests

The local villagers' construct special building or renovate village houses for housing these migrant and earn rental income. These building provide one room or two room accommodation to each family with shared amenities. The owners of building provide maximum convenience to tenants to attract more and to get higher rent. It is also observed that the local villagers' makes efforts to improve village connectivity through getting constructed pucca roads connecting villages with highways and railway stations. These buildings become crowded as more people want to adjust in same accommodation so as to reduce share in total rent. There is competition among villages to attract more and more labours to their respective villages. The villages which are in close proximity to railway station and national highway get advantage. The concentration of settlers in the village increases and they permanently settles in the villages, Effective and efficient connectivity of these villages and mushrooming of industrial and real estate projects culminates creates a new dynamism in rural economy.

The survey findings showed that the majority of migrants were married, illiterate or completed four to five years of schooling and were engaged in agriculture or working as rural artisans in the their respective state of origin with meagre incomes. For few years they work as casual labours at the constructing sites and in the industries but gradually learns basic of various trades. Table 2 shows the state of origin along marital status, education levels and the skills which they learnt

Table 2: Profile of Migrants

<b>Village</b>	<b>Migrants State</b>	<b>Marital Status</b>	<b>Education Primary Level</b>	<b>Skills</b>
Sikri	UP, Bihar, Orissa, MP, Rajasthan and North East	Married (85%)	(95%)	Masons, Carpenters, Plumbers, Industry Specific

Asoti	UP , Bihar, WB, Orissa, MP and Rajasthan	Married (90%)	(90%)	Masons, Carpenters, Plumbers
Tatarpur	UP, Bihar, MP and Rajasthan	Married (90%)	(90%)	Industry Specific
Jharsetli	UP , Bihar, WB, Orissa, MP and Rajasthan	Married (90%)	(90%)	Masons, Carpenters, Plumbers
Harfla	UP, Bihar, MP and Rajasthan	Married (90%)	(90%)	Industry Specific

Source: Field Survey

#### 4.2. Out-migration

Host communities living for generation in the villages shifting their families to the adjoining cities or towns have become a very common trend in the NCR-Delhi. Outmigration is cumulative result of awareness and affluence, to avail services hitherto unavailable to improve quality of life and brighter future prospect. There are a number of push factors at work due to which affluence and aware host communities want to settle in adjoining cities. Post 1991, the year when India introduced the economic reforms, the land in the NCR has become what oil is for sheikhs of Arab. An acre of land which till yesterday was either barren or giving low and uncertain return now have buyers with bag full of currency notes to get it at exorbitant rates. Local landowning class received huge compensation as land has been acquired by the government. With high liquidity with them the village host communities wanted to avail urban facilities of public school education for children, multispecialty hospitals, a new marketing experience with new products for making life comfortable and public spaces for outings. Recognising the vast untapped opportunities in cities, affluent rural people invest in activities in cities like real estate developers and agents, local transportation business, building contractor and material supplier, security agencies for providing guards as hiring them is new fad and need of commercial agencies and gated communities in urban areas. The survey findings show that affluence also provide them political heft which they also use in urban areas. Most of these people who shifted to cities have been landlords in their respective villages and their hegemony still prevails in village politics. The ancestral houses is taken care of either by family elders or the house is given to migrant family to live as caretaker and if the family is large then one of the siblings remains in village. No estimate of number of families amongst host communities who have shifted to cities can be made that as all families have their names in the electoral roll of the village and remain connected for various needs and reasons.

### 5. Changing Dynamics in the rural economy

The composition of populations is such that the migrants who are now permanent settlers outnumber the host communities, the rural economies develop in its own way breeding new opportunities for growth in myriad ways

#### 5.1. Informal Sector: Growth and Contributions

Most of the infrastructure and real estate projects have gestation period of four to five years and contract labour is most safe option for developers'. The contractor shifts the workers to other nearby site after completion of earlier project, The increase in number of settlers promotes the growth of informal activities particularly street vending of essential goods and services, small temporary shops for essential and eatables items, tea stalls, pan and cigarette shops, fast food items, basic on line services and IT related works etc. The family members of migrants find an easy source of additional income. These vendors do business during morning and evening hours when peoples commute. During the day hours they shifts to industrial and infrastructure projects,, The women folks run these business entities during the day period and in early morning. A few of these units are also run under part time basis. The vending is also carried out on the highways, railway stations, infrastructure sites and bus stops to cater to the needs of commuters round the clock. In two of the villages (Tatarpur and Sikri ) the local have opened placement agencies . The owners of these agencies shared that they recruit security guards, electricians, plumbers, watchmen., security guards, drivers, gardeners , housemaids to work in the housing societies where families have moved in and there is pent-up demand for such services and we being local provide guarantee and promise of

quality services as most of our workers are placed only after proper counselling and basic training. An important finding is that the majority of women amongst migrants offer themselves for employment and they are empowered and recognised as they get additional regular income for the family. Table 3 highlights the number of settled families and their occupation structure.

Table 3: Occupational Structure of the Migrants

Village	No. of Families* Settled	Occupation
Sikri	252	Workers/ Labourer/small shops/road side vending on highway
Asaoti	427	Workers/ Labourer/ Street Vending/ small shops /Security Guards
Tatarpur	82	Workers/ Labourer/
Jharsetli	74	Workers/ Labourer/ Street Vending/ small shops/Security Guards
Harfola	54	Workers/ Labourer/ Street Vending/ small shops

Source: Field Survey

\* Average size of family 3 members

### 5.2. Social Amenities: Increasing Affordability But Inaccessible

Accessibility and availability of pure drinking water, school education and primary health services are sine qua non for healthy, wealthy and inclusive society. Once the families settle and their income increases they do want to avail these for a better living. To our utter dismay we find that on all these fronts the situation is grim and deplorable. A majority of local households who are affluent and living in village no longer avail these services. Their children commute to the public schools in city by school bus, have tap connection in homes and consult physician in cities for primary health check-up. It is because host community is indifferent towards these amenities these remain neglected and in deplorable state and the local administration is least concerned and insensitive toward these issues. The local government indifference attitude towards other social issue like village cleanliness, by lanes and drainage system, village parks, village Chaupal and other necessities is all because locals are no longer availing these facilities. The field survey also observed that the schools, health centres, public hand pumps, public toilets facilities being availed by migrants are purportedly neglected as majority of local residents do not avail these facilities. The block level administration turns a Nelson's eye to inadequate depilated social amenities as the local villagers no longer need and demand. This is gross injustice and denial of fundamental rights to the rural citizenry It is a strange paradox wherein migrants brings vibrancy to rural economic and social life and prosperity to local population and on the other hand public utility goods whose availability to all is the sole responsibility of local government are utterly neglected as local no longer require and migrants who want to avail these are deprived of these essential services.

### 5.3. Sociocultural Fabrics: Vibrant and Lively

The people from different states brings with them different custom, belief and values. The migrants are also influenced by the social culture of the village. The intermingling of cultural and integration of community's inculcates vibrancy and fervour in the village life. Increasing travel expenses and higher opportunity cost of being away from the workplace for many days deter the people from going to the native places and they celebrate common festivals and family functions at the village itself. Industrial and commercial establishments and developers also encourage them to stay through extra bonuses, gifts and festivals fairs and parties at the workplace during festival seasons. The round the year celebrations on religious festivals, family functions and other activities

usher in new cultural of community participation and becomes a direct and indirect source of temporary employment for labourers for arranging paraphernalia on these festive.

#### 5.4. Political Landscape: Consciousnesses and Rights

Migrants working in industrial projects or in informal sectors for long time now becomes aware and understand the benefits of political empowerment and political patronage. They now want to participate and contribute in local politics. However, their political involvement and benefits from various government welfare schemes depend on their landlords. Permanent settlers are entitled for being registered voters. During the field survey it was found that they become voters only when local landlord wishes and facilitate the process. The district election office while doing annual survey also involves Panches (Members, village Council) of Gram Panchayats in this vote making process. Once they become registered voters they do feel that should be involved in the decision making processes at the Gram Panchayat level as most of the issues now concern them only as original inhabitants have either moved or are indifferent towards these issues. They find that they are being ignored and they have no say in the development process and are political outcast. In none of the village surveyed the migrants could find their nominations for membership of panchayat. Another important issue is that the families which are settled in city still hold the post of sarpanch(Head, village Council) directly or indirectly through proxy candidates by nominating woman from the family or nominating a person from weaker section when there is reserved seat. During the election time migrants are being approached by different faction who tries to entice them by promising various benefits. The election scenario becomes fearful and these settlers are not able to exercise their franchise fearlessly and wilfully. Their political exclusion enfeebles their power in decision-making. The amenities and infrastructures remain inadequate and inefficient adversely effecting quality of life and hence productivity.

## 6. Conclusions

Changing rural demographics need to be leveraged for transforming villages in to productive, progressive and prosperous entities. Depriving migrants of basic amenities and denial of political right is social injustice. Block level officials and peoples' representatives at all levels should be hold accountable for any injustice and denial of fundamental rights .There is need of proper counselling and training to members of Gram Panchayats to make them understand that this diversity due to migration is a source of opportunities, vibrancy and economic prosperity of the villages. The block development office should involve the NGOs in training and counselling the members of gram sarpanches. The gram penchants need to explore innovative inclusive strategies for involving all in strengthening democracy at the grass root level so that settlers also participate in the decision making process and social harmony prevails. The local village community should be motivated for giving the settlers representation in the Gram Panchayat. The block development officers has a pivotal role for providing a platforms for dialogue between settlers and locals for collaboration and cooperation for preparing and implementing plans to leverage rural diversity for rural development and prosperity. Recognising, empowering and involving permanent settlers in the villages is linchpin for inclusive and equitable society through practising participatory democracy at the grass root levels. There is need to focus on mainstreaming the migrants through involving them in democratic process. The survey noticed instances of local hegemony and choice of migrants suppressed. The migrant people who are now permanent residents are always under constant fear and their safety and honour always at stack. The polarisation of rural communities on the basis of origin need to be subdued and leveraged for inclusive progress and prosperity

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