

Interstate migration and linguistic dispersal to the Indian urban centres

Anirban Barman

Research Scholar, Kalyani University

Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Brahmananda Keshab Chandra College, Kolkata

Abstract: *This article seeks to examine one significant dimension of internal migration in India, i.e. inter-state migration. Among the various migration streams, interstate migration has a chequered history and is consequential in terms of its sociocultural impact. Such migration across the Indian states got impetus in the colonial period and has continued in the post-colonial period. It has been more seminal in affecting the Indian urban society than the rural. It is the urban centres, particularly the state capitals along with other industrial cities which are affected by multiple waves of interstate migration. The migrating populace has been heterogenous in ethnic and class composition and has exhibited historical continuities.*

Key Words: Mobility, Linguistic Dispersal, Linguistic Return, Urban Agglomeration, Pluralistic ethos

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I. INTRODUCTION

There are various migration streams operating within a nation state. Diverse types of migration streams comprise inter-state migration, intra-district & inter-district migration. People migrating throughout the country constitute both short term & long term population movements. Population mobility in India occurs across the districts, within the districts & across the states. Among the various migration streams, movement of people across the states known as interstate migration has considerable significance. It is more consequential than other two forms of internal migration. The pattern of interstate migration in India depends on differential regional disparities in development. The process of “immigration & outmigration” across different states is associated with the purpose of establishing a new permanent or semi-permanent residence. Among the migrants, there are those who migrate from their place of birth to a new destination but do not settle there. They return to their place of birth. Then there are those who migrate to a new destination, for instance from one state to another and permanently settle there. Though they maintain connection with their place of birth but do not revert back to their old place. This second stream of migrants constitute permanent migrants from other states.

II. METHODOLOGY

The continuous process of interstate migration in India, particularly its urban dimension has been examined and interpreted on the basis of consecutive Census data on language i.e. linguistic returns pertaining to different scheduled language speakers spread across Indian states. The statistics regarding diverse mother tongues recorded in the Census operations have been compared and synoptic view of the migration history of the state capitals and urban centres has been provided.

Migration across States

Census data regarding migration is on the basis of place of birth or place of last residence. Apart from the nature of migration i.e. administrative boundaries crossed, duration of stay of migrants is crucial. The phenomenon of migration always prevailed in India in one form or another but it was accelerated during the colonial phase of Indian history. People migrating from one province to another tend to migrate to cities & mega cities of another states. Now the issue of defining migrants is a complicated one. As revealed from the 1961 census there is considerable mobility in India. People who are interstate migrants are mainly attracted to the urban areas of other states. The data on spatial movement of persons between the states based on crossing geographical/administrative boundaries is provided by census. In India *the place of birth and place of last residence* provides data on the spatial aspects of movement, while duration of residence provides data on the temporal aspects of migration. Quite significantly, Census data on languages or linguistic returns for the whole of India brings out the extent of linguistic dispersal which means the proportion of persons speaking a particular language residing outside the home state (where it is the main language) out of the total number of persons in

the country as a whole speaking that language (*Bose & Bhatia,1980,p.202*). All the states in India experience or witness in-migration from other states. In most of the cases immigrants move in from the neighbouring states. But states with big cities & mega cities gain a lion's share of in-migrants both from neighbouring and distant states. The flow of migrants to million plus cities mainly constitute the flow of immigrants across different states.

In a federation & multilingual state, each of the provinces is known for a particular linguistic group. Now when a linguistic group migrates to other states it is considered as a linguistic minority in the destination state. Taking into account the data on mother tongues provided by Indian census enumeration we can arrive at the magnitude of linguistic dispersal across the country during the last two centuries. An incisive study of linguistic returns in all the provinces of India can reveal the numerical strength of the linguistic groups across provinces. The state wise figures of linguistic returns vividly express the extent of linguistic dispersal through interstate migration in various states. This linguistic dispersal means the proportion of persons speaking a particular language residing a particular province getting distributed in other neighbouring and remote states. Interstate migration follow a spatial pattern with immigration witnessed predominantly by major and minor industrial urban concentrations like Calcutta conurbation, Bombay-Thana-Poona industrial complex, Gujrat plain & Saurashtra, Western districts of Maharashtra, western Tamil Nadu, and dispersed industrial districts, such as Delhi, Kanpur & Bangalore (*Kosinski & Prothero,1975,p.202*). Apart from the magnetic impact of the industrial areas which witnessed immigration, development of tea, coffee, rubber plantations and mining areas have led to influx of migrants. The growth of new industries & surge of job opportunities accelerated the migration of different linguistic groups to other linguistic regions. It is significant to point out that every linguistic region possess an ethnic identity which is manifest and the migrant groups to that region attain minority status as ethnic & cultural barriers remain persistent & insurmountable (*Punekar,1974,p.30*). This can be attributed to the development of ethnicity at the linguistic regional level and the historical development of regional languages. The linguistic regional ethnicity is more pronounced in case of linguistic groups who have migrated to other regions. For instance the Marathi speaking groups in the southern Dravidian speaking states or in the predominantly Hindi or Gujrati speaking regions as a language group share their ethnic identity with the Marathi speaking people of Maharashtra & elsewhere. In other words, as a linguistic group, they belong to one culture area (*Ibid.:35*).

There is considerable internal migration which encompasses interstate migration in India with a third of the population has moved at least once and over a tenth has moved during a decade. A section of the *interstate migrants* (migrants moving internally among the states) who permanently settle in their destination of migration represent diverse streams of linguistic dispersal. All the states have their share of interstate migrants who are mostly settled in the urban areas where the population has increased from 25.85 million to 377.10 million in the last 110 years (*Rao et al,1991*). People from the economically backward states gravitate towards the developed states. Though all the states contribute to the process of outmigration and immigration, some states have a disproportionate share. Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, witness outmigration of people to other states. On the other hand Maharashtra, Gujrat, West Bengal, Delhi, Western Uttar Pradesh, Haryana & Punjab witness immigration from other states. Though among the various streams of internal migration, the share of interstate migration is 12%, the consequence of linguistic dispersal is very crucial or remarkable (*Dey,2019*). The state wise distribution of persons by mother tongue in different states of India showcase the numerical strength of linguistic groups who have migrated from one province to another from the inception of Indian Census enumeration. Therefore the analysis of language data in each of the provinces can lead us to statistics regarding interstate migrants. According to 1961 census, among the linguistic groups, the Punjabis have the highest proportion of interstate migrants and Assamese have the lowest (*Bose & Bhatia,1980*). In other words the extent of interstate migration among the Punjabis is such that 2.6 million Punjabi-speaking persons were enumerated outside Punjab (*Ibid.*). With the passage of time the Hindi linguistic groups have become the largest outmigrating section of the Indian population. Total strength of the Hindi speaking population currently is more than 52 crores, out of which more than 3 crores(6.86%) are distributed outside the Hindi belt stretching from Himachal Pradesh to Chattisgarh and Rajasthan to Bihar (Census,2011). Among the major linguistic groups, Assamese and Kannadigas have the lowest proportion of interstate migrants. Hence Assamese and Kannadiga speakers have very low rates of linguistic dispersal.

Table 1 Linguistic Dispersal to Major States of Immigration (2011, 2001)

	Hindi	Bengali	Gujrati	Punjabi	Oriya	Telegu	Tamil	Malayalam	Urdu
MAHARASHTR	14481531 (10681641)	442090 (310137)	2371743 (2315409)	280192 (269309)	139241 (93990)	1320880 (1405958)	509887 (527995)	366153 (406358)	7540324 (6895501)
GUJR	4264868	79648		63288	183549	73568	40072	64998	479206

AT	(2388814)	(40780)		(55810)	(122421)	(68743)	(37092)	(67838)	(550630)
HARYANA	22322157 (18460843)	70948 (39199)	7519 (5734)	2400883 (2234626)	12806 (10932)	9831 (6248)	12658 (10207)	14518 (13989)	374353 (260687)
DELHI	14255526 (11210843)	215960 (208414)	40613 (45145)	873447 (988980)	37645 (29178)	25934 (28067)	82719 (92426)	88662 (92009)	867673 (874333)
KARNATAKA	2013364 (1344877)	87963 (41256)	114616 (102195)	25981 (15572)	64119 (16529)	3569400 (3698657)	2110128 (1874959)	774057 (701673)	6618324 (5539910)

If we look at the **linguistic returns** for each of the provinces in India and compare the figures of last two Census, i.e., 2001, 2011, we can arrive at the fluctuating figures of interstate migration in each of these provinces. For instance let us highlight the linguistic returns for the top 5 migrant pulling states. The linguistic returns from **Maharashtra, Gujrat, Karnataka, Delhi and Haryana** reveal that there is higher rise in migratory population to these states from other states during the previous decades (Census 2001, 2011).

Interstate migrants tend to gravitate towards the largest urban agglomerations in India as in most of Third world nations. Historically, people move from backward underdeveloped regions to developed & prosperous areas reflecting regional disparities, spatial disorganization & assymetric regional development. India has witnessed this phenomenon since the colonial times. It is those states which are lagging behind in development parameters which experience heavy outmigration i.e, they create more interstate migrants. According to Spengler & Myers, migration serve to reduce disparity between communities or regions in different stage of development (**Spenglar & Myers, 1977**). But this phenomenon is complex as migrant groups seldom get integrated with the local population and migration often gives rise to sociological issues. Scholars working on internal migration have highlighted the role of immigration in promoting the growth of million plus cities and emphasized on the genesis of immigration.

For instance, a study of migration to Mumbai by D.P.Singh (2007) has shown that in the last five decades, migration increased from other states as compared to migrants from Maharashtra. There has been a spurt in migration from the North Indian states particularly Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan & Madhya Pradesh (**Kumar, 2013**). In another study on Pune, V.P.Khairkar (2008) has highlighted urban growth of Pune and the effect of immigration on it. Migrants to this city hail from all the states but chief source states were Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala & Rajasthan (**Ibid.,p.85**). According to data provided by 1991 & 2001 census the millionplus cities received more than 30 percent lifetime migrants. Nine cities Greater Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Bangalore, Pune, Surat, Chennai, Ahmadabad & Hyderabad had received more than a million **lifetime** migrants. The share of interstate migrants were large not merely in mega cities but also in small industrial cities. Along with mega cities such as Delhi UA, Greater Mumbai UA, Kolkata UA, smaller cities such as Faridabad (76.6%), Jamshedpur UA(73.9%), Dhanbad UA (66.5%), Surat UA(46.4%), Asansol UA (44.4%) have large share of inmigrants from other states. The million plus cities have 35% of their population as interstate migrants. It is worthwhile to mention that not only metropolitan cities of Delhi, Mumbai & Kolkata have large share of interstate migrants but industrial cities of so called backward states like Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh are host to large number of interstate migrants. For instance, small industrial cities like Jamshedpur(73.9%), Dhanbad(66.5%), Bhopal(39.7), Jabalpur(39.1) have high share of interstate migrants (**Ibid.,p.87-90**). These means that even the smaller cities witness high rate of linguistic dispersal on account of interstate migration. Therefore not only cities of industrially advanced states like Maharashtra, Gujrat, Haryana attract interstate migrants but also states lacking in overall economic development attract migrants from other states.

The colonial metropolitan centres of Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai were those urban centres which witnessed the ‘Great Indian Migration Wave’ comprising labour and mercantile migrations (**Tumbe, 2018**). It was a colonial phase in the migration history of Indian working class, commercial class and the professional class which led to the surge of urbanism marked by pluralistic ethos and multiculturalism. This was succeeded by postcolonial migration waves driven by rise of commerce and new industry in Ahmedabad, Bangalore and Hyderabad. Like the southern state capitals, Ahmedabad has witnessed a spike in interstate migration in the last three decades driven by the textile, pharmaceutical, engineering industries and booming construction industry. In almost all the districts of Gujrat including Ahmedabad there has been a spurt in the linguistic returns of Hindi along with other scheduled languages in the last Census which testifies to the increasing migration from neighbouring Hindi states (**Srinivas, 2018**). It was the growth of electronics and software sector in the early 1980’s in Bangalore and Hyderabad in the early 2000’s which has been the pull factor for the immigration of skilled workforce from other parts of India. With the surge of these sectors, there was consequent surge in the tertiary sector, particularly the informal service sector. It is quite natural that demand for skilled labour promotes the necessity of unskilled labour in the process. The Census linguistic return figures since 1991-2001 decade

have shown continuous increase in the number of Hindi speakers in the southern states of Karnataka, undivided Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. It only reveals the southward migratory trend from the Hindi Heartland. A demographic trend of high economic growth and low population growth in the southern states have provided impetus to the immigration from Northern states (*Ahmad, 2018*).

There are varying trends even among the rising and resurgent capital cities of the Southern states. It has been witnessed that despite being state capitals and high tech cities, Hyderabad(16%) and Chennai(18%) have lower share of interstate migrants according to 2001 census. But demography of Bangalore indicates that it has a high share of interstate migrants partly associated with its rise as an IT (Information Technology) hub (*Kumar, 2013*).

Table 2 Interstate Linguistic Minorities in The Provincial Capitals & Large Cities (2011)

CITY	AHMEDA BAD	MUMBAI	KOLKATA	BANGALOR E	HYDERAB AD	CHENNAI
Native (Regional)	3857222 (69.15%)	4403997 (35.40%)	2763291 (61.45%)	3574226 (42.33%)	4093615 (60.11%)	3640389 (78.34%)
	Gujrati	[Marathi]	Bengali	Kannada	[Telegu]	Tamil
Hindi	1232387 (22.09%)	3598542 (28.92%)	1027137 (22.84%)	476673 (5.64%)	444474 (6.52%)	159474 (3.43%)
Punjabi	19775 (0.35%)	111098 (0.89%)	15913 (0.35%)	15777 (0.18%)	13399 (0.19%)	2783 (0.05%)
Urdu	195464 (3.50%)	1459412 (11.72%)	586234 (13.03%)	1104124 (13.07%)	2060571 (30.25%)	198505 (4.27%)
Gujrati	–	1428091 (11.48%)	25667 (0.57%)	44457 (0.52%)	32066 (0.47%)	31984 (0.68%)
Telegu	12131 (0.21%)	202475 (1.62%)	5330 (0.11%)	1166298 (13.81%)	–	432295 (9.30%)
Tamil	17273 (0.30%)	294769 (2.36%)	6508 (0.14%)	1388305 (16.44%)	75912 (1.11%)	–
Malayala m	18522 (0.33%)	120938 (0.97%)	4434 (0.098%)	268780 (3.18%)	26219 (0.38%)	104994 (1.24%)
Bengali	15110 (0.27%)	141241 (1.13%)	–	55128 (0.65%)	18209 (0.26%)	7741 (0.16%)

CITY	Ahmedaba d	Mumbai	Kolkata	Bangalore	Hyderabad	Chennai
Marathi	112820 (2.02%)	–	1905	174451 (2.06%)	107377 (1.57%)	17893 (0.38%)
Odia	3612 (0.064%)	51803	26158	39121 (0.46%)	21719 (0.31%)	3921 (0.084%)

Table 3

CITY	BHUBANESWAR	GUWAHATI	THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
<i>Regional</i>	780025 (92.48%)	556258 (58.10%)	722879 (75.47%)
	[Odia]	[Assamese]	[Malayalam]
Hindi	26252 (3.11%)	137508 (14.36%)	3519 (0.36%)
Gujrati	1147 (0.13%)	614 (0.06%)	203 (0.02%)

Bengali	17718 (2.10%)	196570 (20.53%)	1009 (0.10%)
Punjabi	1413 (0.16%)	4009 (0.41%)	112 (0.01%)
Tamil	587 (0.069%)	416 (0.04%)	26712 (2.78%)
Telegu	24816 (2.94%)	5073 (0.52%)	2343 (0.24%)
Urdu	16100 (1.81%)	376 (0.039%)	467 (0.048%)
Malayalam	700 (0.082%)	807 (0.084%)	–
Marathi	387 (0.045%)	749 (0.078%)	482 (.05%)
Oriya	–	1501 (0.15%)	291 (0.03%)

Calculated from C-16 Population By Mother Tongue–Town Level
https://censusindia.gov.in/2011census/C-16_Town_html & www.census2011.co.in>city

Moreover being an ancient city existent since the chola period, Bangalore became a historical multilingual city with a large share of Tamils(16.44%), Telegus(14%), Malayalam (3.18%) apart from the Kannadigas (42.33%) (*Census Language data,2011*). Thus multilinguistic culture evolved as Bangalore gained migrant population from precolonial period. It has to be pointed out that with the rise of software industry and the growth of private higher educational institutions there has been a quantum leap in the out-of-the state immigration to Karnataka’s capital. The spate of migration from other states have led to demographic changes such as surge in working age group population in Bangalore(*Hindu BussinessLine,2013*). According to the statistics revealed by last 2011 census, most of the interstate migrants to Bangalore are from neighbouring states such as Tamil Nadu (5.2 lakh) and Andhra Pradesh(3.6 lakh). What is significant here is that among the Tamil and Telegu linguistic migrants, a section of them are permanent settlers who have been residing in the city for generations. Interstate migration is not only confined to neighbouring states as distant states like Rajasthan which contributed a vital segment of the migrant population in the last decade. The last census enumerated more than 80 thousand Rajasthanis (a 50 % rise from previous census) in Bangalore out of which around 10 percent came for commercial purpose (*Times News Network,2019*).

The city of Hyderabad has a fair share of linguistic groups such as Kannadigas (0.92%), Marathis(1.57%), Tamils(1.11%) and people (6.52%) from the Hindi speaking states who constitute the largest linguistic minority from other provinces. Telegu and Urdu are, historically the largest spoken languages in the capital Hyderabad and the states of Telengana and Andhra Pradesh. The extent of linguistic dispersal in undivided Andhra Pradesh can be understood from the proportion of speakers of Telugu which is around 84%. That is to say, rest of the speakers speak non-Telugu languages and thus constitute 16% of the state population(*RBI,2018*).

Among the colonial metropolitan cities, Chennai has the highest proportion of speakers who speak the local language i.e. Tamil. Apart from the Tamils whose share in Chennai’s population has steadily increased from 61.2% in 1901,76.7% in 1991, & 78.34% in 2011, there are several other linguistic groups like Telegus (9.30%), Urdu (4.27%), Malayalam (1.24%) & Hindi (3.43%) (*Census,2011*). As far as southern metropolitan city Chennai is concerned, high share of Telegus in Chennai can be attributed to the inclusion of Telugu speaking areas in erstwhile Madras Presidency. The share of Telugus in Chennai’s population was21.3 in 1901 but it fell to 10.5 in 1991 on account of mass migration of Telugu speakers from the city upon the formation of Andhra state in 1953. Whereas the share of Telegus have gone down, the share of Malayalam speakers & Hindi have increased from 0.2 (1901) to 1.24% (2011) and 0.3 (1901) to 3.43% (2011) respectively. Therefore among the speakers of Dravidian language from neighbouring Kerala, there are 104994 Malayalam speakers in Chennai. As far as people from neighbouring Karnataka is considered, there are very few Kannada speakers (22,124) in Chennai. But it is more in comparison to other urban centres like Thiruvananthapuram, Cochin, Mumbai(*Census,2011*). As far as migrants from upper India is concerned, speakers of Hindi language were very few 100 years back. According to 2001 census, the number of Hindi speakers were 103,813 out of 4,343,645 Chennai residents which is just 2.39% of the total population. This is a substantial increase from 1901 census figures when the Hindi speakers were just 0.3% of the total population ,i.e. 1528 speakers. But according to the last 2011 census, the Hindi linguistic group have reached a total of 159474. It is Tamil Nadu with its

capital at Chennai which witnessed consolidation of linguistic nationality identity buttressed by the anti-Hindi movement. But despite the linguistic chauvinism of the Tamils & antagonism against the Hindi Speakers, migration from Hindi belt never lost its momentum.

Given the extent of Indian social heterogeneity, migration across states or interstate migration creates the problem of outsiders. Ever since first census was conducted in 1872 in order to trace internal movement of people within India, a question on migration, based on place of birth is included. The distribution of speech communities in India shows that a lion's share of its population live in the states in which they are born. The circulation of human population in India predates colonial times and what is crucial is that migration received impetus during the colonial period with significant transfer of linguistic groups across various linguistic-cultural regions of India. This migration across regions which are perceived to be different crystalizes the insider-outsider dilemma. Studies regarding migration have shown that Indians living outside the province or state of birth in 1931 was 3.6 percent compared to 22.4 percent in U.S.A. (**Bhagat,2013**). But this has changed a lot after independence with the acceleration of the process of urbanization and industrialization. According to the 2011 Census, around 11.91% (5.43 crore) had migrated from one state to another (**Yadav, 2019**). On account of uneven development of the linguistic-nationalities of India under the impetus of colonial capitalism, migration is inevitable. Ever since the inauguration of the Indian Republic in 1950, the process of migration of linguistic groups to other states in search of livelihood has been hastened. Migration across states have made the issue of identity and cultural cleavages more conspicuous irrespective of the forces of modernization. According to Murphy, there is a dualistic approach of economic cooption and social denigration towards the migrant groups (**Abbas, 2016**).

It is evident that provincial capitals along with small industrial towns have attracted interstate migrants in the postcolonial phase with a renewed vigour. But at the same time some capital cities like Bhubaneswar, Thiruvananthapuram, Guwahati have witnessed lesser interstate migration in comparison to others. Many cities such as Vadodara, Surat, Pune, Dhanbad, Indore have drawn high proportion of interstate migrants than the aforementioned capital cities (**Kumar, 2013; Census,2011**). Large scale migration among different social & ecological zones of a single nation is consequential in terms of social change. The Census of India places stress on the mother tongue which is spoken at home. Every person who is a temporary migrant or a permanent migrant is asked about his or her mother tongue. Irrespective of the fluency in other languages, the person's mother tongue is recorded (**Seetharaman, 2019**). It has been found that immigration over many generations can also affect the socio-political scenario of a particular area or region. There is sharp rise in the decennial growth rate of migration from 9% between 1941 & 1951 to 34% between 1951 & 1961 on account of rural push & urban pull factors(**Rao et al,1990**). This is a major demographic trend with socio-political consequences which has attracted scholarly interest.

III. CONCLUSION

The movement of people across Indian states from rural & urban areas to urban areas of another state is expected to lead to disintegration of old loyalties and the inculcation of pluralistic values. It is through migration across the states that avenues of cross-cultural linkages are opened up. People belonging to diverse ethnolinguistic communities have migrated to different linguistic regions for generations driven by socio-economic reasons. Investigation into socio-political consequences of interstate migration has been an emerging field since the 1960s. There are several networks of migratory flows to different cities & towns, which have engendered different patterns of linguistic dispersal throughout India.

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