

Migration in Pursuit of Education: Challenges and Barriers

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Abstract

Education is crucial in enhancing an individual's quality of life and fostering contributions to social welfare. The process by which a person has brought about significant positive changes in society is education. Geographically speaking, migration appears to be necessary for humans of all ages. Since, human beings tend to leave the areas where life is difficult, they migrate to the places where life may be easy and better. From ancient times to the present, migration and society have had close relationships. Migration is a term that is usually associated with work or employment, especially in a developing country like India, where colossal migration occurs within the state. However, another type of migration occurs, which is migration for education. Students move from one place to another in search of high-quality higher education because it imparts knowledge and skills through primary education, elementary education, adult education, higher education, vocational education, personality development education, etc. Even though the "Right to Education" is now a Fundamental Right in India, not everyone has the opportunity to attend school and be educated in their area or locality. Ambedkar also said, "Education is something which ought to be brought within reach of everyone." One of the main drivers of migration in search of education is the unequal distribution of population and educational infrastructure and a lack of access to high-quality education. Its roots are so deep that it is impossible to make a change overnight; a long journey must be planned for this successful education system in the country. Migration for education is now becoming a trend for students, and family members agree with their children's education because education has become as important as food, clothing, and shelter. Migration occurs in large numbers, and when students migrate to different locations, they face various emotional, social, psychological, or physical challenges. This paper mainly focuses on the problems students face due to migration for education.

Keywords: Migration, Education, Problems, Challenges

Introduction

It appears that humankind has always needed to migrate, as migration is a geographical occurrence. Since man tends to leave the areas in which life is difficult, he migrates to the places where life may be easy and better. From ancient times to the present, migration and society have had close relationships; if there was a migration process, society faced problems. As a result of human migration, society faced several challenges, including health, cultural, and, most notably, educational issues. If migrations did occur, it was usually for one of two reasons: either individuals were forced to relocate by artificial or natural calamities (such as persecution for holding opposing political or religious beliefs) or because economic opportunities appeared to be better in other areas (Dustmann & Glitz, 2011). One of the most critical global concerns is migration, a constant activity that has sparked political discussion worldwide. Migration has continued to grow higher. People left their homelands either voluntarily because of economic crises or were forced to leave because of distress in their country. Migration is a term that is usually associated with work or employment, especially in a developing country like India, where colossal migration occurs within the state. The recent pandemic has given us a scenario of migration where people are attempting to flee back to their hometowns, and governments in various states in India are struggling to provide transportation for migrants. However, another type of migration occurs, which is migration for education. Students move from small places to larger cities in search of high-quality higher education because it is a process of imparting knowledge and skills through primary education, elementary education, adult education, higher education, vocational education, and

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personality development education; these are imparted via teaching, training and are directly or indirectly related to their livelihood and the development of the country. Even though the “Right to Education” is now a Fundamental Right in India, not everyone has the opportunity to attend school and be educated. Its roots are so deep that it is impossible to change overnight; a long journey must be planned for this successful education system in the country.

Objective and Method

In every community where education is vital, it not only facilitates career advancement and a quality lifestyle but also aids students in cultivating their individuality and integrity, thereby fostering their development as better individuals. This paper aims to understand how students encounter various challenges and problems when they migrate from one location to another to pursue education. The paper also discusses Dr. Ambedkar’s ideas and the Indian education system to enhance the reader’s understanding of the educational framework. To further investigate, the paper elucidates various factors contributing to student migration and the challenges universities and colleges encounter.

This paper intends to have a contemplative discussion on this specific issue. Comprehensive analyses have been conducted for this work, primarily utilising secondary data from various publications, online resources, and articles from newspapers, journals, and magazines. This study examines the period from 2006 to 2022, utilising national and international journals and the government of India’s official website to provide a comprehensive understanding and analytical interpretation of its overarching purpose.

Ambedkar’s View on Education

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar made education his top priority. “I know what is the value of education”-Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. As a result, in Bombay and Aurangabad, he established the “People’s Education Society” to educate the Dalit community.

Dr. Ambedkar firmly believed that all inhabitants of independent India should have equal access to education. “Education is something which ought to be brought

within the reach of everyone.” was the fundamental educational thought of Dr. Ambedkar. He believed that education was the only way for depressed people to raise their standard of living. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar stated, “Education is the birthright of every person, and this right cannot be denied to anyone.” In his life, he also faced many milestones while pursuing a good education due to the social disparities that existed in Indian society, and he wanted to uplift the disadvantaged and downtrodden people. He thinks that everyone has a right to an education. A lack of knowledge is the reason for every inequality in society. As a result of his inspiration, Article 45 of the Indian Constitution now stipulates that all children in India must get free and compulsory education.

Education and Student

As a teacher, he comprehended the student’s thinking. He asserted that education ought to enhance students’ self-assurance and that pupils should maintain their confidence during examinations or when applying newly gained abilities. He argues that education should be obtained for one’s own improvement as well as the benefit of others. He stressed the value of education and said that students should be self-reliant in knowledge, intellect, politeness, and strict discipline in their behaviour and character.

According to Dr. Ambedkar, “Scoring high marks in exams and receiving a degree is a separate issue; being cultured, informed, and an educator is quite another. He pushed the students to “be educated, be agitated, be organised, be confident, and never give up,” which are the five principles of our lives. These five principles implore us to act, learn, and build, raising the all-important question of how we can make a better society.

Indian Education System

In the beginning, the education system in India was different than it is now. To gain knowledge, a person had to find a school or Gurukul and ask a teacher to accept him as a student. It was up to the teacher whether he would take him or not. However, if the teacher agrees to accept him as a student, he must stay with him until he has acquired sufficient knowledge from Sanskrit to mathematics and metaphysics. At the time, most learnings were intertwined with nature and life (Sasi Kumar, 2011).

The modern school system, including English, was introduced to India. The curriculum was restricted to “modern” disciplines, including science and mathematics, whereas metaphysics and philosophy were considered superfluous (Sasi Kumar, 2011). The personal engagement between educator and pupil, together with the connection to nature, diminished when education became confined to classroom environments.

In today’s world, education is one of the most important aspects of a person’s life. The three essential things formerly known as food, clothing, and shelter have been renamed food, clothing, shelter, and education. Having a formal education is essential to one’s life. When children reach the age of five, they are admitted to school with their first class, which begins in Nursery. Then, the child starts their journey of self-discovery in the school, which serves as a unit of socialisation, as well as classroom learning, which broadens the child’s horizon and leads to the everlasting realm of knowledge.

Education is divided into different stages mentioned below:

- Pre-school
- Primary/Elementary school
- Secondary/high school
- University/graduation level
- Post-graduation level.

However, according to the New Education Policy (2020), the Foundation Formula for the New School Education Structure is 5 + 3 + 3 + 4. These five years will be covered by the new curriculum: the first two years of first and second grade in school, followed by three years of Anganwadi, or pre-school. It will focus on activity learning and cover children of 3–8 years old. This way, five years will be completed, and Class 3-5 will be considered the preparatory stage. At this stage, children will gain knowledge through experiments like science, mathematics, arts, etc. Children from 8–11 ages will be covered under this stage. Classes 6–8 will be considered the middle stage. Children from ages 11–14 will cover subject-based lessons. Skill development courses will be covered at this stage. Class 9th-12th will be considered as the second stage. The freedom to choose a subject will be

provided at this stage, and in a 4-year graduation program, subjects will be studied intensively.

Reasons for Migration for Education

People migrate daily for various reasons, including economic crises, unemployment, and artificial or natural boundaries that sometimes ultimately force them to relocate. As a result, many moved abroad or inside their own country in search of a better life for themselves and their children. This education plays an important role in determining earnings in both the place of origin and the prospective destination country (Dustmann & Glitz, 2011). The rural areas of Austria have been dropping for many decades, and it has become usual practice to blame this decrease on the migration of young people owing to structural limitations, such as education and employment (Eacott & Sonn, 2006). India is by no means a fully literate nation. Historically, poor literacy and high rates of fertility have been seen in states with high concentrations of poverty, such as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Orissa. A substantial fraction of India’s population resides in these states as well. It is not unexpected that there is a dearth of higher education institutions in these states considering the challenges with access to high-quality primary and secondary education in these areas. As a result, human capital leaves the state or region (Chandrasekhar & Sharma, 2014). There are several explanations or factors why students are moving for education. The main reason that attracts students to leave their comfort zone and move to a new place is to seek better and quality education. In addition, the main reason Indian students enroll in foreign courses is to relocate abroad. Students find that research opportunities open up tremendously in good companies and better career growth. Students who return to India after studying abroad have improved job opportunities. Political turmoil and interethnic conflict compelled many to abandon their residences. Students sometimes relocate within India due to insufficient amenities in their home regions. Multiple course alternatives in developing cities or countries are one of the reasons students leave their hometowns to pursue their desired subject. Developments in the town will attract students seeking a better future or chances. The high cost of education in their hometowns causes many

students to leave their homes (Deshmukh et al., 2022). As education levels rise, so does migration to urban areas; however, migrants at the lower and higher ends of the educational spectrum typically relocate overseas.

Regional jobless rates, opportunities for skilled labour, and educational returns Cause varying expected income gains in different locations, which explains the intricate migration trend. Significant financial benefits of migration are somewhat offset by the direct and indirect migration expenses and increased education spending (for rural migrants). Rural people make educational choices based on their prospects of migrating to urban areas (Girsberger, 2017).

Migration Education in India

One of the main drivers of migration in search of education is the unequal distribution of population and educational infrastructure and a lack of access to high-quality

education. Because of this, the flow of human capital to other places is prevalent. Students migrate to different districts within the state because they believe the quality of education and facilities available are better elsewhere, particularly in urban areas. According to the 2011 census, 32,96,340 men and 21,61,216 women migrated to India for educational purposes. Of these migrants, 60.4% are men, and 39.6% are women who came for education. Based on data from the 2011 Census, Andhra Pradesh (including Telangana) has the highest number of migrants in the education sector (9,33,354), accounting for over 16% of all migrants in this category. However, 9,06,123 came from within the state, accounting for a staggering 97% of all migration (Fig. 1). Maharashtra comes next, where 7,75,062 people moved for school. Out of them, 6,48,596 people moved from within the state, accounting for almost 84% of all migrants who did so for educational reasons. Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka all follow this in the same sequence (Census of India, 2011).

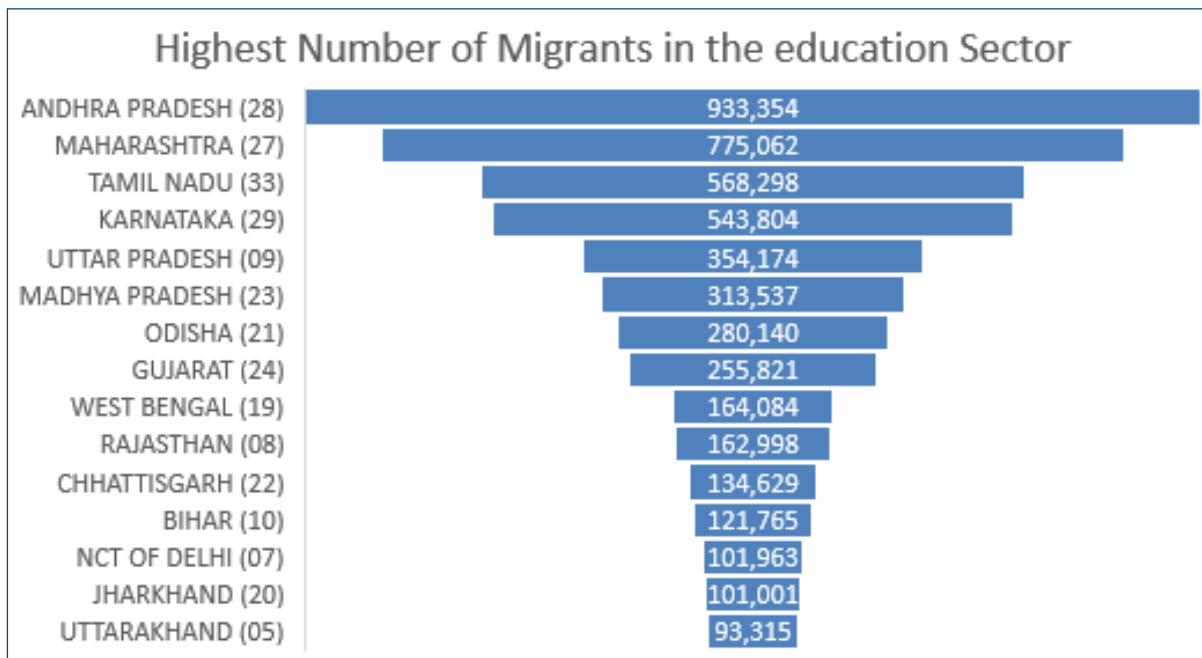


Fig. 1: 2011 Census Data (D03), The Highest Number of Migrants in the Education Sector

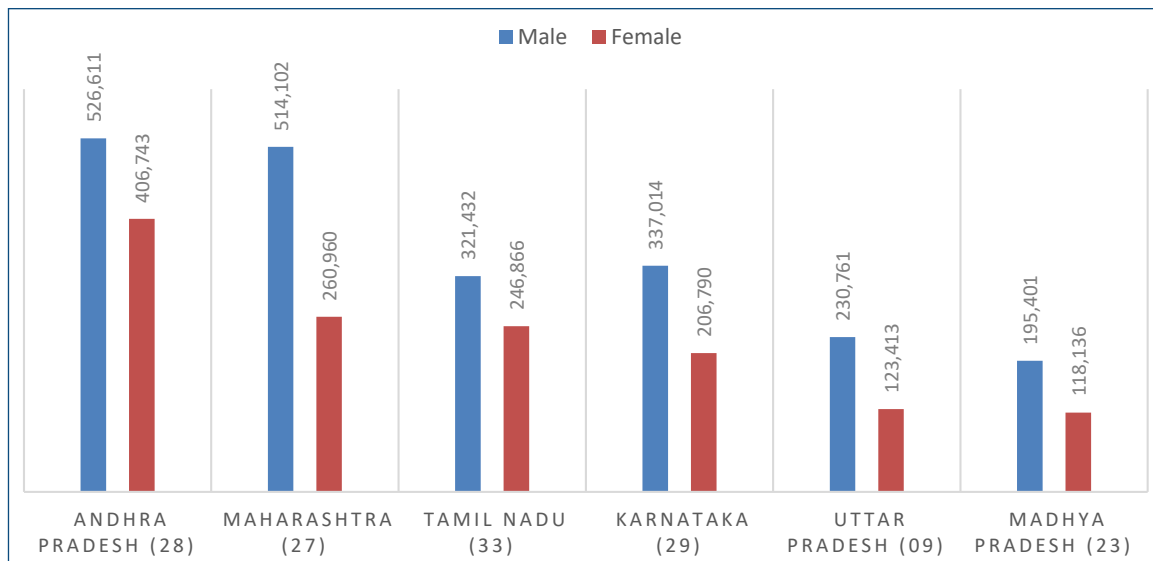


Fig. 2: Census Data 2011 (D03), Male and Female Populations from Top Five Indian States Migrating for Education

Nevertheless, the highest number of female students who relocated for education comes from Andhra Pradesh (406,743), followed by Maharashtra (260,960), Tamil Nadu (246,866), Karnataka (206,790), Uttar Pradesh (123,413), and Madhya Pradesh (118,136) Fig. 2. (Census of India, 2011). As per the 2011 census, individuals aged 10 to 19 represent a substantial portion of the total migratory population from urban and rural areas. 57.5% of migration motivations relate to education because this is the best time to pursue academic goals. In contrast, persons aged 20 to 29 constitute 24.1%. Most individuals terminate their education by age 30, resulting in a decreased possibility of employment in their field of study; hence, the percentage of adults over 30 who relocate for educational purposes is significantly lower than that of the 10–29 age group. (Pavithra, 2019).

However, not all applications can be accepted by Indian universities, especially for master's and doctorate degrees. India has only 504 universities, despite a population of over 1.3 billion, with more than 50% under the age of 25 and over 65% under 35. Given the high school dropout rate and the few available spots, admission to higher education institutions in India is highly competitive (Deshmukh & Sankpal, 2022). Another factor contributing to educational migration is the quality of education offered by Indian colleges. A few of the nation's universities merely satisfy international criteria (Abzhapparova, 2020). One issue

facing the Indian educational system is that academic institutions only provide popular STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) courses due to the lack of availability of their chosen course in India. A specific percentage of Indian students who favour unconventional routes consistently endeavour to pursue higher education overseas. Despite the availability of the course, Indian colleges lack the requisite experience and accreditation to adequately educate proficient students for further careers.

Migration for education is now becoming a trend for students, and family members also agree with their children's education because education has become as important as food, clothing, and shelter. Migration occurs in large numbers, and when students migrate to different locations, they face various emotional, social, psychological, or physical challenges.

Challenges and Problem

Many students are moving for higher education internationally and inside a single nation or state. It has been seen that many metropolitan cities have become the hub for undergraduates and postgraduate students. The primary reason for choosing a capital city like Delhi NCR is because of better college and institutional infrastructure, higher standards of living, better job opportunities, etc.

The reasons behind leaving their home state include a lack of educational institutions, a lack of desired subject options, a lack of job opportunities, etc. (Arora, 2021).

According to one of the studies, students who migrated to bigger cities are from geographically bordering states. On the other hand, Northeastern states like Manipur rank third in student migration (Arora, 2021). This migration is complex for the student because various factors are associated with education migration, such as financial hardship, personal safety concerns, unfamiliar healthcare systems, difficulty adjusting to new weather and food, and social and cultural isolation (Boral et al., 2021). They communicated worries and anxiety about how things would turn out at the new place because the change they had been going through seemed overwhelming (Altinyelken, 2009). However, state governments, like the Delhi Government, have also provided several helplines and special offices for complaints and welfare of students from the northeastern states of India.

India is diverse; we can see differences in culture, language, food, etc. However, many of the students who migrated to another state in India faced various problems, such as feeling culturally separated from their community/family or sometimes going through emotional turmoil because they had never stayed away from family; discrimination was experienced because of their caste, race, ethnicity, gender, place of origin, language, etc. (Arora, 2021). Some attributed their challenges to external reasons beyond their control, including lack of acceptance by locals, actual or perceived prejudice, and language hurdles. These obstacles impeded their prospects for enhanced engagement and involvement in the new society, both academically and within the broader community (Altinyelken, 2009). Students find language challenging because they speak the same language but have different accents depending on their origins. The living conditions of university residents are often inadequate, as they are separated from their families and homes. This is exacerbated by the pressure of coursework and the lack of easily accessible support for academic and non-academic issues (Boral et al., 2021). The students left the college because they could not follow the local language they were taught at their university, so they joined another subject they did not prefer in the local area (Biswakarma, 2015). Aside from that, one of the challenges that most students experience is not having enough pocket money,

which causes them to skip meals and choose fast food with minimal nutritional value (Boral et al., 2021). All these problems make the students much more substantial, but at the same time, they also create insecurity among themselves because of the consequences like college dropout, less activity in class, poor grades, etc. Teachers reported that migrant pupils faced two sorts of adaptation challenges: behavioural adjustment to new peers and acclimatisation to a superior educational standard, with the latter proving to be the more arduous task.

Another issue was adapting to new coursework. Language abilities, appearance, and ethnic background were all mentioned as influencing factors in the duration and nature of their adaptation (Altinyelken, 2009). Despite the impact of these factors on students' physical and mental well-being, they are able to adjust and thrive in a new environment with a solid educational system and positive learning culture.

Conclusion

Every student has different motivations for migrating, but the most common reasons are a lack of educational institutions in rural India and a lack of preferred subject selections in existing colleges and universities throughout India. Previous research has focused on many aspects of migration, education, and youth. However, migrant youth for education has gotten less attention. As Ambedkar said, *“Education is something which ought to be brought within reach of everyone.”* They failed to spread Ambedkar's idea of bringing higher education within everyone's reach. As a result of a lack of infrastructure, a lack of new courses taught in local institutions, a lack of job possibilities, and other factors, people were compelled to move for education. Many states and union territories have failed to provide high-quality primary and secondary education, and there is a shortage of higher education institutions. As a result, human capital leaves the state or region. They experience a variety of issues when relocating, including health issues, linguistic challenges, social exclusion, racism or other forms of discrimination, emotional effects, academic repercussions, etc. This has a variety of effects, including feelings of security, college dropouts, emotional pain for some of them as a result of prejudice, etc. After finishing their education, most students do not return to their hometown due to a lack of career possibilities. This can create family separation, emotional

distress, and disruption of social networks, especially when family members are left behind in the sending state or country. However, it impacts not just individuals or families but also rural development output. It also influences metropolitan regions, creating many issues in natural resources, facilities, and services. Therefore, the government should review its youth-related policies, make necessary changes, consider important variables like youth migration for educational purposes, and broadly execute any current youth development policies.

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