

Determinants and Consequences of Circular Migration
Case study of three sites of informal labour in Hyderabad

Final Report of a study report submitted to

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I. Introduction

I. Understanding Migration:

The migration of people to a city from the surrounding “region” has for long been considered an inevitable process in an industrial or industrializing economy. The economist Arthur Lewis attributed this inevitable process to an asymmetry in labour supply between the city (where there is a growing demand) and region (where there is a surplus of labour) and also an asymmetry in wage rates between the city's industrial sector and the region's agricultural sector. He proposed, however, that in due time the economy would attain a “turning point” where the wage rates would become uniform. This Lewisian turning point has been an important feature in the debates around migration in developing economies. India is generally considered an economy where the Lewisian turning-point has *not yet* been arrived at, but there are certain arguments emerging which state that due to certain structural features, this turning point *can not* be arrived at.

The Lewisian analysis, however, seems slightly outdated in our so-called post-industrial age. Borrowing from the discipline of geography, one can say that a turning point that *has been* witnessed is what can be called the Lefebvrian turning point, where the process of urbanization has disembedded itself from industrialization and has, in certain ways, subordinated it. As the sociologist Dipankar Gupta has said, the village is shrinking as a sociological reality in India. (Gupta 2005) The “urban” looms large in today's context. There are complex spatial differences and relations between cities and regions that influence the process of migration. There is a mixture of necessity and aspiration. These elements are recognized in the conventional economic analysis of “push and pull factors”, but these analyses eschew the particular spatial relations that give rise to these factors. In this light, it is important to seek an understanding of migration that is spatially aware.

Political economic theories that emerged in the latter half of the 20th century elaborated a theory of migration that was determined by structures of unequal development. The statement that agrarian distress is one of the major causes of migration is well established. However, the problem with both the Lewisian and the uneven development theories is that they largely view migration as a linear movement. It is increasingly apparent that despite being from distressed regions, migrants follow diverse paths of migration leading to sometimes surprisingly remote regions and they continue to

maintain connections with their places of origin. Take the case of landless labourers in Bihar for instance, they might migrate to a nearby town during the lean agricultural season, or to the higher-paying plantations of Kerala or large farms of Punjab, others go to metropolitan cities in search of non-agricultural work for longer durations, some even go out of the country. The analysis of push and pull factors isolates the “origin” and “destination” and precludes an understanding of how the choice of destination is made and disregards the predominantly circular or cyclical character of migration streams. This study focuses on the cyclical character of migration, keeping in mind firstly, that migration is most often a household decision, not an individual decision. Secondly, that it is a network of migrants related through familial, caste or religious ties that facilitates the movement and often determines the migration path. Thirdly, that a majority of migrants continue to maintain ties to their places of origin, through remittances and periodic return-trips.

II. The Economics of Migration in India:

A. The Political Economy of Migration at the Origin:

The major economic factor contributing to migration is easily identified as the lack of employment opportunities in rural areas. These employment opportunities, in turn, are related to the locational characteristics of the village in terms of drought or flood proneness of the region; the agricultural calendar of the region, i.e. whether it is irrigated and multiple-cropping is a common practice or whether it is rain-fed and mostly cultivated in one season; its proximity to a city or town, etc. It also has to do with the political economy in the village in terms of land ownership, the concentration of land in the hands of a few would give them a great deal of power and result in the control of these power elites over employment in general. But how so?

While the various communist parties in India continue to stress on the prevalence of landlordism and landed power in Indian villages, a debate has ensued over the relevance of landlordism today. The debate arose in the context of fragmentation of land through inheritance. It is believed that demography has achieved what land reform could not. However, as John Harriss points out, despite the fact that there has been a fragmentation of land, there has been little or no transfer of land to the trans-historically landless groups in Indian villages. (Harriss 2013) Additionally, a fragmentation of land means greater reliance on family labour, thus, reducing the employment opportunities for the landless in agriculture. These groups, thus, also remain deprived of access to capital. Land is an essential asset in the village. There can be two ways in which non-farm employment opportunities

can become available in villages. Either the state can provide it or the market. By market, we mean some entrepreneurial initiative in the village. But the skewed ownership of land and social power in the villages result in a fundamentally fragmented market. It is only the landed elites who can undertake such entrepreneurial activities. Thus, they would maintain effective control over non-farm employment too. In this way ownership of land continues to have strong links with power. Even state initiatives like the NREGS to provide non-farm employment are liable to capture by local powers. In many parts of the country, the landless labourers in villages are in quasi-bonded relations with powerful contractors. In Jharkhand for instance, labourers do not even have the right to manage their own NREGS job-card which is often in the possession of the contractor.

Migration away from villages has two facets. In one scenario, the labourer attempts to get away from these oppressive relations by migrating to a city. In the other scenario, it is these contractors who send the labourers on temporary migration paths. Such migration may be peculiar to specific regions, but very little attention has been paid to it. Thus far, we have spoken mostly of the landless labourer. What about the landed households which have members who have migrated?

This too has links with the political economy of land. The fragmentation of land has meant that the demand for labour on the smallholding is sometimes outstripped by the supply of labour. Also, the income generated by the smallholding is insufficient to meet the consumption needs of the household. In this scenario, migration becomes an important strategy for households. It can have two forms. Firstly, it could be a coping strategy and could help meet the consumption needs of the family. Secondly, it could be an accumulative strategy through which the household could acquire new assets and perhaps diversify its activity.

B. Migration – The Journey

There have been remarkable improvements to transport infrastructure across the country. While in an earlier time the railways were the predominant mode of transportation and people often migrated to nearby towns by foot. There has now been significant upgrading of the road network connecting different parts of the country. Public transport like buses and various other forms of para-transit such as share autos, tempos, jeeps, etc. provide sufficiently inexpensive options for people to travel over small distances. A metropolis like Hyderabad is well connected through these modes with the regions that surround it. These regions attract the largest proportion of migrants to the city, because the transport options make it very viable.

C. Economic Conditions at the Destination and the Migrants' Propensity to Save:

Another facet of migration that is getting a great deal of attention is the casualization of migrant labour in cities. This casualization is mostly seen as a consequence of neoliberal policies and the dismantling of PSUs. However, rather than considering it as a consequence of the process of neoliberalization, casualization must be seen as a strategy that is constitutive of neoliberalization. In recent decades PSUs have consciously outsourced even core functions to contractors.

Neoliberalization, then, has a dual impact, whereby people in regions are faced with invigorated threats of dispossession by private companies and the workers in the cities are either facing retrenchment or giving in to increasingly casualized modes of work. This understanding of neoliberalization forms an important backdrop for understanding migration at the present juncture and will inform some of our analyses of the data gathered in this study.

Casualization has had several drastic impacts on the lives of workers in the cities. Unstable employment which often fluctuates on a daily basis is a major consequence. Labourers wait at designated labour *addas* for contractors to come pick them up for daily-wage work. Inability to get work at the labour *adda* for women has forced some of them to engage in sex-work. For heads of the family household, inability to get work would have multiplied effects on the well-being of the family. Unstable employment also makes it impossible for the worker to save except for short-term contingencies, this means a loss of remittance for the family in the place of origin. In this context, one must be wary of romanticizing the positive effects of migration. Contractors in the city can be just as powerful as those in villages. Relations of quasi-bondage are obtained in cities too. The poor economic conditions of workers in cities has several links with the politics that defines the discourse of migration. There are complex ways in which the state and market are co-implicated in the miserable living and working conditions of migrant workers. In the next section, we will look into this politics of migration.

III. The Politics of Internal Migration and Policies Around it:

A. Anti-migrant Politics:

Notwithstanding the academic debates which have, over time, acquired new lenses to understand

migration and can deal with the complexity of the phenomenon, the policy discourse lags far behind. Policy debates still revolve around the question of whether interventions should facilitate or control migration. This paralysis in the debate on migration at the national scale has not come in the way of the politicization of migration. At the level of everyday practice, migration has been attributed an explicitly negative colour.

In most cities of India, the issue of migration has been made into a major electoral contest. The argument is that incoming migrants are a nuisance. They lead to the proliferation of slums, they steal the jobs away from 'locals' by accepting lower wages, they adulterate the local traditions and culture, etc. Political parties, irrespective of whether they claim to be secular, conservative, regionalist, or what-so-ever character, perpetuate this xenophobia for electoral gains. The migrant workers being temporary and newly-come residents are unrepresented because they are not part of the local electorate. This makes them the preferred straw man for political polemics.

Besides the xenophobic or anti-migrant everyday discourse around migration, there is the additional problem of denial of migration. Collectors of districts that are clearly witnessing massive out-migration deny the phenomenon. Similarly, city leaders misrepresent and make-up figures of in-migrants to politicize the issue. The paucity of reliable information on the process of migration has definitely contributed to the paralysis in policy debates, leading to myriad incoherent approaches to the issue.

B. Policies For Immobile Citizens:

The major drawback of policies which attempt to intervene in issues of migration is their paradoxical denial of mobility. They either treat individuals as immobile or try to create conditions under which people would somehow remain fixed. One major cause for this is the difficulty of identifying the migrants or mobile citizens, in need of state assistance, in a vast and highly populated country like India. The state has difficulty even in identifying beneficiaries in specific locations. Thus, all the schemes designed by the state require the acquisition of some document or the other which is inevitably linked to location. In the context of big cities where there has been growing xenophobia, these documents are out of the reach of migrants who arrived after certain politically decided cut-off dates.

At the place of origin, the rural areas, the state's strategy has been the NREGS. The NREGS tries to

prevent migration by providing 100 days of work at the place of origin. The World Bank has frowned upon this as a policy that deters labour mobility. It is slightly more complicated than that however, NREGS has played an important role in some parts of the country where workers have found new ways to articulate their right to work and to fair wages. The strategy therefore has to be necessarily multi-pronged, intervening at origin and destination. We must also find ways of doing this without relying on panoptical surveillance as espoused by the Aadhar programme. The solution can only be political, even with Aadhar cards, migrant workers would be deprived of benefits without the political will of the concerned political leaders.

C. Intersection of Informal Labour Markets & State Policies:

The previous sub-section has already flagged some of the policy issues relating to the informal labour market which is significantly constituted by migrant workers. Another aspect that must be taken into account is the legal provisions made for worker welfare and their implementation. While Article 19 of the constitution grants the citizens of India freedom to move across the territory of India, their mobility is constrained. The massive quanta of internal migration in the country might be valorized to look like a situation of fluid labour mobility. However, while the worker her/himself is moving, the entitlements of a worker do not. In fact, as a result of most of the employment being generated in largely unorganized, irregular and temporary work, state guarantees to workers are seeming to become irrelevant. A paradigm shift in workers' rights is imperative at this juncture. The state has tried to expand its role as an employment provider through schemes like NREGS, but in many parts of the country NREGS has become entrenched into existing adverse labour markets.

Taking stock of the observations of this and the former sub-section. The new policy paradigm must emphasize the need to provide access to affordable healthcare, PDS even to mobile citizens. There are some organizations like the Andhra Pradesh Construction Workers Board. These institutions should be made responsible and accountable for the conditions of work and work benefits of construction workers. In AP, it is known that the APCWB has received a large fund (rumours of the figure range from 200 to 2500 crores). The exact amount must be found out and appropriately spent. Another major problem with the informal labour markets is the lack of accountability of the employer towards workers' welfare. The consequence has been that workers either struggle to meet their needs and actually pay heavy prices for them or they neglect them altogether.

D. Gender, Caste and Other Categories:

Section II has already discussed the preponderance of the landless among migrants and the preponderance of historically disadvantaged groups among the landless. So-called backward and scheduled castes have been pan-historically deprived of land and have also been reserved an extremely disadvantaged position in symbolic relations of power. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar saw the village as a “den of vice”, one where there is little scope for transformation of social structures. Despite the economic hardships, migration to cities has always been a liberating experience for these disadvantaged groups. The positive outcomes of migration must therefore be considered beyond the economic realm too.

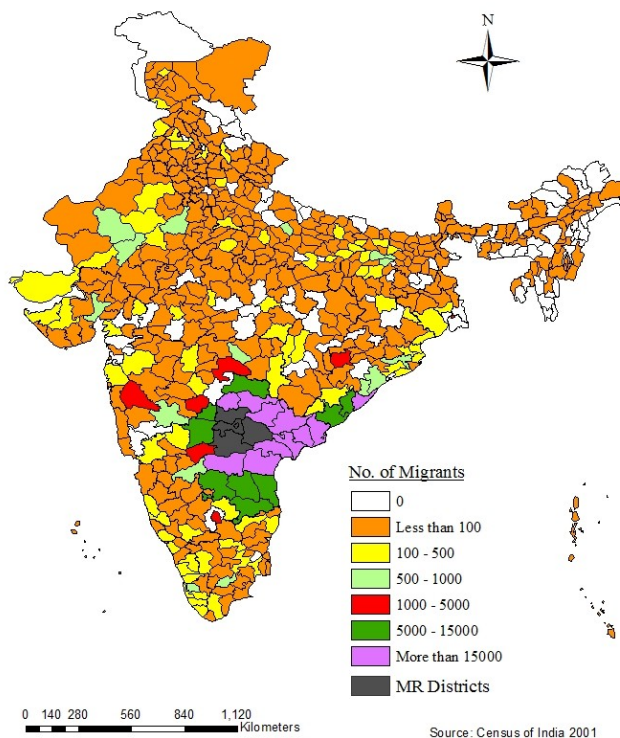
The statistics on migration show that women are the largest migrating group in the country. This migration is a result of the woman moving to the husband's house and married women migrating with their husbands. The migration of women is a highly under-studied phenomenon. In India, it is marked by remarkable lack of autonomous individual choice. Besides, women, irrespective of their caste and religious group, have been historically deprived of land and access to capital. Migrant women in India are particularly tied into various relations of dependence that are scarcely acknowledged.

The categories of NTs(Nomadic Tribes) and DNTs(de-notified tribes) have been historically mobile groups. Today, as their erstwhile ways of life become unviable, cities are the only places for them to go, having never been a part of village life. In most of the big cities of India, people from these categories are the most disadvantaged. Their capabilities are relatively poor even in comparison to scheduled castes and tribes. They mostly constitute street dwelling populations in big cities and are culturally oppressed even in cities due to their traditional reputation for “stealing” and other criminal activity. This study pays attention to the caste and gender aspect of migration. Unfortunately, the NTs and DNTs have not been given specific attention.

IV. The Present Study:

This particular study focuses on migrant workers in Hyderabad. According to an analysis of migration to Hyderabad based on the figures of Census 2001, carried out by the Center for Policy Research, seasonal migrants to Hyderabad come predominantly from the other districts in the state.

**NUMBER OF MIGRANTS TO THE DISTRICTS OF
HYDERABAD MR FROM OTHER DISTRICTS OF INDIA
(2001)**



Source: How to Govern India's Megacities: Towards much needed transformation, Centre for Policy Research

There are ways in which Hyderabad can be considered to be a homogeneous entity. It is an agglomeration of different localities, each exhibiting distinct characteristics. For this reason, the study focuses on three particular areas in Hyderabad, viz. Qutbullapur, Kattedan and Borabanda.

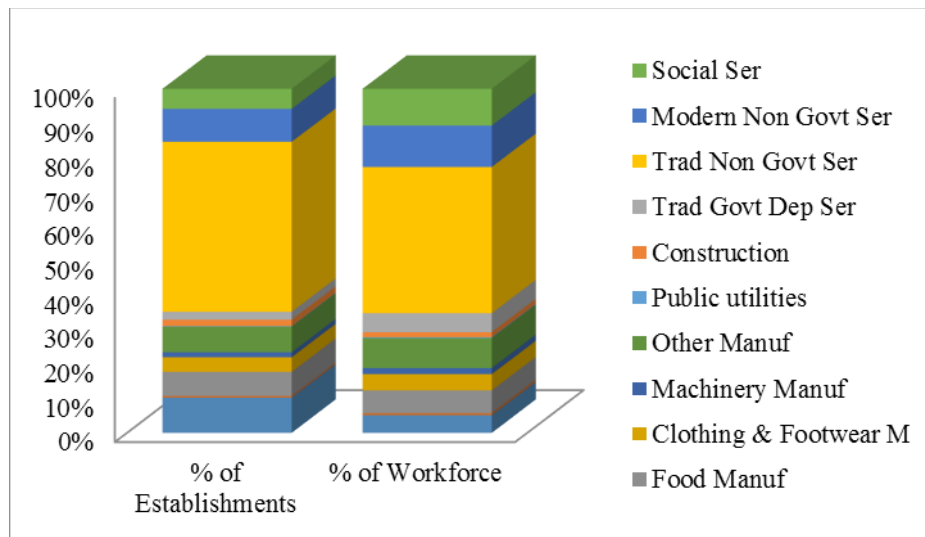


Figure 1: Breakdown of employment in Hyderabad urban agglomeration

The study comprised of a sample of 300 respondents from three sectors viz., Engineering, Construction and Services in Hyderabad. The survey was conducted in Qutbullapur, Kattedan and Borabanda. The following sub-sections provide brief descriptions of the selected study sites. In the 1980s large public and private industries declined through a process of outsourcing of their functions, this outsourced work was taken up by new SMEs that emerged along the peripheries of the city. The three study sites are all located on the peripheries of the city and the commonality between them is precisely that they consist of these small and medium industrial units that emerged in the wake of declining public sector industries and large private industries. The small and medium industries are in many cases ancillary industries and in some cases autonomous. They have given rise to a new labour force with rural ties. These small and medium units attracted investment and a large number of workers from rural Telangana. Thus, the entire process of the emergence of these small and medium industries through reinvestment of agricultural surplus, the on-going in-flow of migrant workers from surrounding rural areas and the changing urban consumption patterns are aspects of the larger dynamics of the regional economy.

A. Qutbullapur:

Qutbullapur is an area on the peripheries of Hyderabad city in the Ranga Reddy district. It is considered one of the gateways into Hyderabad. The development or evolution of Qutbullapur, however, has been closely linked to the city. When the public sector industries in Hyderabad began to drastically down-size and in some cases collapse, a lot of them started contracting their work to small units that came up, as a result, in Qutbullapur.

Qutbullapur therefore, developed as an industrial and residential area. Because the industrial units are very small, they are interspersed across the residential areas. There are some large units that undertake smelting work and have furnaces, these units too abut the residential areas. Majority of the industrial activity in the area, however, is carried out in small units consisting of 5-10 workers. These units absorb most of the in-coming migrant workers. The other major source of employment for migrants is construction activity in the expanding residential area.

B. Kattedan:

Kattedan is infamously known as the “plastic hub” of the city. It is a centre for other “dirty” industries like rubber, paint, chemicals, etc. too. The emergence of Kattedan as an industrial area began with returning mill-workers from Bhiwandi, near Mumbai. The TDP government of the time, gave out plots of land to be developed as industries. However, many of the people who set up industries suffered losses and eventually shut down and sold off their industrial units. (many of these former owners eventually ended up as workers in the sold units) Subsequently, this land was bought over by plastic and rubber industries. These industrial units attract a large number of workers from the adjacent mandals in the Ranga Reddy district. In the late 1990s, there was also a steep increase in child labour being employed in Kattedan's industries. The industries have also attracted alot of the Bihari (especially Muslim) migrants settling on the fringes of the city.

C. Borabanda:

Borabanda was an area that had a large amount of vacant land. This land was first taken over by the Andhra Pradesh Housing Board. Subsequently, some of the remaining vacant land was occupied by squatters. There are some industries that came up in the area. Majorly, some large glass factories and ancilliary industries. The most important source of employment for migrants however has been the fast growth in residential construction. Therefore, Borabanda has a mix of both industrial and construction sector casual workers.

D. Sectoral Distribution:

All three areas have migrant workers from the three sectors in different proportion. While Qutbullapur and Kattedan are industrial areas, Borabanda is primarily a residential area with a few

small-scale units and many migrant workers in construction and service sectors. Qutbullapur has more construction workers compared to other two sectors.

City	Sex	Engineering	Construction	Services	Total
Hyderabad	M	84	78	91	253(84.33)
	F	16	22	9	47(15.66)
	T	100	100	100	300(100)

The engineering sector includes a variety of tiny and small scale units employing five to 30 employees. There are also a few large units like biscuit factories and power-looms in Kattedan. Biscuit factories have several hundred workers. There are a few waste recycling units also. The service sector includes auto-rickshaws, tiffin centres, fruit juice units and street food vendors. The construction sector has masons and construction labour who work independently by getting work from an *adda* or those who work in big construction sites for a few months.

Since there was no data existing or available about the number of migrant workers and their nature of work, the sample was purposive. There is no data about how many seasonal migrant workers are in Hyderabad and what their distribution is across different sectors.

There are 100 respondents from the construction sector where the seasonal workers are employed as unskilled labour at construction sites like apartments/ multi-storied buildings in Hyderabad. Around one third of the respondents are working in small and medium size industrial units like welding, electrical, etc.

Seasonal workers in construction sector move from site to site even if they work with the same builders or through the same labour contractor. Those working in engineering sector have chances working for longer duration and settling down eventually.

V. Objectives of the Study:

The main objectives of the study are:-

- 1) to critically review the theoretical and empirical studies on temporary and circular rural to

urban migration in India with a view to develop an appropriate approach to understand the growth, structures and problems of the phenomenon,

- 2) to analyse the impact of migration on employment, income, debt and asset position of rural migrant households, and the overall development of rural economy in India,
- 3) to understand the factors that contribute to the present state of neglect and poor mobilization of urban migrant labour, and
- 4) to unravel the social, political and cultural implications of the present state of living and working conditions of the urban migrant labour based on an in-depth field study, covering a range of issues.

II. Data Analysis:

Demographic Profile of the Respondents:

Table 1: Classification of the sample by Sex and Sector of Work

	Sector		
Sex	Engineering	Construction	Services
Male	84	78	91
Female	16	22	9
Total	100	100	100

The sample consists mostly of male workers, especially in some sectors like industry, automobile industry, confectionery (biscuit factory). In contrast, construction sector has considerable number of women also. This fits in with research findings that have pointed out that rural to urban seasonal migration is mostly undertaken by males, while females constitute a larger proportion of rural to rural migration. However, it must be noted that some of the male individuals in this sample are family migrants who have brought their spouses along with them to the city. The larger proportion of females might be explained by the fact that many of the family migrants to cities engage in construction work, where the woman finds employment too. The low proportion of females in the engineering sector may be an outcome of the general tendency for industrial work to be male-dominated. The low proportion of females in the service sector might be owing to the fact that for the purpose of this study, the sample of service sector workers have been drawn mostly from individuals providing services in commercial establishments of large and minuscule size. Many studies have found that a large majority of poor women in cities are engaged in domestic work.

Table 2: Classification of respondents from various sectors of work by age category.

	Sector		
Age	Engineering	Construction	Services
Average Age	26.91	30.51	30.17
Age category			
11-20	14	12	20

21-30	66	50	41
31-40	12	27	27
41-50	7	7	8
51-60+	1	4	4

From the sample it is found that seasonal or short term migrant workers are predominantly aged below 30 years. Around two thirds of them (67.67%) are aged below 30 years. About one fifth of them (22%) are aged between 31 and 40 years, and those aged 41 and above are only about 10 percent of the total migrant workers in Hyderabad.

Aged less than thirty means they are just married and young and do not have children to take care of. For a young unmarried male, migrating to a city can also be a favourable asset in finding a suitable mate for marriage. Young migrants are an additional source of earning for their families who are under pressure to clear debts or having to prevent from getting into severe debt. Although some studies indicate that rural to urban migration is not the preferred strategy to cope with indebtedness because of the relatively high costs of living in big cities. Recent literature has focused on rural to urban migration turns out to have positive accumulative outcomes, thus also assuaging indebtedness. They often help mobilize the resources required for continuing farming in the village and undertake hardships and risks of working in alien locations without security and low wages. The final section of the data analysis will be a more elaborate account of the impact of remittances.

Age appears to be an important factor or their biggest strength to endure the challenges of working as a migrant worker. The migration of young individuals belonging to SC or OBC categories might also be a reflection of a relatively more educated youth with an aspiration to break with traditional forms of oppression in the village and make a fresh start in the cities. Despite poor working conditions in the cities, they might offer a safer and more dignified life for such individuals. Migration has been cast in a favourable light most often in this context of escaping traditional cultural oppression.

Table 3: Classification of respondents from each sector of work by level of education

	Sector		
Education	Engineering	Construction	Services

Primary	15	7	10
Middle	18	10	8
High school	17	6	16
Intermediate	4	2	6
Graduate	6	1	2
Others	3	1	0
Illiterate	37	73	58
Total	100	100	100

Most of the seasonal migrant workers are barely literate. More than half of them (56 %) are illiterate and those who studied up to primary school constitute 10.66 %. Migrant workers who studied beyond High School are a mere 7%. Seasonal migrants have no technical qualification like ITI or polytechnic.

Educational background of the migrant workers is not similar across the sectors. While little more than half of the total respondents are illiterate, they constitute 73.0 % in construction sector, followed by 58% in service sector and 37% in engineering units. Migrant workers with primary and middle school education constitute 10.67 % and 12% of total respondents. Engineering sector has slightly higher number of respondents with primary and middle school education compared to construction and service sectors. Respondents with graduation, post graduation and other qualifications are 9% in engineering sector while it is 2% in construction and again 2% in service sectors. Seasonal migrants are mostly without any formal education.

The larger proportion of males in the engineering sector might be because of a rigid occupational segregation which favours male workers in certain kinds of industrial work like in the biscuit factory or power-looms in our study sites.

Table 4: Proportions of males and females by educational qualification in the sample

	Illiterate	Primary	Middle School	High School	Higher Secondary	Higher Studies	Total
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Male	51.38	15.02	21.34	8.69	1.68	1.97	100
Female	19.15	17.02	40.4	17.02	0.42	0.21	100

The larger proportion of literate individuals in the engineering sector might seem to explain the earlier observation of fewer women in the sector. Women from poor rural backgrounds have comparatively lesser educational qualifications than their male counterparts. However, within the sample of this study, the proportions of women with middle and high school educations is greater than that of men. Similarly, the proportion of illiterate women in the sample is also significantly smaller than that of men. (Refer to Table 4.) This observation suggests that the relegation of women to do mostly construction work might be a result of some kind of employer or customer discrimination in the engineering and service sectors respectively. It might also be that most of the women who migrate to cities come with their husbands and together work on construction sites where they are also provided space to build temporary shelters.

Table 5: Marital Status of respondents in each sector of work

Marital Status	Sector		
	Engineering	Construction	Services
Married	50	72	69
Unmarried	49	21	28
Widow	0	1	0
Total	99(100)	94(100)	97(100)

About a third (32.67%) of the respondents are unmarried or single. Their unmarried or single status allows them to undertake frequent short term work in locations away from home. A possible reason for some of these seasonal migrants being unmarried could also be their age, 67.67% of them are aged below 30 years. Several among the married respondents also live alone in Hyderabad leaving their spouse and family in the native village. Risks of living with low wages in Hyderabad doesn't make it feasible for the migrant workers to live with their family here. Their aim to save some amount is not possible unless their spouse is also able to take up some work, which is not possible, particularly in the engineering sector.

Instances of both wife and husband engaged in same work, is observed in construction sector. Service sector, especially tiffin centres/ street food units, also has some workers along with their spouse in the same work.

Table 6: Workers in each sector classified by religious group

Religious Group	Sector		
	Engineering	Construction	Services
Hindu	95	95	89
Muslim	4	3	8
Sikh	1	1	1
Buddhist	0	0	1
Christian	0	1	1

A large majority of the respondents are nominally Hindu, this grouping is composed of SCs, OBCs, other castes, STs, etc. People of the other religious groups are also divided into castes but their numbers are quite small in proportion to the sample. It is interesting to note that out of the number of Muslims, albeit a small number, more than half of them work in the service sector. This might indicate some employer discrimination in the engineering and construction sectors.

Table 7: Classification of respondents from each sector by caste group/category.

Caste Group	Sector		
	Engineering	Construction	Services
ST	4	7	7
SC	24	23	14
OBC	57	59	62
Others	15	11	17
Total	100	100	100

Type of work available or taken up by migrant workers is partly also related to one's caste. More SC and ST migrants are into construction work compared to migrants from other castes. Very few SC respondents are found in service sector. Very few ST respondents are found in engineering

works, perhaps due to preponderance of illiteracy among them.

Type of work reflects hierarchy and status which has correspondence with one's caste. While respondents belonging to OC constitute 14.33 % of total respondents, they account for 11 % in construction works and 17 % in service and 15 % in engineering works. More OC migrant workers are found in services than in construction work. While respondents belonging to OBC constitute 59.33 % of total respondents, they account for 59 % in construction works and 62 % in service and 57 % in engineering works.

Respondents belonging to SC constitute 20.33 % of total respondents, they account for 23 % in construction works and 14 % in service and 24 % in engineering works. More SC migrant workers are found in construction sector and less in service sector. Tiffin centres at the study sites were a major source of employment for the respondents from the service sector. The rigid traditional conventions regarding purity and pollution with regard to food might be a determinant of the higher OC proportion and lower SC proportion in the service sector.

Respondents belonging to STs constitute only 6 % of total respondents. However, they account for 7 % in construction works and 4 % in engineering works and 7 % in service sector. Lack of education and skills, and also their tendency to migrate with their family, makes ST migrants more likely to be absorbed in construction work over other sectors. Another factor could be the relatively weaker social networks of STs in big cities like Hyderabad.

Table 8: Occupation Category (Skill) of respondents from each sector

Occupation Category	Engineering sector	Construction sector	Service sector	Total	Percentage (%)
Semi skilled	8	17	0	25	8.33
Skilled	18	1	27	46	15.33
Unskilled	74	82	73	229	76.33
Grand Total	100	100	100	300	100.00

The fact that majority of the migrants are engaged in unskilled work reflects a couple of issues. Firstly, the poor spread of education and skill training to rural India. This can be interpreted either through the lens of human capital or the capabilities approach. The effective lack of access of rural

citizens to education and skill training, greatly reduces their ability to achieve greater functionings. Secondly, the non-availability of skilled jobs, even in cases where individuals possess skills. A direct result of the breakdown of PSUs has been the capture of the job market by powerful contractors in the city. In order to get jobs through these contractors, migrants must have connections to them or information about them. For most migrants who lack adequate information or social capital, the only option is to seek a job at the labour adda, where they must take what they get. These individuals would often take up unskilled jobs just to meet their survival needs.

Migration – Origins, Causes and Sources of Information

Table 9: State of origin of respondents from each sector

State	Sector wise			Total	Percentage (%)
	Engineering	Construction	Service Sector		
AP	44	73	41	158	52.67
Bihar	14	7	10	31	10.33
Chhattisgarh	0	6	1	7	2.33
Delhi	1	0	0	1	0.33
MP	1	1	4	6	2.00
Karnataka	1	3	11	15	5.00
Orissa	25	0	10	35	11.67
Punjab	1	0	0	1	0.33
UP	13	3	16	32	10.67
Assam	0	0	1	1	0.33
Maharashtra	0	4	3	7	2.33
Pondicherry	0	1	0	1	0.33
Tamil Nadu	0	2	0	2	0.67
Rajasthan	0	0	3	3	1.00
	100	100	100	300	100.00

NOTE: AP refers to the erstwhile state consisting of present-day AP and Telangana states.

About half the migrant workers in Hyderabad are from other states. Intra-state migrants constitute 52.67 % of total respondents. Inter-state migration doesn't reflect distance or socio-cultural proximity as highest number of inter-state migrants are from Bihar (10.33 %) followed by Uttar Pradesh (10.67%) compared to only 0.67 % from neighbouring Tamil Nadu state. Bihar and UP constitute 21% while five neighbouring states like Orissa, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh

and Tamil Nadu together account for 22 %. Type of work and histories of migrant labour contract systems explain the pattern of inter-state migration in Hyderabad. Also relative degree of employment opportunities available in respective states explain the size of inter-state migration. For instance Orissa respondents are 11.67 % compared to 5 % from Karnataka or a mere 0.67 % from Tamil Nadu.

Table 10: Reasons for Migrating

	Indebtedness	Cultural Oppression	Better Opportunities	Lumpsum Money Requirement
Engineering	0	2	96	0
Construction	0	1	99	0
Service	0	1	98	1
Total	0	4	293	1

As mentioned earlier, distress migration appears to be the major factor that explains how and why of the seasonal migration. Migrant workers are economically poor and have little scope for wage labour to support their families in the villages or little hope of earning to meet cost of farming. However, a deeper understanding of agrarian distress requires an investigation of not just economic, but also cultural oppression. Although, the number of respondents who cited “cultural oppression” as a reason for migration is very small. It is noteworthy that all these respondents belong to the “BC” and “SC” categories.

The overwhelming response of “better opportunities” indicates that the importance of distress as a determinant of migration paths is augmented by an aspiration to break away from the village. The lack of non-agricultural employment options in villages is drawing people to big cities. The overwhelming response, in light of the fact that migrants maintain connections to their places of origin, also indicates that migration has become an important accumulative strategy for village households. Most prominently, the only non-agricultural work available in villages is provided under the NREGS. However, the inconsistent and often very poor implementation of the NREGS in many parts of India does not make it an effective counter-weight to the push-factors of agrarian distress and the pull-factors of urban opportunities.

Table 11: Other Reasons for Migration:

Sector	Eng	Const	Service	Total	Per
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					(%)
Higher Wages	100	99	98	297	99.00
Better Working Conditions	43	47	53	143	47.67
Safety	4	2	4	10	3.33
Easy to commute	0	1	1	2	0.67
Known people are here	6	5	5	16	5.33
Others	1	1	1	3	1.00
<i>Note: Multiple answers were allowed.</i>					

Assured employment and source of earning for a few months, which is not there in place of origin, is the most important cause for migration. Higher wages are cited as the reason for migration by 99 % of respondents. In this sense, the Lewisian analysis is still relevant in understanding migration to cities in India. The factors of surplus labour in villages and higher wages in cities are still very important determinants of migration streams. The fact that “better working conditions” are cited as a reason in a context when scholars are increasingly being alarmed at the casualized conditions of workers in the city, indicates the deplorable lack of opportunities in the villages. Concerns for “safety” which could be a reflection of caste discrimination, oppression, indebtedness is the reason for 3.33 % of respondents. Lack of employment in place of origin is the single most important reason for seasonal migration.

Although most migrants periodically return to their home village, over time the promise of steady employment outweighs the unsteady scenario in villages and these individuals or families gradually settle in the cities.

Table 12: Land ownership at origin among respondents

	Land	Semi skilled	Skilled	Unskilled	Total
Engineering	Landless	6	8	33	47
	<1			3	3
	1<2	2	4	16	22
	2<5		4	14	18
	>=5		2	8	10
	Total	8	18	74	100
Construction	Landless	6	0	40	46
	<1	0	0	1	1
	1<2	4	0	16	20

	2<5	5	1	17	23
	>=5	2	0	8	10
	Total	17	1	82	100
Services	Landless	0	17	33	50
	<1	0	0	2	2
	1<2	0	6	10	16
	2<5	0	3	17	20
	>=5	0	1	11	12
	Total	0	27	73	100

Around half (47.67 %) of the respondents are landless and find seasonal migration a better option to escape unemployment in the village. Seasonal migration to Hyderabad provides assured employment for the period they spend in the city. Those who have less upto 2 acres of land constitute 21.33 % of the respondents.

There has been a lasting debate around the adverse fragmentation of land in Indian villages. Some have interpreted the predominance of smallholdings in the light of Chayanovian theory. The Chayanovian logic for smallholdings posits that these holdings are cultivated largely by single families for sustenance without employing labour from outside. Any changes to the status quo are determined by a loss of equilibrium between what Chayanov calls the drudgery of labour and the consumption needs of the family. Some Indian scholars believe that the preponderance of such Chayanovian smallholdings across India's rural landscape make the village an unsuitable site for planning futures (Dipankar Gupta). A surplus of labour in the family, makes it a viable option to send some members out of the village as an accumulative strategy. Another possibility could be in the case of floods or drought, i.e. distress, whereby the yield of the smallholding will not meet the consumption needs of the family, thus necessitating migration as a coping strategy.

The increasing fragmentation of land and dependence on family labour also reduces opportunities for landless labourers. Thus, necessitating that they in turn also undertake migration as a coping strategy. Especially in times of distress.

Table 13: Home-ownership, house-type, electricity and water supply at place of origin

Sector	Engineering	Construction	Service	Total
HH Facility	Ownership			
Own	5	1	2	8
Rented	94	95	96	285

others	1	4	2	7
	100	100	100	300
	house type			
kutchha	61	82	43	186
Semi pucca	27	16	39	82
pucca	8	2	18	28
	96	100	100	296
	Electricity			
yes	96	99	97	292
no	4	1	3	8
	100	100	100	300
	toilet			
yes	53	31	44	128
no	45	64	53	162
	98	95	97	290
	Drinking Water			
<i>Note: Multiple answers were allowed</i>				
well	5	6	2	13
Hand pump	15	13	4	32
Panchayat	67	64	60	191
street tap	34	42	56	132
Common				
well	4	5	12	21
Others	0	0	1	1
	125	130	135	390

Most of the migrant workers do not have own house in their place of origin. As many as 95 % of the respondents live in rented house in their place of origin. About half of the respondents also don't have any land, indicating that they have no assets or resources to have any assured source of earning for survival. Many seasonal migrants have nothing holding them back or attracting them to return to their place of origin.

Houses they inhabit in their place of origin are kutchha for two thirds of the respondents. About half the respondents (52.92 %) have toilet and almost all (97.33 %) have electricity. About two thirds (65.44 %) respondents have drinking water from Panchayat water tap.

Housing and sanitation conditions in Hyderabad are relatively poorer than what they have in place of origin as there is more crowding here.

They are homeless and landless and are likely to settle down in Hyderabad or return frequently/regularly even if working conditions here are not decent or incomes being not very high. Promise of employment for a few months is the major pull factor.

Table 14: Source of information about destination for migrants

Industry	Type of worker	No.	Relatives	Friends/colleague	Media	agents/contractor	Others
	Semi Skilled	8	1	4	0	2	1
Engineering	Skilled	18	8	9	0	0	1
	Unskilled	74	20	56	1	0	0
	Semi Skilled	17	6	13	0	2	0
Construction	Skilled	1	0	0	0	1	0
	Unskilled	82	22	56	0	7	0
	Semi Skilled	0	0	0	0	0	0
Service	Skilled	27	9	18	1	1	0
	Unskilled	73	19	52	0	3	0

Seasonal migration to city is motivated by the information provided by relatives, friends, or fellow workers among 97.67 % respondents. Experiences of known people guide them to decide in favour of seasonal migration. Agents, middle men, contractors are the source of information for only 5.33 % of the respondents. Media and other sources are the source of information for 1.33 % respondents. Recent scholarship on migration has particularly paid attention to the importance of supportive social networks for migration of both the coping and accumulative variety.

Source of information from known people also provides the ‘security’ and support to contact in times of crisis for any help in the city. Once the migrant has arrived in the city, these known people continue to be sources of information and connections. They can help the migrant find shelter, healthcare, new opportunities, etc.

Table 15: Mode of migration – individual or family?

	Individual Migrant	Family Migrant
Engineering	74	25
Construction	52	47
Services	63	35
Total	189	107
Percentage	63 %	35.67 %
<i>Note: 4 non-responses have been excluded.</i>		

It has been indicated earlier that the preponderance of single migrants might be a result of the young age of the migrants. However, the above table which compares the sector of work and mode of migration indicates a different analysis. Although working in the construction site implies that the worker will have temporary housing and will be moved as and when she/he moves to a different site, the fact that housing is provided enables the worker to migrate along with her/his family. Other sectors like engineering require the migrant to work at remote factory sites and live in small tenements. This is not amenable to family migration.

Working Conditions:

Table 16: Proportion of workers in each sector hired as regular or irregular workers

Occupation Status	Engineering		Construction		Services	
	Regular	Irregular	Regular	Irregular	Regular	Irregular
Semi Skilled	6	2	17	0	0	0
Skilled	15	1	1	0	24	0
Unskilled	65	2	64	12	64	4
Total	86	5	82	12	88	4

The category of regular worker here refers to a worker who has been contracted a job for a specified period. Irregular workers are those who find daily-wage work at labour addas across the city. The labour 'adda' is a common feature across Hyderabad and draws both migrants and retrenched local workers.

The regular workers would therefore presumably have some contract or agreement with the employer. Although in most cases it is found that the agreement is oral (See table 17), thus reserving

the privilege over the contract with the employer. If the employer were to break the agreement, there is no document to prove it.

Table 17: Number of workers with and without written contracts

	Contract	No Written Contract
Engineering	29	71
Construction	51	48
Services	29	71
Total	109	190
Percentage	36.33 %	63.33 %

The replacement of permanent forms of employment by contracts has already led to a heavy erosion of employers towards workers. The additional lack of a contract makes it possible for the employer to exempt itself of any responsibility or accountability whatsoever. There are many laws that have been enacted to safeguard the welfare of migrant workers, but in the context of contracting and daily-wage work they are extremely difficult to enforce.

Table 18: Average Monthly Wage of Workers for each Sector

	Eng	Const	Services
Semi Skilled	7250	6305.88	-
Skilled	9222.22	9000	7870.37
Unskilled	6736.48	6914.63	6064.65

The above table gives details of the average monthly wage of workers of varying status across the three sectors. As it might be expected the wages of skilled workers in the engineering and construction sectors are highest, while the lowest wage goes to the unskilled worker in the service sector. In most cases these service sector “workers” are actually micro-entrepreneurs who run small business like tea or pan shops to make ends meet. In the context of India's “micro-entrepreneurs”, while there is a deal of ingenuity in their practice, the outcome is not profitable capital accumulation but only so much accumulation as to sustain the individual or family. Additionally, many of these micro-entrepreneurs get started not as a result of their “animal spirits”, but out of necessity. The difficulty of finding stable employment, compels some migrants to attempt setting up a micro-enterprise. Many of them fail and suffer losses, while those who succeed derive their

sustenance needs from their earnings.

Table 19: Periodicity of wage received by respondents

	Wage Rate	Semi Skilled	Skilled	Unskilled	Total
Engineering	Hourly rate			1	1
	Daily rate	1		14	15
	Weekly		1	6	7
	Monthly	5	16	53	74
	Piece rate	2			2
	Any others		1		1
	Total	8	18	74	100
Construction	Hourly rate				0
	Daily rate	14		41	55
	Weekly	1		20	21
	Monthly	1	1	21	23
	Piece rate				0
	Any others	1			1
	Total	17	1	82	100
Service	Hourly rate			1	1
	Daily rate		9	17	26
	Weekly			3	3
	Monthly		11	52	63
	Piece rate				0
	Any others		7		7
	Total	0	27	73	100

From the above table it is evident that the engineering sector offers the most stable job prospects to workers out of each of the three skill categories. 74% of the workers in the sector receive monthly wages, compared to merely 23% in the construction sector. In the construction sector, daily wage rates seem to be the norm with 55% of the workers receiving daily rates.

Although daily rates aggregated over the month might be slightly higher than the monthly rate, it largely deprives the worker of the ability to save. Compelling her/him to live a hand-to-mouth daily life, especially in the case of family migrants. Very little attention is being paid to this increasing tendency of casualizing labour. There are some organizations that are seeking to unionize these casual workers, but the outcomes are unclear given the power and lack of accountability of contractors and the constant inflow of migrants and thus supply of new cheap labour.

Table 20: Kind of Benefits Available to Respondents

Benefits	No. of Respondents
ESI	5
Group Insurance	4
Festival Allowance	2

Seasonal migrant workers have no allowances or benefits offered under any legislation. Benefits of labour laws don't apply to the seasonal migrant workers in any sector. Continuity of their jobs is dependent on the satisfaction of the employer. The laws also privilege inter-state migration, while a large proportion of the migrants are intra-state.

Table 21: Health-care access for respondents in the city

	Public			Private			Native Medical Practitioner		
	Engi	Const	Service	Engi	Const	Service	Engi	Const	Service
Semi Skilled	2	4	0	6	13	0	0	0	0
Skilled	10	1	15	9	0	13	1	0	0
Unskilled	50	54	48	24	30	28	2	1	0

(Some of the respondents said they were using both private and Public health centers)

The above table indicates that only 50% of the migrant workers are accessing public health centres. This can mean either that there are no public dispensaries or health centres in their locality or that they are not aware of them. About 27% of the migrant workers access private healthcare. In the context of casualization of labour, workers rarely benefit from health insurance or benefits from their employers. Most of these migrant workers are contracted temporary workers and must finance their own healthcare. Even in a sector like construction where accidents are likely.

Caste and Migration:

Table 22: Caste groups of respondents in relation to skill-category of work

Sector	Caste	Semi Skilled	Skilled	Unskilled	Total
Engineering	OC	0	7	8	15
	BC	7	8	42	57
	SC	0	3	21	24

	ST	1	0	3	4
	Total	8	18	74	100
Construction	OC	2	0	9	11
	BC	9	1	49	59
	SC	2	0	21	23
	ST	4	0	3	7
	Total	17	1	82	100
Service	OC	0	1	16	17
	BC	0	18	44	62
	SC	0	5	9	14
	ST	0	3	4	7
	Total	0	27	73	100

An interesting point highlighted by the above table is the fact that the proportion of SCs in the service sector is smaller than that in other sectors. It could be that this is an outcome of discrimination arising out of traditional norms and customs.

But the under-representation of SCs, STs and OBCs to some extent from skilled work has also to do with the fact that in their case migration was undertaken mostly as a coping strategy. Faced with landlessness and lack of access to education in the villages, and a life of labour on farms, migrants from these groups are less likely to enter skilled work in the city. Unfortunately, the barriers into skilled work are difficult to surmount in the absence of skill training or night schools, which would be an additional burden for a casual labourer.

Table 23: Land ownership among different caste groups

	Landless	Own Land	Tenant	Missed Info.
BC	88	77	2	12
SC	32	28	0	1
ST	6	12	0	0
OC	16	24	0	2
Total	142	141	2	15

The general political economy of land in relation to caste is well known. Among the respondents too this general case is somewhat evident. Among the OCs, a larger proportion of them own land as opposed to being landless. The opposite relation is obtained in the case of SCs and BCs. The landless face the harshest brunt of agrarian distress. The vast networks of migration across the

country are largely constituted by landless labourers moving from place to place. The issue of landlessness however, has never been tackled head-on by the state.

There is some evidence that migrants leaving distressed regions are able to make positive gains at the destination. However, only a specific study can affirm that in the case of SCs and STs, who continue to be the most disadvantaged groups in rural and urban India. There is no easy solution to this problem. Given that many, especially from the SC groups, migrate to escape cultural oppression, providing employment opportunities at the origin is not a solution. Providing skill training or benefits at the destination has proven to be difficult. However, in the absence of any steps to provide access to land, it is imperative that policy take into account that these categories of people are becoming increasingly mobile and their entitlements must be provided to them.

Table 24: Mode of migration among different caste groups

	Single Migrant	Family Migrant
BC	100	76
SC	46	15
ST	6	12
OC	37	4

Only among STs it is found that a larger proportion are family migrants rather than single migrants. It is likely that among OCs and BCs single migrants are able to accommodate themselves with kin or friends in the city, because their networks tend to be richer in social capital. This may, to some extent, be the case with SCs too. Thus, single migration is preferred to family migration.

Remittances – Networks:

Table 25: Distribution of Workers who send money by Remittances Categories:

	Occupation	Semi Skilled	Skilled	Unskilled	Total
Eng	No remittances	3	2	10	15
	1000-2000	3	5	34	42
	>2000-5000	2	10	29	41
	>5000	0	1	1	2
	Total	8	18	74	100
Const	No remittances	8	0	24	32

	1000-2000	1	0	14	15
	>2000-5000	6	1	40	47
	>5000	2	0	4	6
	Total	17	1	82	100
Service	No remittances	0	4	13	17
	1000-2000	0	13	15	28
	>2000-5000	0	7	42	49
	>5000	0	3	3	6
	Total	0	27	73	100

Despite their low wages a remarkably large proportion (78.67 %) of workers send remittances home from their wages. These remittances range from Rs.1000 to more than Rs.5000. Comparing this range of remittances to the average monthly wages in Table 18 shows that migrants have a capacity to save and are able to maintain connections with their origin and aid their kin there.

There are a number of studies that have tried to put a number to the amount of remittances from internal migration in India and most of them have come up with some large numbers. It is clear from this that migration in India is not simply a coping strategy but has several positive benefits. The monthly remittances could enable the education of a younger sibling, marriages, clearing debts, etc. It could also simply improve the standard of living of the relatives at the origin, thus it acts as an accumulative strategy.

Table 26: Average Remittances by Occupation:

Occupation	Engineering	Construction	Service
Semi Skilled	1250	2500	-
Skilled	2638.88	3000	2566.66
Unskilled	2428.37	2278.04	2867.12
Total	2372	2323	2786

From table 26 we can derive our own estimate of the magnitude of remittances from our sample of 300 which amounts to Rs. 7,48,100. The actual number of migrants in Hyderabad city is a much greater number. It also shows that the possibility of accumulation in the service sector is not strictly dependent on the level of skill. The reason for the average remittances from unskilled workers in the service sector being higher than the skilled workers cannot be derived from the table, but raises

an interesting question. It is also interesting that despite larger wage differentials, the gap between average remittances of skilled and unskilled workers is quite small. This might have to do with the kind of housing they are accessing, for which the differences in rent might be significant.

Table 27: Workers response about utilization of remittances amount:

	Occupation	Semi Skilled	Skilled	Unskilled	Total
Engi	Food	7	15	71	93
	Education	2	6	21	29
	Health care	7	15	68	90
	Repair of Assets	1	1	2	4
	Purchase of Other Assets	0	0	0	0
	Repayment of Debt	0	1	4	5
	Total	17	38	166	221
Const	Food	13	1	72	86
	Education	5	0	18	23
	Health care	13	1	72	86
	Repair of Assets	8	0	9	17
	Purchase of Other Assets	0	0	1	1
	Repayment of Debt	4	0	5	9
	Total	43	2	177	222
Service	Food	0	22	64	86
	Education	0	4	14	18
	Health care	0	24	65	89
	Repair of Assets	0	0	3	3
	Purchase of Other Assets	0	0	0	0
	Repayment of Debt	0	3	5	8
	Total	0	53	151	204

Note: Multiple answers were allowed

The three major uses that remittances are being put to are related to food, health and education. This starkly shows the close link that internal migration has had to human development in India. The other uses are purchase and repair of assets, thus, it can be re-iterated here, that migration has also been an important accumulative strategy.

III. Conclusion

Recognizing the non-linear nature of internal migration in India, has opened up new ways of thinking about the process. In this new paradigm, the determinants of migration are seen to encompass more than economic needs or wants. It throws into relief the peculiarities of places, cultures and their heterogeneous power geometries. Caste, gender, religion, region, then are no longer unitary categories which can provide an abstract model for migration, rather each instance of migration is located at the intersection of these categories. This study has tried to pay heed to these intersectionalities and with some caution tried to generalize them.

The study finds that migration for work continues to be undertaken predominantly by men. Many of the women migrants have accompanied their husbands to the city. Landlessness in the villages is also found to be extremely common among migrants in Hyderabad. In the absence of any attempts to redistribute land, this indicates firstly, that the village is proving to be an unviable site for the landless to plan a future and secondly, that even the governments NREGS is unable to disincentivize migration. It must also be taken into account that the landless are mostly constituted by underprivileged groups whose human development has been hindered both by history and contemporary power relations. In this light, migration must also be seen as a phenomenon that is produced by power relations. Present policy debates stress on the need to generate employment in the rural areas and with a decline in the sway of leftist and liberal discourses, less is said about cultural change. Perhaps cultural change will be a positive externality of more employment and better wages, but the power relations are deeply entrenched.

The standard of living of migrants in cities is found to be remarkably poor. The neoliberalization of cities has meant that city governments have backtracked from their responsibility to provide housing to workers. Provision of housing to migrants is such a contested issue that the city of Hyderabad has not notified a single slum since 1996. This means that migrants have to struggle to even find the basic anchor of shelter in the big city. While moving to the city might be liberating for some from cultural oppression. The data does not suggest any major economic mobility. There does not even seem to be much mobility across skill categories. Unskilled workers tend to remain in unskilled work. For economic mobility to be possible, it is essential that workers have steady incomes and some social security. In the context of intensifying casualization of labour, migrants struggle to find work on a day-to-day basis and can make few investments towards their own development. Employment has gone out of the hands of the state or even unitary corporations which

can be held accountable for the treatment of workers. In the present situation employment is in the hands of a network of contractors who forego responsibility and deny accountability for the workers' lot. The contractors also function within certain social structures, therefore different occupations and sectors obtain different biases, either on the part of employers or workers or customers. Thus, identity continues to be influential in the city. The glass ceiling for women (for instance, in the form of lower wages for the same work) and the discrimination against SCs or OBCs continues to have an impact on their lives.

Indian policy has directed all its energy towards designing grand schemes for the “upliftment” of people which are easily captured by local power elites and has also made failed attempts to pin down and identify its citizens so that it can provide them their entitlements directly. In the light of these policy failures, people are struggling to find their own ways of coping and one of their chief strategies is their migration. Indian policy must take notice and gear itself towards providing benefits to these mobile citizens. Indian cities are growing increasingly inhospitable to in-coming migrants, both in terms of the lack of infrastructure to accommodate them and also a burgeoning xenophobia that is taking an increasingly revanchist colour in the metropolises.