PATTERNS AND DETERMINANTS OF SHORT-TERM YOUTH MIGRATION IN UTTAR PRADESH

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Abstract

This study investigates short-term internal migration patterns among young adults in Uttar Pradesh, focusing on age-sex wise reasons and migration streams in the state. The research specifically targets migrants aged 15-34, identified based on their last residence, with durations less than one year. This age bracket has been chosen for its heightened likelihood of engaging in migration, forming the core demographic base under investigation. The analysis has been categorised into four migration streams– Rural to Rural, Rural to Urban, Urban to Rural and Urban to Urban. Utilising 2011 Census data, the research identifies rural-to-rural migration as dominant, mostly led by marriage-induced movements. The analysis reveals distinct gender disparities, with male migrants more prevalent, especially in rural-to-urban and urban-to-urban streams. Work/employment emerges as a significant factor in migration decisions, while education-related migration remains low. The results have been validated by the latest data available for migration from PLFS for 2020. The findings shed light on societal dynamics, emphasizing the pivotal role of marriage and employment in shaping migration trends among Uttar Pradesh's young population.

Keywords: Short-term migration, Migration streams, Intra-state migration, Gender disparities

Introduction

Migration serves as a catalyst for social transformation within societies (Mahapatro, 2020). Despite international migration garnering more attention, internal migration significantly surpasses it, with a four-fold greater volume, as highlighted by the UNDP (2009) and Bhagat (2011). The decision to migrate plays a pivotal role for individuals and groups, influenced by factors such as community, gender, age, educational attainment, socioeconomic background, environmental considerations, and marriage (Khan et al., 2016). These variations lead to behavioural changes, prompting individuals to either move to or depart from a particular location (Clarke,1980), indicating distinctions between migrants and non-migrants (Khan et al., 2016).

Historical census data, starting from 1881, reveals the evolution of migration-related inquiries in India. The focus shifted from the place of birth to the location of the last home, providing insights into return migration dynamics. In 1981, "reasons for migration" were introduced, categorized into employment, education, family relocation, marriage, and

others. The 2001 Census added, "moved after birth," and natural calamities were merged into "others" (Census of India, 2001). Short-term migration, defined as residing in a place for three months to less than 12 months (Global Migration Indicators 2021), or less than 1 year (Census quest., 2011), is a noteworthy aspect.

Motivations for migration, as theorized by Premi (1984), encompass factors in the origin place, destination area, intervening obstacles, and individual factors. Census data from India identifies seven major reasons for migration, with marriage alone accounting for 49% of total migration nationally, followed by household relocation, other reasons, post-birth relocation, and work and education (Tumbe, 2012). Internal migration is predominantly observed in the rural-to-rural stream, dominated by male migrants aged 15-34 due to work and employment reasons, while female migration is primarily induced by marriage (Khan et al., 2016). Internal migration is also linked to internal brain drain and correlates strongly with livelihood options among rural poor communities, particularly from Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) (Bhagat & Keshri, 2021).

Several studies highlight the multifaceted impact of internal migration. While some argue that short-term migration reduces young migrants' engagement in labour activities, enhancing the educational quality and delaying the age of migration (Lahiri, 2020), others approach it from the perspective of seasonal migrants, directly connecting it to socio-economic variations. Viewing internal migration as stepwise migration from rural areas is another perspective (Majumdar & Taukeer, 2019).

Social status plays a pivotal role in migration (Singhatana, 2017), with evidence from rural Uttar Pradesh suggesting that male migrants from upper castes possess more skills and educational attainment, while those from lower castes often lack in these areas, leading to engagement in informal sectors with fewer degrees and skills (Singh, 2018). Narrowing the focus, studies explore the experiences of Dalits in the new market-oriented economic model in Uttar Pradesh, shedding light on opportunities and needs within this community (Kapur et al., 2010).

It is noticeable that even after identifying the most prone migrating population are young (15-34 years), as pointed out by Wankhede, (2021), they have not been approached minutely through different migration streams. Being among the top three contributors of migration, Uttar Pradesh has not been studied seldom from the point of view of young adult migrants (UN, 2009 and Khan, 2016) and this paper tries to fill this gap. The study of UP needs to be explored as it has a huge population to supply in the migration streams, and the reasons hidden behind migrations may vary over time. The paper traces the volume of short-term migrants, categorising them by gender and different age groups across all migration streams and analyse the gender-specific reasons for internal short-term migration within the age group of 15 to 34 years across diverse migration streams in the state.

Study Area

Uttar Pradesh has been selected for this study due to its rich abundance of natural

resources capable of sustaining a significant population. The state spans latitudes 23° 52'N to 31° 02'N and longitudes 77° 04'E to 84° 03'E. Bordered by Nepal and Uttarakhand to the north, Bihar and Jharkhand to the east, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh to the south, Rajasthan to the southwest, Haryana and Delhi to the west, and Himachal Pradesh to the northwest, Uttar Pradesh is strategically located. Administrative divisions are organized into 18 divisions and 75 districts. Covering an area of 240,928 sq. km, Uttar Pradesh ranks fourth among all states, yet it claims the top spot in population with 199.58 million people according to the 2011 Census. The male population constitutes 104.48 million, and the female population is 95.33 million, contributing to 16.5% of the national population. Uttar Pradesh holds the third position in population density, with 829 persons per sq. km. The sex ratio stands at 912 females per 1000 males, and literacy rates indicate 77.3% for males and 57.2% for females. Despite its vast expanse, the state is predominantly agrarian, with 77.7% of the population residing in rural areas as of 2011. The state's topography is dominated by the fertile soil irrigated by the extensive river system, particularly the plains of the mighty Ganga River and its tributaries, which support primary activities and rural populations. Urban areas account for only 22.2% of the total population.

Based on the place of the last residence, it is identified that the state recorded 8.8 million people engaged in short-term migration (residence less than 1 year), while durations of 1-4 years and 5-6 years contributed 47 million and 42 million individuals, respectively, at the national level in 2001. Notably, rural areas in Uttar Pradesh serve as emigration zones, primarily inhabited by female migrants across various migration streams.

Methodology

The study utilizes secondary data from the Registrar General of India, Census 2011, to investigate internal migration patterns in Uttar Pradesh. The paper focuses on migrants based on the place of their last residence. Data from the D series of the Census, specifying migration reasons for various age groups and durations of residence, is analysed. The study concentrates on individuals with a residence duration of less than 1 year, indicative of short-term migration, within the age group of 15-34 years, more prone to migration. Further categorization is done for ages 15-19, 20-24, 25-29, and 30-34. The analytical approach involves applying the simple percentage method to comprehensively analyse migration patterns within the specified parameters.

The datasheet for the D-05 series concludes with a description of the data that states, *"The place of last residence unclassifiable as "Rural" or "Urban" is included in "total""* (D series, Census, 2011). The crucial element for additional computation is this description. The total number of migrants for a given age-specific duration of residence should equal the sum of all rural and urban migrants for the same age-specific duration of residence; yet, this description leads to a finding that the two are not equal. This can be understood from equation (1) which is provided below.
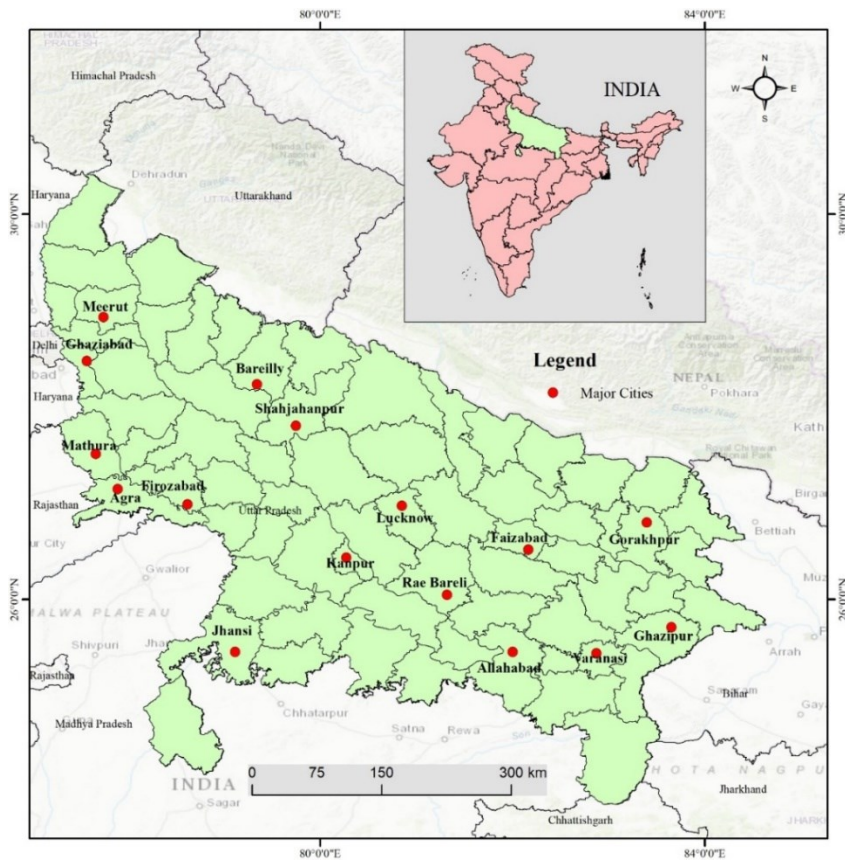
Fig 1: Map of Uttar Pradesh and its neighbour states. Major cities act as a hotspot of migration.

Rural migrants residing less than 1 year of age group 15-19 (964818) + Urban migrants residing less than 1 year of age group 15-19 (431688) ≠ Total migrants residing less than 1 year of age group 15-19 (1489848)   (1)

The real number of migrants is shown on the left side of the equation, while the people whose residence cannot be classified as rural or urban are included on the right side of the equation. Therefore, determining the real number of migrants in both rural and urban areas is the first stage in the computation. The further steps are:

1. Determine the exact number of migrants across all migration streams.
2. The percentage of migrants in each stream, calculated as (age and the number of migrants in that stream ÷ the age and the actual number of migrants in that stream) * 100

The results from the 2011 Census have been supported by the latest data on migration released by NSSO/PLFS in their report "Migration in India 2020-21".

As the work is focused on 2011 data, the literature has been taken back from 2007 to 2023 related to internal migration and short-term migration in India and Uttar Pradesh and run the bibliometric analysis to identify the reasons for migration. The metadata for bibliometric analysis has been manually taken from Google Scholar between 2008 and 2023 and filtered out 124 articles meeting with the interest area of internal migration and short-term migration in India and Uttar Pradesh (Fig.2).
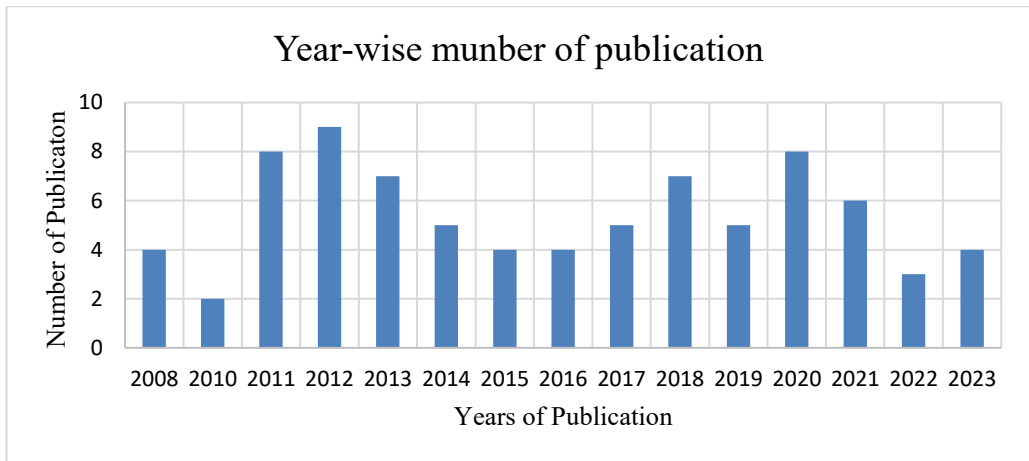

Fig 2: Year-wise publications (2008-2023) related to internal migration and short-term migration in India and Uttar Pradesh

Results

This study explores migration dynamics in Uttar Pradesh, focusing on migrations lasting less than 1 year and falling in the 15-34 age group, renowned for its heightened mobility, the analysis unveils intricate patterns across different internal migration streams. Fig 3 displays the percentage distribution of short-term internal migrants (less than 1 year) across various streams in Uttar Pradesh, with data sourced from the Registrar General of India's Census of India 2011 (Series D 05). The study focuses on young adults aged 15-34, divided into four age groups: 15-19, 20-24, 25-29, and 30-34, considering their heightened propensity for migration according to existing research (Internal Migration in India, 2011).

Data source: RGI, Census of India,2011

Upon examining the data presented in Table 1, noteworthy trends become apparent. Rural-to-rural migration takes precedence across all age brackets, reaching its zenith in the 15-19 age group at an impressive rate of 69.51%. Particularly noteworthy trend is the predominant female composition within this age cohort, accounting for 77.27% of the total rural-to-rural migrants. In contrast, rural-to-urban migration contributes a comparatively lower share, ranging from 7-8% for all age groups. Urban migration, encompassing both urban-to-rural and urban-to-urban streams, collectively averages around 20% for all age groups. The 15-19 age group, however, has the lowest urban migration share at 11.5%.

Examining gender distribution, male migrants dominate the rural-to-urban, urban-to-rural, and urban-to-urban streams, as indicated by the data from the 2011 Census. The 15-19 age group stands out, with female migrants surpassing males in the rural-to-rural stream, illustrating the unique mobility patterns of this demographic.
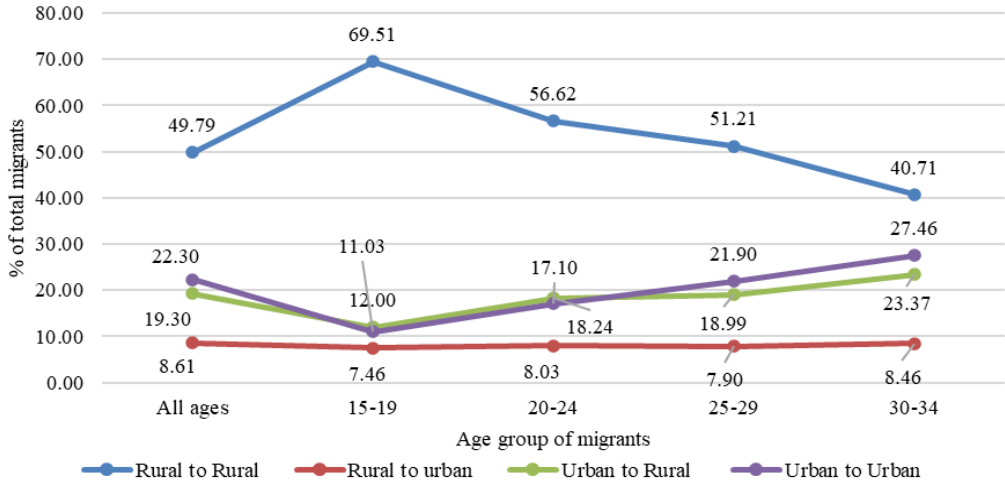

Fig 3: Total internal short-term migrants (%) of different streams in Uttar Pradesh.

Table 1: Gender composition of internal short-term migrants (%) of different streams in UP

| age group	Rural to Rural		Rural to urban		Urban to Rural		Urban to Urban	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
All ages	32.86	59.22	10.01	7.83	27.81	14.56	29.32	18.39
15-19	34.98	77.27	11.39	6.58	26.99	8.63	26.63	7.52
20-24	29.97	64.52	9.83	7.50	34.08	13.55	26.13	14.43
25-29	31.00	59.50	9.56	7.22	31.28	13.94	28.16	19.33
30-34	30.47	48.38	9.04	8.02	30.15	18.29	30.34	25.30

Data source: RGI, Census of India,2011

The study identifies young adults aged 15-34 as the most mobile demographic, reacting swiftly to external opportunities. The 15-19 age group, in particular, experiences high mobility, marked by female dominance in rural-to-rural migration. This age bracket encounters significant life changes, such as independence, career initiation, and family formation. The consistent prevalence of rural-to-rural migration across all age groups suggests that economic transformations from rural to urban and vice versa are limited. Individual decisions and intervening obstacles, in line with push and pull factors, play crucial roles in shaping migration patterns. The detailed gender-wise distribution presented in Table 1 emphasizes that, for the rural-to-rural stream, female migrants consistently contribute a substantial portion across all age groups, although their share is lower compared to male migrants in other streams.

Gender and age-wise reasons for short-term migration in the age group of 15 to 34 years have been calculated (residence less than 1 year) to identify the age and sex-specific reasons responsible for migration and see their variation among all the streams. This estimation gives valuable information about the specific reasons for specific age and sex and will be helpful to understand social circles in society to formulate policies.

1. Rural to rural

A prominent trend evident from Fig 4 is the dominance of marriage as a primary reason for migration across all age groups. Marriage accounts for a substantial share, with figures peaking at 81% for the 15-19 age group, gradually decreasing to 43.86% for the 30-34 age group. Notably, this trend is more pronounced among female migrants, reaching as high as 88% in the 15-19 age group. The persistence of high percentages of female migrants across all age groups underlines societal norms where women typically move to their husband's residences after marriage.
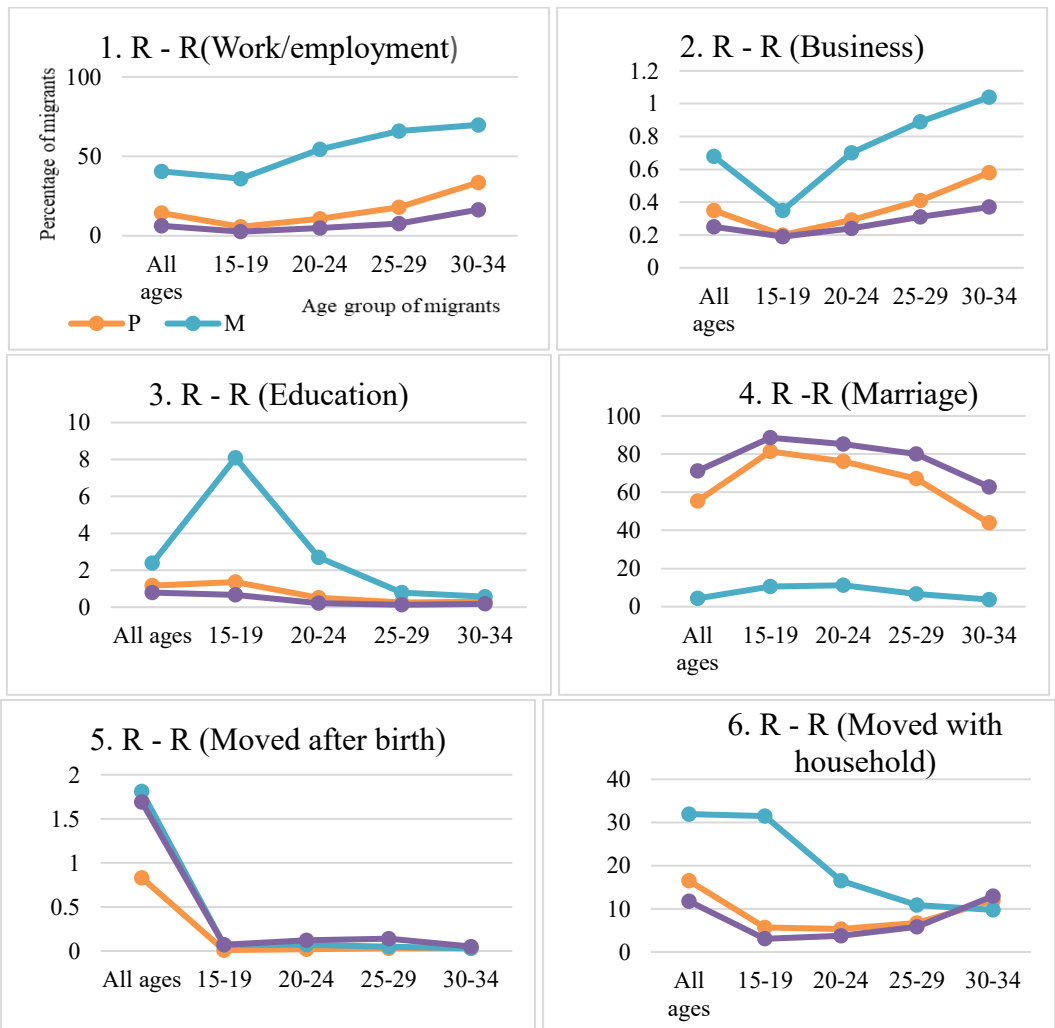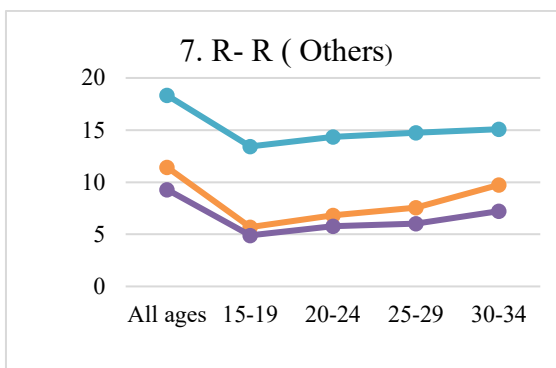
Fig 4: Age – Sex wise seven reasons for short-term migration in the Rural-to-Rural stream in UP (in percentage) (where, the X-axis = age group of migrants, Y axis = Percentage of migrants, the Green line = Persons, the Blue line = Males, Yellow line = Female)

Data source: RGI, Census of India,2011

Beyond marriage, economic factors, particularly work and employment, emerge as influential drivers of migration, especially for male migrants. The 15-19 age group sees the least contribution to work-related migration at 35%, but this figure rises significantly for subsequent age groups, reaching 69% for the 30-34 age group. Female participation in work-related migration remains comparatively low, ranging from 2-16% across age groups. The reasons "moved with household" and "other" display relatively stable patterns across total persons and female migrants. Those opting to move with their households often make this decision early in life to seek improved living conditions.

Education-related migration, while crucial for societal development, registers a low percentage, ranging from 1% to 0.25%. This could be attributed to changing perceptions and a preference for urban educational institutions. The rural-to-rural stream reflects a larger societal trend, wherein urbanization plays a pivotal role in shaping migration patterns.

It can be derived from the data that female migration in the rural-to-rural stream is primarily driven by marriage, followed by work and moving with the household. The increasing share of female migrants in the work category suggests a positive shift in societal acceptance of working women. However, the limited educational migration among women, particularly in age groups beyond 25, underscores persistent challenges in this regard.

2. Rural to Urban

Fig 5 provides a detailed breakdown of age and sex-wise reasons for short-term migration in the rural-to-urban stream in Uttar Pradesh. It reveals several significant observations about the drivers and patterns of migration in this particular context. In the rural-to-urban stream, marriage and moving with the household emerge as the dominant

reasons for migration, accounting for 27.31% and 32.26% respectively across all age groups. This underscores the strong influence of familial and domestic considerations in motivating individuals to migrate from rural to urban areas. The prevalence of these reasons suggests that family-related factors play a crucial role in shaping migration dynamics, emphasizing the importance of familial ties and household arrangements in relocation decisions.

Contrary to expectations, the "business" category appears to be the least influential in inducing rural-to-urban migration, with percentages ranging from 1% to 0.5%. This unexpected finding suggests that economic drivers, specifically business opportunities, may not be strong enough to compel individuals to leave their rural homes and relocate to urban settings. This could reflect a certain level of attachment to one's native place despite perceived economic challenges.
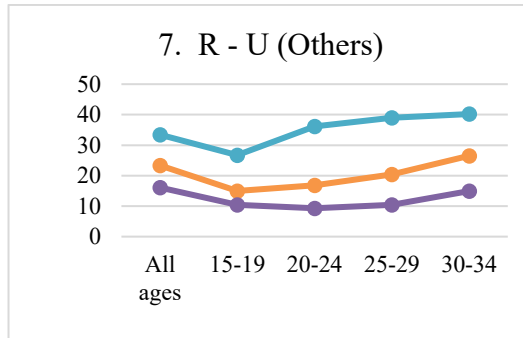
Fig 5: Age – Sex wise seven reasons for short-term migration in Rural to Urban stream in UP (in percentage) (where, X-axis = age group of migrants Y-axis = Percentage of migrants, and Green line = Persons, Blue line = Males, Yellow line = Female)

Data source: RGI, Census of India,2011

Education-related migration contributes to a total of 2%, with a higher concentration among individuals aged 15-19. However, this percentage diminishes to less than 1% among those above 25 years of age. This trend may indicate that younger individuals are more inclined to migrate for educational purposes, possibly seeking for better opportunities in urban educational institutions. The decreasing contribution in older age groups could be influenced by various factors such as established careers or familial responsibilities. The gender dynamics suggest that female migrants constitute less than half of their male counterparts in the rural-to-urban stream. However, marriage-induced migration stands out as the highest among the reasons, and female migrants play a significant role in this category. The data aligns with societal norms where marriage, especially between the ages of 15-25, is considered ideal.

The analysis reveals that the rural-to-urban migration pattern is heavily influenced by familial ties, particularly marriage and moving with the household. Surprisingly, economic factors, as represented by the "business" category, appear to have a minimal impact. Educational migration is more prevalent among younger age groups, and despite an overall low percentage, it highlights the potential influence of educational pursuits on migration decisions. The gender dynamics, with female migrants being prominent in marriage-induced migration, reflect traditional societal norms and expectations.
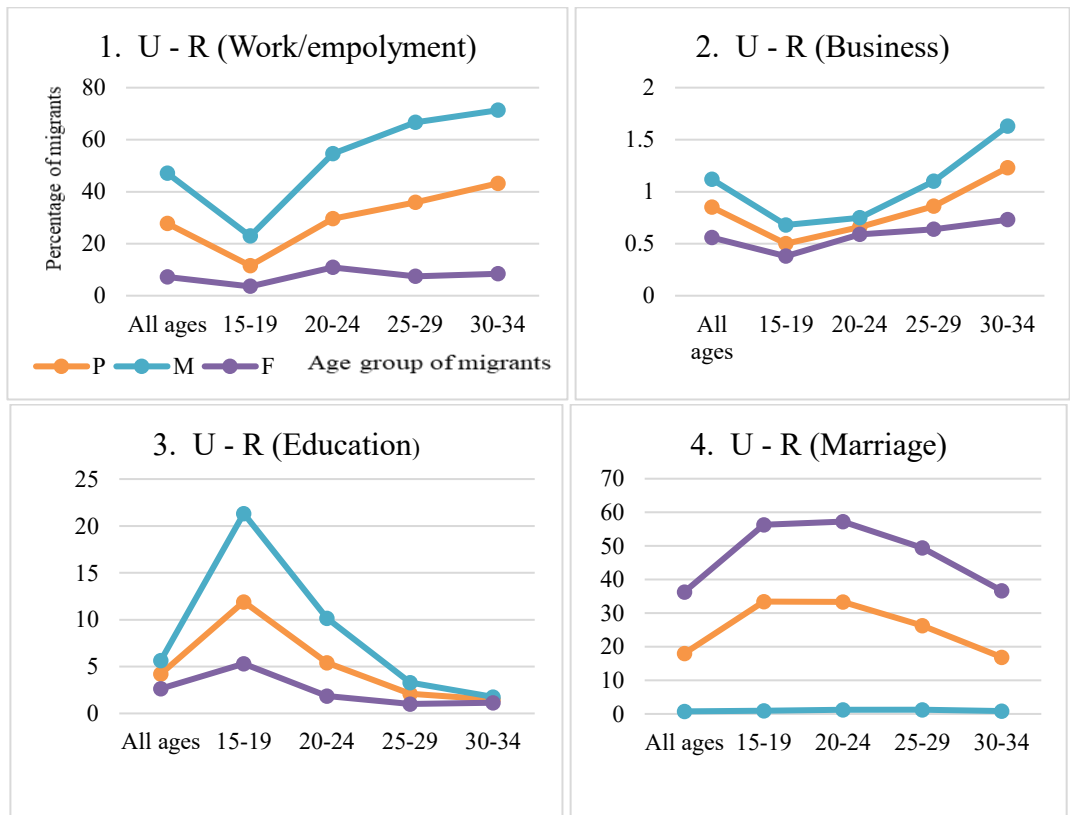
3. Urban to Rural

In the context of urban-rural migration, as shown in Fig 6, the key determinants influencing relocation patterns are "moved with household" and "work," standing out as primary motivators, succeeded by "others" and "marriage." Noteworthy is the prominence of "moved with household," constituting 35% of migrants across all age cohorts. This category exhibits a distinct gender distribution, with females contributing 43%, surpassing males at 28%. Particularly in the 15-19 age group, a distinctive pattern emerges, with male migrants

(43%) outnumbering their female counterparts (28%), suggesting unique dynamics associated with familial and caregiving responsibilities.

The second most prevalent reason for migration is work/employment, attracting 27% of urban migrants to rural areas in search of job opportunities. Remarkably, 47% of these migrants are male, reflecting entrenched societal norms in a patriarchal context where males are traditionally designated as primary breadwinners. This phenomenon is further linked to the preference for government employment, with males, upon securing such positions, often experiencing rural postings. The data demonstrates a clear trend, with 54% of male migrants in the 20-24 age group, 66% in the 25-29 age group, and 71% in the 30-34 age group transitioning from urban to rural areas.

Educational migration constitutes 4% of the overall migration across all age groups, with a notable impact in the 15-19 age group, contributing to 11% of the total migrants. This suggests a deliberate strategy for rural development, as evidenced by the intentional establishment of high-ranking educational institutions in rural areas. Gender-wise analysis within the 15-19 years age group reveals participation of 21% of male migrants and 5% of female migrants in educational migration.
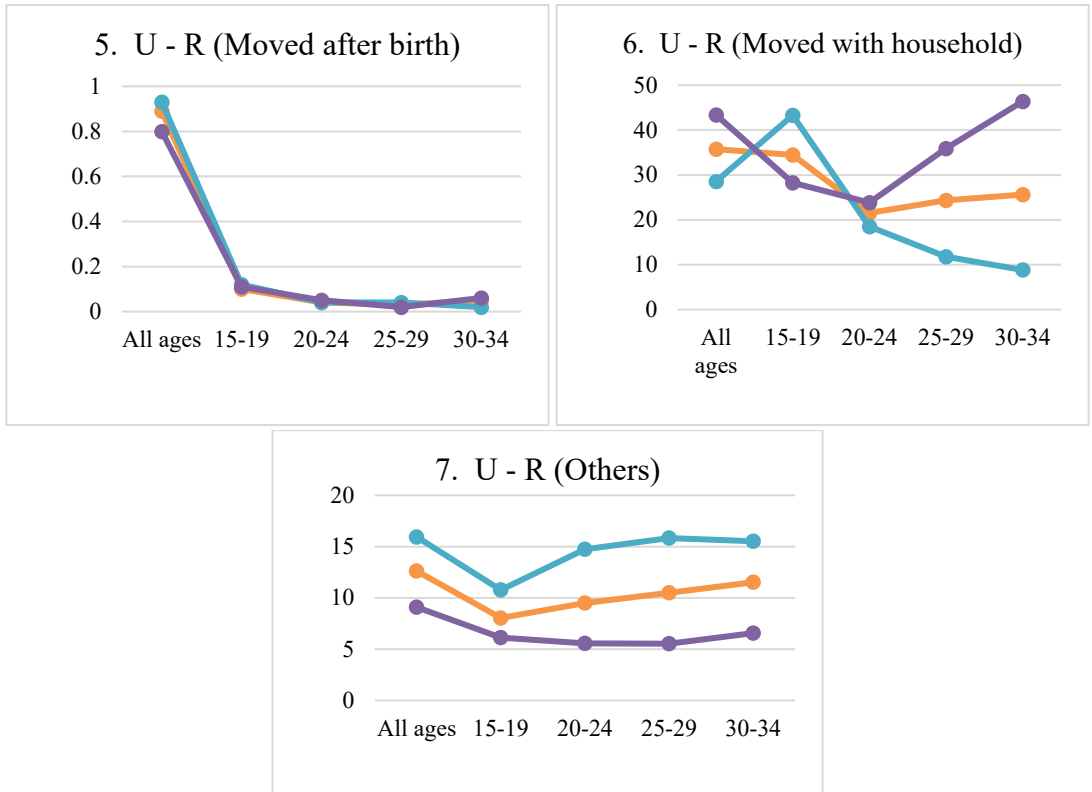
Fig 6: Age – Sex wise seven reasons for short-term migration in Urban to Rural stream in UP (where, X-axis = age group of migrants Y-axis = Percentage of migrants, and Green line = Persons, Blue line = Males, Yellow line = Female)

The Urban to Rural migration in UP is characterized by a dual influence of familial ties, particularly "moved with household," and economic factors, with "work" playing a pivotal role. Gender dynamics underscore traditional expectations, with males primarily migrating for employment opportunities. The strategic placement of educational institutions in rural areas reflects a thoughtful approach to rural development through educational initiatives. This research provides insightful perspectives into the intricate interplay of societal norms, economic considerations, and educational pursuits shaping migration trends in this specific stream.

The 15-19 age group reveals distinct patterns in migration reasons. Work (5%) and business (1%) show minimal contribution, while education constitutes 13% of total migrants, with higher involvement from males (21%) compared to females (6%). Notably, "Marriage" emerges as the second most prevalent reason in this age group, encompassing 23% of total migrants, primarily driven by 41% of female migrants. The "Moved after birth" category holds minimal significance, contributing only 3% to the overall migrants, with slight variations across age groups ranging from 0.11% to 0.27%.
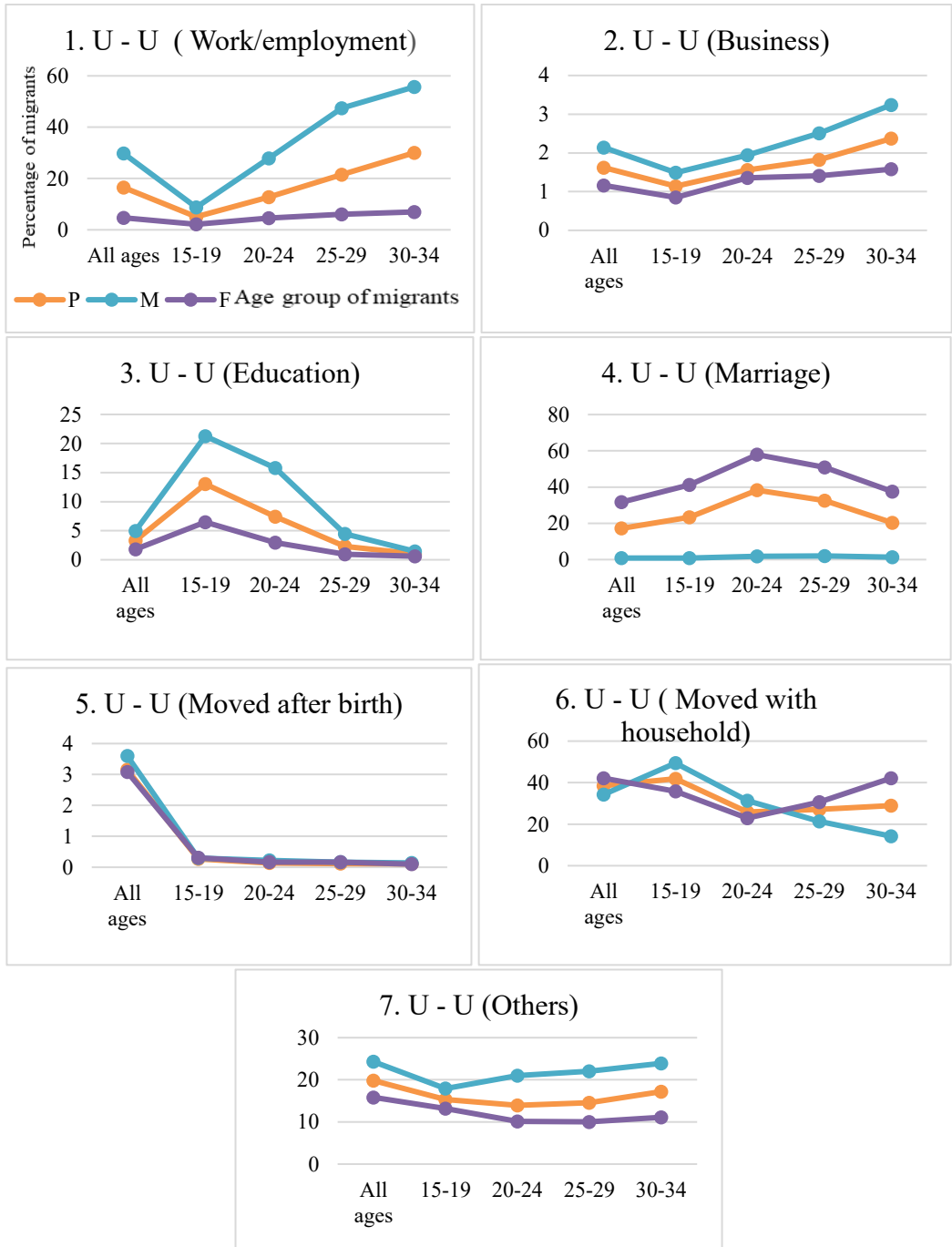
Fig 7: Age – Sex wise seven reasons for short-term migration in the Urban-to-Urban stream in UP (where, X-axis = age group of migrants Y-axis = Percentage of migrants, and Green line = Persons, Blue line = Males, Yellow line = Female)

Data source: RGI, Census of India,2011

Discussion

A careful examination of migration patterns in Uttar Pradesh, as presented in the table and figures, uncovers noteworthy trends and offers profound insights into the factors steering short-term migration across various streams. This discussion will succinctly summarize key findings and draw connections to pertinent literature.

The prevalence of rural-to-rural migration across all age brackets, particularly peaking in the 15-19 age group, aligns with existing literature emphasizing the significance of internal rural migration (Mitra & Murayama, 2009; Raman & Bhagat, 2021). The dominance of marriage as a driving factor, especially among females, underscores societal norms and the high percentage of female migrants in the 15-19 age group raises concerns about potential instances of child marriage (Bhagat et al., 2018). Work-related migration is substantial, predominantly among males, highlighting the economic aspect of rural-to-rural mobility (Panchamukhi, 2013). However, limited female participation in work-related migration suggests persistent challenges for women in this context. Educational migration remains relatively low, reflecting broader trends of lower educational attainment in rural areas (Premi, 1984).

In rural-to-urban migration, familial ties, particularly marriage and moving with the household, take precedence over economic factors (Korra,2012). Surprisingly, the minimal role of business opportunities suggests a strong influence of traditional and familial considerations (Bhagat, 2012). Educational migration is more pronounced among younger age groups, indicating a potential inclination towards urban educational institutions. However, the decreasing contribution in older age groups suggests other factors influencing migration decisions. Gender dynamics in this stream reflect traditional expectations, with females playing a significant role in marriage-induced migration (Piplai, & Majumdar,1969)

Key motivators for the urban-to-rural migration stream can be highlighted in the figure are "moved with household" and "work/employment." The higher percentage of females in the "moved with household" category highlights unique dynamics associated with familial and caregiving responsibilities (Rajan & Bhagat, 2021). Economic factors, particularly job opportunities, drive a significant number of male migrants, aligning with patriarchal norms and a preference for government employment (Bhagat et al., 2018). In the Urban-to-urban migration stream, factors such as "moved with household" and "Others" emphasize the importance of family and indicate group migration with fewer risk factors associated with migration (Clarke,1980) and unspecified reasons in relocation decisions (Ozden & Sewadeh,2010). Gender dynamics in this stream highlight traditional expectations, with females more inclined towards family-related reasons. The overall low percentage of educational migration suggests that factors beyond education play a more significant role in urban-to-urban migration (Mahapatro, 2020).

It can be inferred from the above figures and supported by literature that educational migration contributes to rural development, with intentional efforts to establish educational institutions in rural areas. However, it is visible that, gender disparities persist, with a higher percentage of male migrants participating in educational migration.

Recent evidence from PLFS survey

The limitation of the paper is the latest available migration data. The last census was conducted in 2011, and the next census is still in process. Therefore, by comparing the 2011 census data with the recently available report on migration 2020 issued by MOSPI, PLFS series, one can understand the trend of migration. Data in the report showed that internal migration is highly dominated by females both in rural and urban areas. It also provides evidence that the rural migration stream prevailed by females while in the other three streams, the share of female migrants is lower than that of males (Fig 8). Be it rural or urban areas both receive the higher share of migrants from rural areas. The recent data also gives a similar trend that most females migrate due to "marriage" followed by "moving with household" in rural areas while on the other hand, urban female migrants show some variation: marriage still being the first reason followed by moving with household and then comes employment and studies. Figure 9 and 10 give a valid comparative idea about the trending reasons for migration among males and females. The only difference between these two datasets is that PLFs do not give any data on "moved after birth" and "moved with household" Apart from these, the rest of the variables are the same; hence, they can be compared from the above analysis derived from Census 2011.
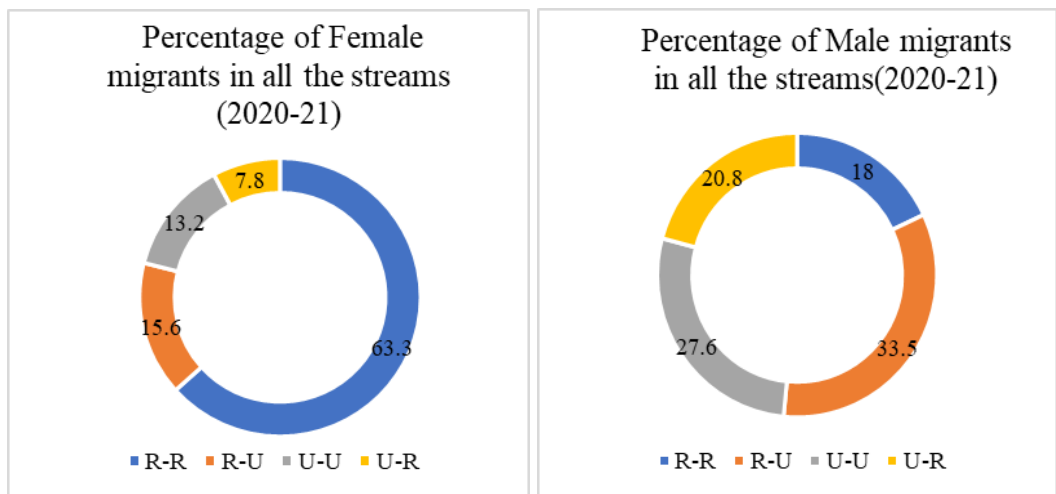

Fig 8: Percentage of Male and female migrants in all the streams, recent trend.
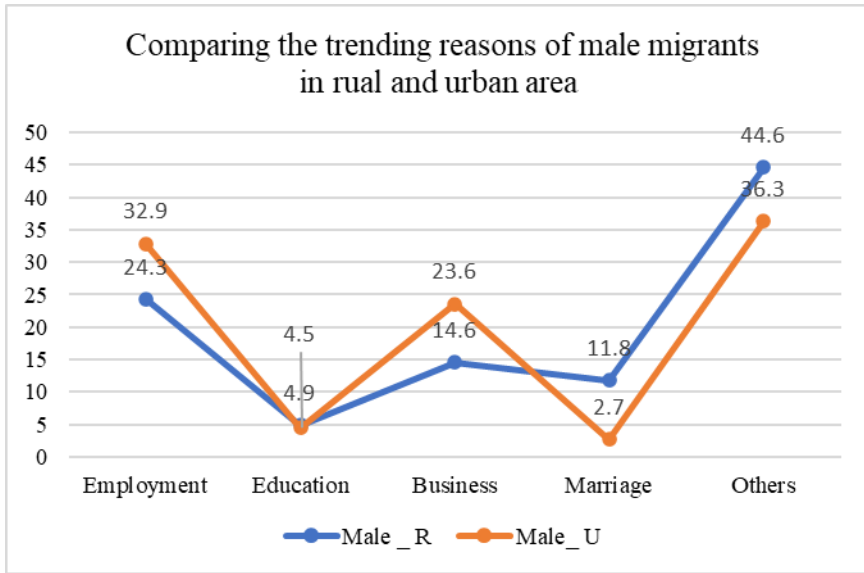
Source: Migration In India, 2020-2021

Fig 9: Reasons of male migration in rural and urban area (2020-21)
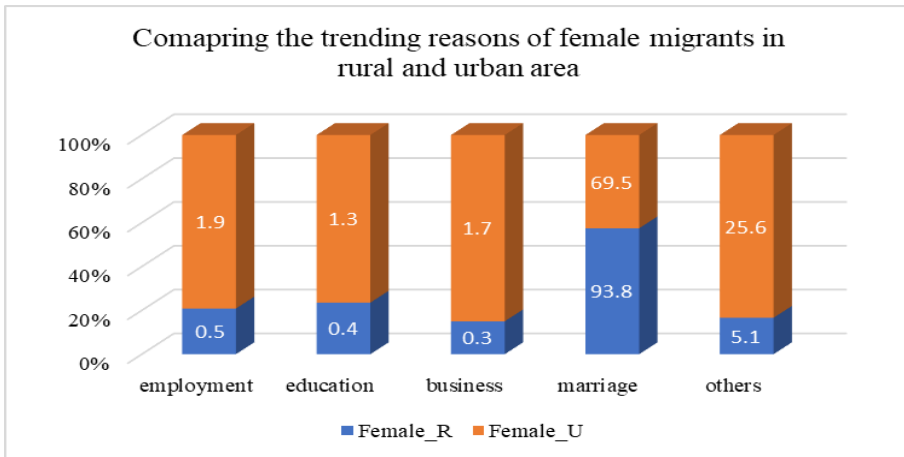
Source: Migration In India, 2020-2021

Fig 10: Reasons of female migration in rural and urban area (2020-21)

Source: Migration In India, 2020-2021

Conclusion

The comprehensive analysis of short-term migration patterns in Uttar Pradesh illuminates the intricate dynamics in the mobility of the population. The prevalent rural-to-rural migration, especially in the 15-19 age group, underscores the profound impact of societal norms, economic motivations, and familial ties on migration decisions. The dominance of marriage, particularly among females, raises concerns about early marriages,

emphasizing the need for addressing associated social challenges. Persistent gender disparities and the limited participation of females in work-related migration highlight existing obstacles hindering women's mobility and educational attainment. Younger age groups exhibit a higher inclination towards educational migration, diminishing in older age brackets, indicating the influence of established careers and familial responsibilities. Though the primary work is based on census data, similar trends have been noted in the latest migration survey of 2020 as well. Policy implications stress the necessity for targeted interventions addressing traditional norms, promoting gender equality, and facilitating educational opportunities to foster inclusive growth and societal development in Uttar Pradesh.

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