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MIGRATION DYNAMICS IN UTTARAKHAND: PATTERNS, CAUSES AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

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Abstract

Migration has become an important demographic and economic process in Uttarakhand, especially in its Himalayan districts. Large-scale temporary and permanent out-migration has changed rural livelihoods and settlement patterns. This study looks at the patterns, causes, and social and economic effects of migration in the state using secondary data from census records, government reports, and existing literature. The findings show that migration mainly happens because of limited job options, low agricultural productivity, land fragmentation, insufficient education and health services, poor infrastructure, and growing human-wildlife conflict in the hills. Meanwhile, urban centers attract people due to better job opportunities. Migration has led to rural depopulation, an increase in partially abandoned villages, labor shortages, and more women taking on agricultural roles in the hills. At the same time, remittances from migrants are important for supporting household incomes and reducing economic risks. The study points out that migration in Uttarakhand highlights long-standing regional development gaps. It stresses the need for specific development strategies for the hills to tackle the root causes and encourage sustainable economic growth.

Introduction

The economic development of hill states has been severely affected due to unemployment. Migration has been one of the major socio-economic phenomenon observed in the development of hill states. This paper attempts to present the notion of migration in the state of Uttarakhand, India. Migration has been one of the major demographic and socio-economic issues for the development of hill state of

Uttarakhand since the time of formation of the state. Uttarakhand has 7 districts which have a total of 242 talukas, 4,375 revenue villages, and 149 cities and towns. Migration has been observed largely from the remote villages of higher side of the hill to the towns and cities. After the formation of the state it is observed that a large number of people moved from villages to state capital cities like Dehradun, Haridwar, and cities of adjoining states. Uttarakhand has experienced rapid urban growth in recent years and has become increasingly or more urban-like. In Uttarakhand there are more number of villages but only some of these have a population. Villages with less than 500 inhabitants are abundant and many of them are semi-abandoned or “ghost” villages in the interior Himalayan region. Also, the depopulation of high-side rural areas of the state

Over the past three decades, Uttarakhand, a newly formed state situated within the Himalayan landscape, has witnessed a significant increase in the rate of migration. Despite the socio-economic impetus for migration emanating from some of the drivers of migration, such as lack of sustainable livelihoods, lack of access to educational and health services and decline in land productivity, there is lack of empirical research on understanding the patterns, causes, and consequences of migration in Uttarakhand. We conduct an extensive and comprehensive literature synthesis to bring together findings and insights on migration from across Uttarakhand. Adopting the most commonly used classification of Migrant Pull and Push Theory, this article identifies drivers of migration in Uttarakhand and establishes that push factors such as lack of livelihood facilities, social amenities and services such as health and education, unsustainable farming practices and repercussions of natural hazards are significant in Uttarakhand. Pull factors such as better employment opportunities, quality education and healthcare services, better living conditions and housing in urban areas are also pivotal, leading to increased migration. The migration networks within and outside Uttarakhand have helped promote remittances which have improved household income, but has also led to feminisation of agriculture, weaker agrarian system, loss of social capital, ageing rural population and

Objective

- Understanding the migration dynamics in Uttarakhand Course and significant socio-economic consequences.

Research Methodology

In this paper a secondary-data-based research was carried out to present a brief overview on migration phenomenon in Uttarakhand. The report was primarily based on Palayan Aayog (Rural Development and Migration Commission) Report, 2018. The report presents an extensive district- and village-wise information regarding temporary and permanent migration including its magnitude, characteristics, reasons, problems, implications, solutions, and policy recommendations of migrants and their communities in the Uttarakhand Himalaya. Selected data on demographic characteristics of migrants, their livelihood conditions, constraints to agriculture and agrarian activities, available landholding, land use pattern, infrastructure facilities and some major socio-economic push and pull factors were extracted from the report. An attempt was made to compile and analyse the data using some descriptive statistical tools like percentages and comparison to bring out spatial variations in the drivers of migration in the surveyed districts. The conclusions drawn from the reported results are further, discussed and interpreted in the setting of general development issues and specific vulnerabilities of the mountain region of Uttarakhand.

Review of Literature

Migration has long been recognised as a core element of demographic change and regional development in India. Historical chronological studies of internal migration in India (Zachariah 1964) and studies of labour mobility (Nair and Narain 1985) as well as migration and urbanisation (Chatterjee and Bose 1977) provide some insights into the growing significance of migration as a fundamental process of regional development.

According to Lee (1966) workers tend to migrate from one area to another if there are reasons at the point of origin that encourage them to do so (push factors such as lack of employment) and if there are reasons at the destination that attract them (pull factor of better employment at the urban centre). Lee (1966) argues that there might be mediating factors such as cultural values, class, family or friends that influence migration decisions as well. These factors, mixed together, follow a push–pull theory (<https://doi.org/10.2307/2060063>). The push–pull theory has been extensively used to explain rural Indian out-migration (e.g. Babu & Reddy, 2004; Chetty, 2013; Muraleetharan, 2010; Sekhar, 2004). As the Indian labour markets respond to the forces of a globalising economy, urbanisation will grow, which in turn will increase migration pressure. International research on development and migration suggests that migration has always been identified as a factor in process of development (Skeldon, 1997; UN-DESA & OECD, 2013).

The research literature on migration in India reports migration as a livelihood strategy that leads to poverty alleviation and an increasing dams of migrants in the labour markets. Srivastava and Sasikumar (2003) and Srivastava (2011) have provided general overviews of internal migration in India, classifying migration in India into temporary, seasonal, permanent and circular migration and mentioning persistent policy challenges. Keshari and Bhagat (2004) have reported that temporary and seasonal migration is an important livelihood diversification strategy for rural households. Deshingkar (2006) and Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty (2009) have shown that migration may be poverty alleviation or an embodiment of the existing structural inequalities among people in the country for mobility depends on their access and ownership of valuable assets and resources. The recent NSSO data (2010) have reported that employment is the major reason for internal migration in India.

Migration varies in distinctive ways in mountainous and ecologically fragile settings. Panda and Mishra (2018) point out that out-migration from the Himalayan region is constrained by a lack of livelihood options, small area of land, low crop production and inadequate infrastructure. Some years in Uttarakhand, rural out-migration and its impact on agrarian change is examined in detail by Awasthi (2011). His study shows that continuous out-migration of males has led to landlessness, abandonment of land and feminisation of agriculture. The paper highlights how demographic change and farming systems in the mountain region are closely related.

Empirical evidence from the Census of India (2011) shows depopulation in many hill districts in Uttarakhand and the trend for population growth is declining. Analysis of Government of Uttarakhand reports (2018) for the state illustrates that there are many villages with less than 50% of their inbuilt population a situation which often coincides with large out-migration. Venkatesh (2016) describes such villages as ghost villages, the consequences of which are yet to be fully understood. They are especially prevalent in the more remote regions of the state. Negi and Maikhuri (2017) critically assess the socio-economic and ecological implications of major depopulation in the Indian Himalayan Region and its possible outcomes. Outcomes of depopulation are presented as positive (e.g. forest regeneration) and negative (e.g. loss of traditional knowledge systems). (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envdev.2017.02.004>)

Migration in the Uttarakhand State

India's internal migration is by no means a new phenomenon as it has been studied since the early part of the twentieth century (Zachariah, 1964; Nair & Narain, 1985). Recent migration literature in India has happened to lend a considerable focus to migration out of hill states such as Uttarakhand. It could be said that another chapter of Indian history has begun, and the history of Uttarakhand itself is defined by migration. In this paper, I provide a critical literature review on the issue of migration out of hill states with a particular emphasis on Uttarakhand. Using Lee's (1966) push-pull theory of migration as a theoretical framework, I identified the major push/factors for migration out of Uttarakhand as ecological fragility, deficient livelihood diversification, micro-landholdings, poor agricultural productivity, lack or inadequate infrastructure and mobility, and the lack of established institutions and services in the region. The pull factors for the migration out of Uttarakhand are the availability of jobs, better educational and healthcare facilities, improved infrastructure, and general benefits of urban and metropolis. Further, I argue that 'migration' makes its presence felt in the political, social, and economic spaces of Uttarakhand. The economic narrative is of an almost complete dependence on remittances being sent in by those migrants who have settled in the plains and the metros. Migration has enhanced the state's political clout which requires a screening of the extant literature regarding the extent and impact of migration on Uttarakhand. Awasthi (2011) and Panda & Mishra (2018).

Migration from Uttarakhand is not homogenous; it includes permanent, semi-permanent, seasonal and circular streams. Studies on temporary and seasonal migration in India (Keshari & Bhagat, 2004; Srivastava & Sasikumar, 2003) provide insight into how households diversify risk by sending members to urban labour markets while maintaining rural bases. In the hill context, seasonal migration historically functioned as a coping strategy, but over time it has increasingly transformed into long-term or permanent relocation (Panda & Mishra, 2018). This shift reflects broader national trends of labour mobility linked to uneven regional development (Srivastava, 2011; Deshingkar, 2006).

Urbanisation processes also influence migration streams. Traditional studies on migration and urban development in India (Chatterjee & Bose, 1977) suggest that migration flows tend to concentrate in those parts of the country where striking differences in economic, social and demographic development remained after the 1960s. The present influx in Uttarakhand follows a similar pattern, with sophisticated urban centres such as Dehradun, Haridwar and Haldwani – and smaller ones such as Ranikhet and Lansdowne – exhausting all options in their surroundings and thus, looking towards new areas for labour. Migration and urbanisation are globally and increasingly conceived not only as survival strategies but also as potential (new) forces of development in the less developed world (Skeldon, 1997; UN-DESA & OECD, 2013). Though, current research on the relationship between migration and poverty (see e.g., Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty, 2009) implies that the net outcome of migration depends on several factors, such as migratory skills, social capital, and a fairly certain job.

While remittances in source regions contribute to household income security and increase spending on housing improvements and education, persistent out-migration also has significant socio-cultural implications. The high levels of out-migration has contributed to the problem of an ageing population in rural areas. Gender roles have also been affected due to the lack of male family members present to occupy supporting roles for women. Women have been curtailed in community roles which on a broader level has had implications for community institutions. Labour scarcity in agriculture and public service delivery in remote villages in Uttarakhand has been deeply compounded by unequal

development and regional disparities (Government of Uttarakhand, 2018; Govt. of Uttarakhand, 2018; Awasthi, 2011).

Since its formation in the year 2000, Uttarakhand has emerged as a hot spot for massive migration from rural areas towards the state capital, Kuchwaha. Some of the same population continue to migrate to other hilly districts, while a sizable group migrates to the plains of the state and metropolitan cities outside the state. This migration is mainly attributed to the mountainous physiography, poor development status, and limited livelihood opportunities in the region. The prevailing hostile conditions for rural development in the region such as fragmented landholdings, low and unproductive agriculture, absence of irrigation, poor access to markets, and lack of non-farm employment opportunities in remote villages have led to a robust migration system. The role of migration as an economical coping strategy is examined. The study shows that migration is adopted as an income diversification and risk management strategy. Migration reduces the hardship of the rural population. The heterogeneity of the migratory institutions is revealed. The institutional aspects are analysed. Options are provided to manage the negative consequences of migration. The role played by the institutions in migration is interpreted. The study to facilitate the development of an institutional framework to harness the benefits of migration as a livelihood strategy is stressed.

The majority of the population mobility in Uttarakhand is of temporary migration. As per the available data 3,83,726 persons form of temporary migration are present in 6,338 Gram Panchayats and this shows that temporary migration has a huge spread to many villages of the state. The temporary migrants migrate for short periods to nearby towns, or to remote cities of Dehradun and Haldwani, Delhi and other parts of North India in search of wage labour, construction work, service sector job and informal employment. Only one or two persons of a household migrates leaving strong economic and social bonds with the mother's native village. The remittance sent by such temporary migrants are useful to meet the household consumption, education and health care expenses in rural areas.

Although permanent migration occurs in a much smaller number of rural areas than seasonal one, it is equally insidious and a cause for great concern among the environmental planners, policymakers and development specialists keen on the socio-economic and demographic restructuring of the hilly areas. The data show 1,18,981 permanent migrants originated from 3,946 Gram Panchayats. The departure and relocation of "whole families" seek the provision of better facilities and opportunities such as modern school, health centre, employment in good job and improved standard of living. 18,981 permanent migrants originated from 3,946 Gram Panchayats (Table 10.1). As per the census 2011, there are 2,23,560 Labour Labourers, a mothball in the background of the population, as already illustrated in Figure 10.7. A good example of how the permanent exodus has stopped the growth of the rural population and by extension, expanded the size of the "ghost villages" (partly or wholly depopulated villages) in the hilly areas is Benzamohi, a hill village panchayat with about 210 families, even though the 1991 data showed 585 families in the area. Four of the five last recorded

The overall effect of migration in Uttarakhand, through changes in social, economic, political, cultural, ecological and demographic structures of origin and destination communities, has been studied. While the economic aspects of migration, namely, remittances, decrease the depletion rate of resources available at the origin, they cause labour shortages in agriculture and the disappearance of traditional farming practice. The social aspects of migration have brought about the breakdown of the joint family system and a change in the family relations pattern. In rural areas, the livelihood and social welfare of women, elderly and children have increased in terms of time since they are left behind by the migrants. In the destination communities, urban status has increased, congestion of the cities resulting in the

worsening of infrastructure and the growth of slums. Also in the destination areas, there is an erosion of political participation patterns of migrants including their participation in village panchayats and labour movements as well as the loss of the informal network of dependencies. The major problem faced by migrants in terms of treatment has been the discrimination against them, shearing them away from the mainstream of the civic community. The rural economy depends on agriculture, which has decreased due to lack of labour. This has increased the dependence on food grains from outside. Migration has also

Table No. 1 Migration in the Uttarakhand State

State	Temporary Migration		Permanent Migration	
	No. of Migrant	Gram Panchayat	No. of Migrant	Gram Panchayat
Uttarakhand	383726	6338	118981	3946

Sources: Palayan Ayog Report, 2018

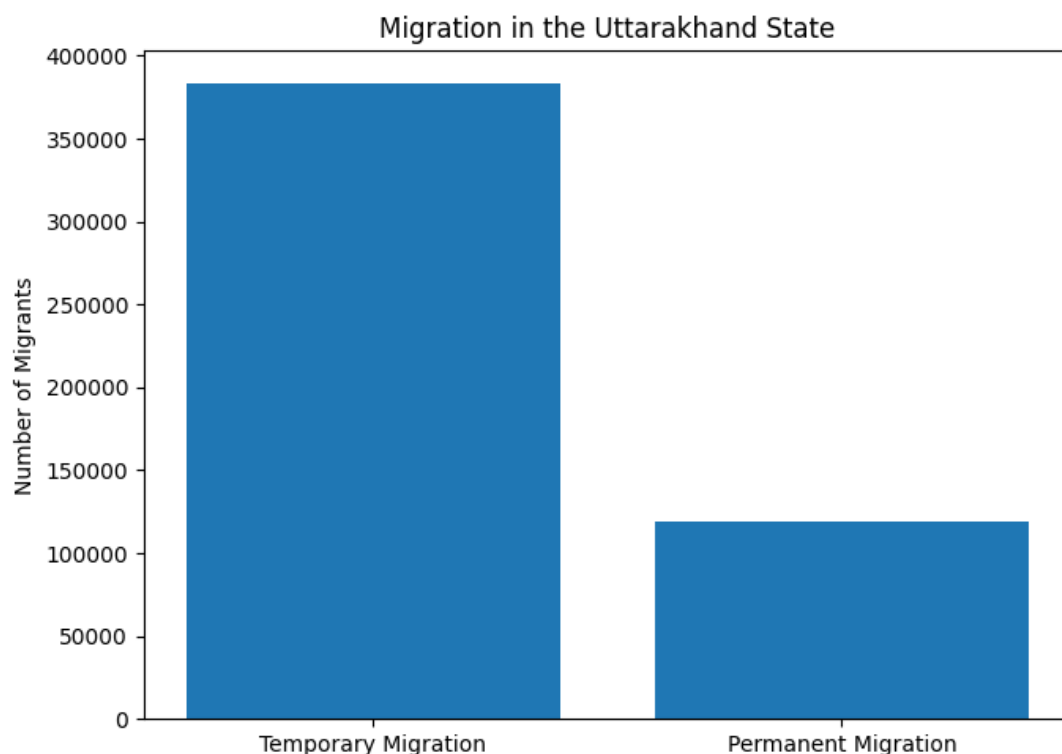


Diagram No. 1 Migration in the Uttarakhand State

District wise migration in the Uttarakhand Himalaya

A census of India (2011) indicates significant out-migration from hill districts. Relying on census derived indicators such as decline in rural population in hill districts, we observe that paucity of population in the several villages of these districts has raised the phenomenon of “ghost villages” due to large scale migration of males and families from such villages (Venkatesh 2016). The Government of Uttarakhand (2018) confirms the reality of this depopulation in hill districts, with a discussion of permanent migration and temporary migration due to a variety of reasons, although the major factor is employment. The NSSO (2010) provides substantial evidence that for Indians, and by extension the peasantry of India, migration is primarily a strategy for coping with employment and livelihood

insecurity, with the decline in employment opportunities being especially pronounced in mountainous regions.

The current district-wise temporary and permanent migration in the Uttarakhand Himalaya has shown a gradual shift from the traditional pattern due to changes in the causes of temporary migration. The level of both temporary and permanent migration varies widely from district to district. This is an indication of unequal development, unsuitable conditions for an agrarian lifestyle, fragile environment, and limited livelihood opportunities in the hill districts. The temporary migration, on the whole, dominates regardless of the district. However, in some districts (e.g., Chamoli, Pithoragarh, Champawat and Rudraprayag), permanent migration is on the rise. This implies a serious societal shift in those areas.

Table no.2 Correspondingly, Almora district shows a high migration intensity with about 53,611 temporary migrants spread across 1,022 Gram Panchayats and 16,207 permanent migrants from 646 Gram Panchayats. This is an indication of an extensive seasonal out-migration caused by low agricultural productivity, small landholdings and limited non-farm opportunities. Permanent migration from Almora is a result of long-term migration to the urban centres for better prospects such as education, employment and superior living standards.

In Bageshwar district temporary migration is seen with 23,388 migrants in 346 GPs and permanent migration is seen with 5,912 migrant in 195 GPs. Though the numbers of migrants are less in Bageshwar district as compared to other large districts but its drivers, such as rain fed agriculture, lack industrial activity and limited connectivity, explain the migration patterns.

Sample analysis of the migration patterns in Chamoli district revealed that, in 2014, there were 32,020 temporary and 14,289 permanent migrants from its 556 and 230 Gram Panchayats, respectively. The extreme climatic conditions, frequent natural hazards and limited agricultural options in higher altitudes require a dual pattern of both seasonal and permanent migration. Permanent migration has increased to such an extent that the rural population of several interior villages has declined over and above normal absenteeism. Though temporary migration enhances household incomes, it contributes directly to the declining rural population in many interior villages.

In Champawat district, 20,332 temporary migrants and 7,886 permanent migrants from 304 and 208 Gram Panchayats, respectively, mean moderate but stable levels of migration. The major causes/impetus for both types of migration are constrained employment prospects due to scarce resources, continuity of subsistence agriculture, and a lack of higher educational and health care facilities.

Pauri Garhwal is one of the most migration affected districts in Uttarakhand. It has 47,488 temporary and 25,584 permanent migrants in 1,025 and 821 Gram Panchayats respectively. The district is prominent in terms of “ghost villages” and large scale depopulation, a result of long term permanent migration which results in abandoned settlements, ageing population and decline in agriculture.

In Pithoragarh district temporary migration is associated with 31,786 migrants of 589 Gram Panchayats whereas permanent migration involves a total of 9,883 migrants of 384 Gram Panchayats. The distinct geographical features, isolated position and lack of employment opportunities in the district favor the temporary migration which is prevalent among a large part of the working-age population of the district whereas permanent migration is well marked due to the pursuit of educational and employment opportunities.

Rudraprayag district has 22,735 temporary migrants in 316 versus 7,835 permanent migrants in 373 gram Panchayats. Rudraprayag district is predominantly agrarian, with vulnerability to natural calamities coupled with lack of diversification thereby increasing the rates of forced migration among the youth.

The maximum temporary migration is observed in Tehri Garhwal where the migrating population is 71,509 from 934 Gram Panchayat and the maximum permanent migration from 230 Gram Panchayat which is 18,830. Migration pattern is mostly influenced by large scale displacement along with decreasing agricultural viability as well as by the development project like Tehri Dam.

In Uttarkashi district there are 19,893 temporary migrants from 376 Gram Panchayats and 2,727 permanent migrants from 111 Gram Panchayats. It is comparatively lesser permanent migration but seasonal migration is still essential in view of severe climatic condition and short vegetation period, and lack of available employment opportunities in the higher Himalayan region.

Table No. 2 District wise migration in the Uttarakhand Himalaya

District	Temporary Migration		Permanent Migration	
	No. of Migrant	Gram Panchayat	No. of Migrant	Gram Panchayat
Almora	53611	1022	16207	646
Bageshwar	23388	346	5912	195
Chamoli	32020	556	14289	230
Champawat	20332	304	7886	208
Pauri Garhwal	47488	1025	25584	821
Pithoragarh	31786	589	9883	384
Rudraprayag	22735	316	7835	373
Tehri Garhwal	71509	934	18830	230
Uttarkashi	19893	376	2727	111

Sources: Palayan Ayog Report, 2018

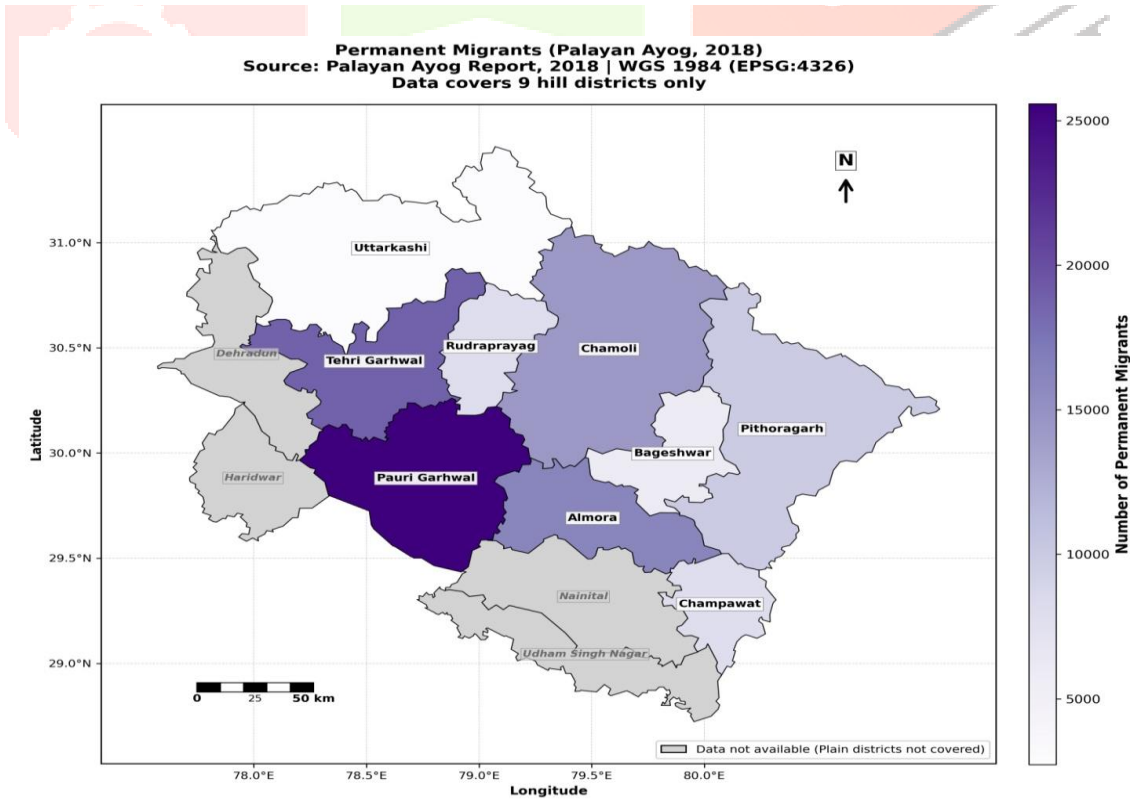
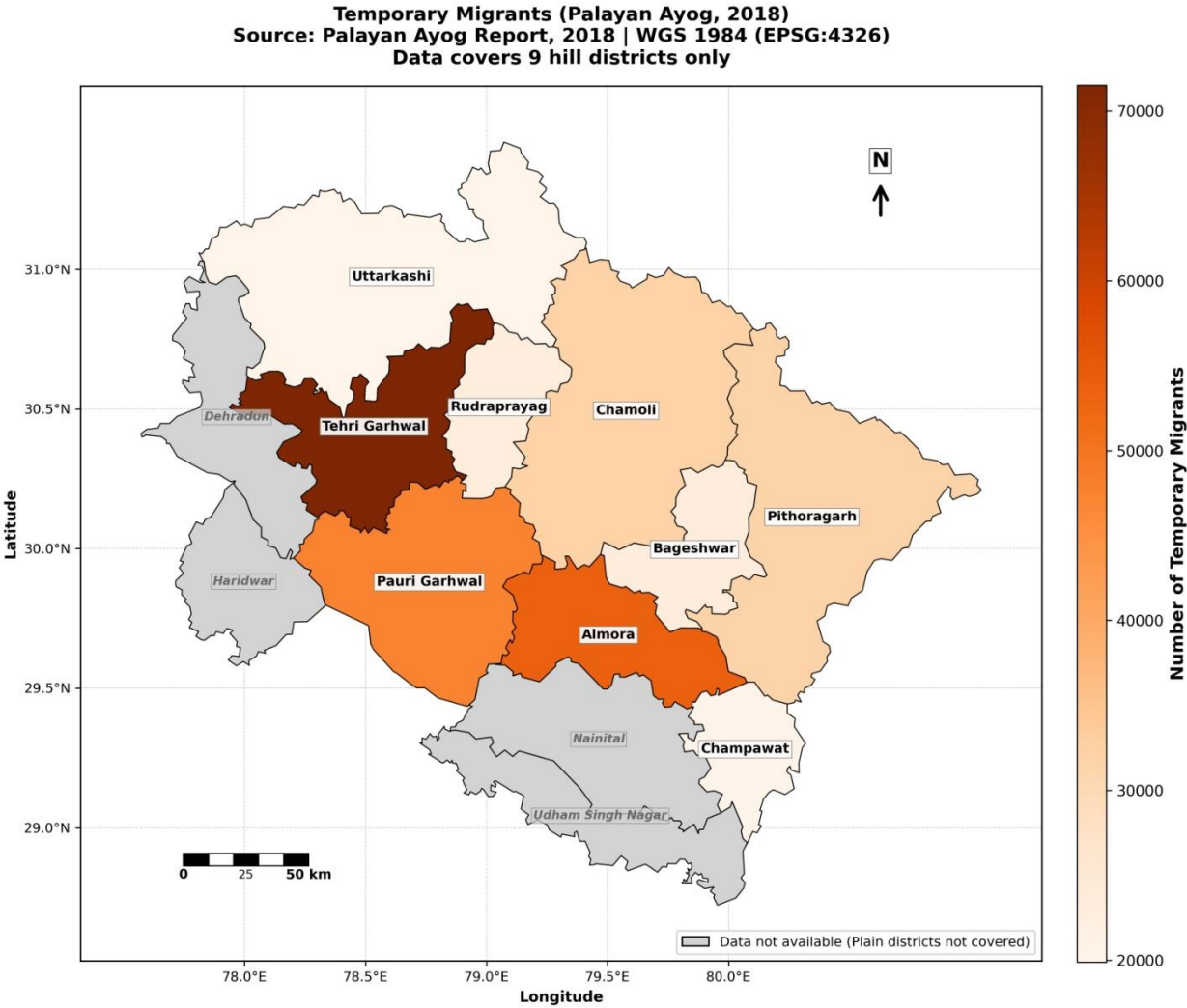


Diagram No.2 District-wise Migration in the Uttarakhand Himalaya

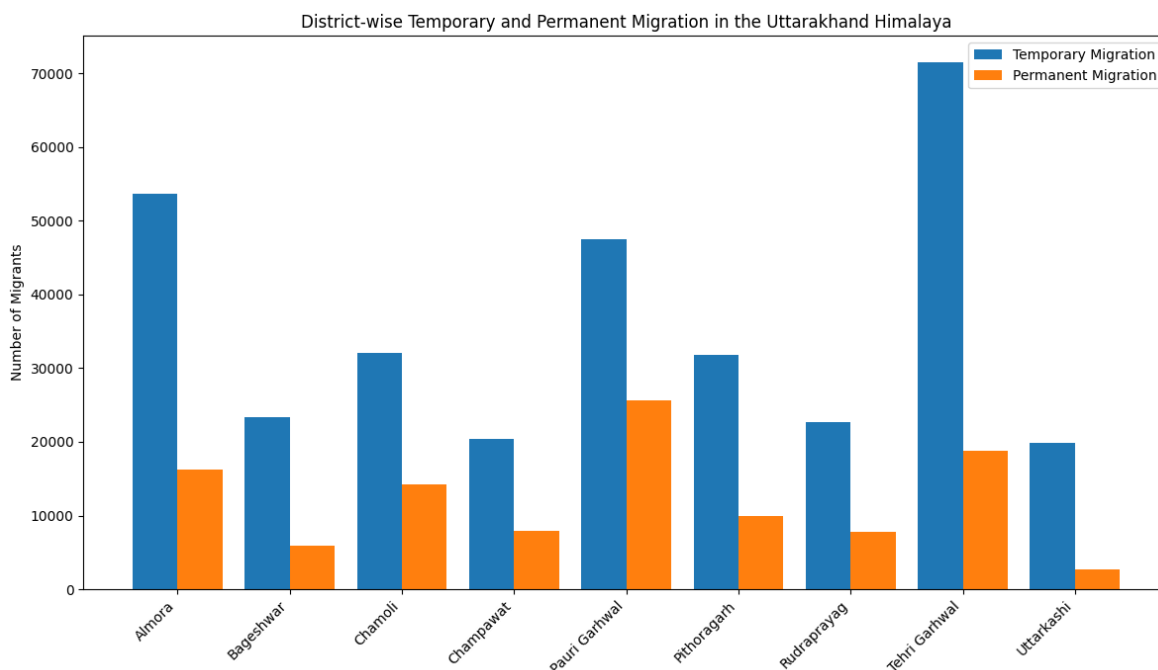


Fig. No.2 District-wise Migration in the Uttarakhand Himalaya

Causes of Migration in the Uttarakhand Himalaya

Migration and Land Use Change in the Sub-Himalayan Regions of North-Western Himalayas: A Review. Development: sustain & secure. 2020; 61(3): 175-192. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.devherb.2020.04.006>. Akhtar Z, Hasan M, Murarka R, Sarkar R. 2020. A review on migration and land use change in the sub-Himalayan regions of North-Western Himalaya. Development: sustain & secure, 61 (3), 175-192, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.devherb.2020.04.006>. Awasthi, B. K. (2011). Economic and social context of agrarian change in the Uttarakhand Himalaya. Economic Geographer, 87 (4), 409–426. <https://doi.org/10.2307/22912979>. Negi, K., & Maikhuri, R. (2017). Farming demography: Sub-Himalayan ambit of rural depopulation. Environment and Development, 9(1), 147–165. <https://doi.org/10.1016>

Table No. 3 Show Migration in the Uttarakhand Himalaya is a complex phenomenon that is a result of a combination of economic, social, environmental, and infrastructural factors. The district-wise analysis reveals that most of the migration is distress-driven, people are forced to leave their native villages either for better livelihood opportunities or in search of basic services. Despite differences in intensity, various factors that influence migration pattern in Uttarakhand Himalaya share some commonalities. Employment, education, and healthcare are the most significant drivers in the region.

Employment and Livelihood Constraint is the main factor for migration in all the Himalayan districts of Uttarakhand. The percentage of migration due to this factor is reported to be greater than or equal to 50% for Champawat (54.90%), Rudrapur (52.90%), Pauri Garhwal (52.58%) and Tehri Garhwal (52.43%) districts, due to subsistence agriculture, land fragmentation, dwindling farm productivity and lack of non-farm employment. This constraint drives working-age individuals from agricultural households to migrate elsewhere, either for short periods or permanently, towards plains or cities in search of better livelihood prospects.

Poor medical facilities also play a major role in migration, especially in Pauri Garhwal (11.26%), Chamoli (10.83%) and Pithoragarh (10.13%) districts. The remoteness, rough topography, scarcity of

doctors and lack of beds in hospitals push many families, mainly with old people and/or chronic patients, to migrate to the nearby towns and cities where health facilities are available.

Educational institutions also constitute a push factor especially in Chamoli (19.73%), Pithoragarh (19.52%), Tehri Garhwal (18.24%) and Uttarkashi (17.44%) districts. Lack of higher education institutions, poor school infrastructure and limited opportunities of quality education leads households to migrate to avail better education for their children and subsequent long term or permanent migration.

Poor road connectivity, unreliable transport, deficient digital infrastructure, limited basic amenities; these factors shaped migration decisions in Champawat, Chamoli and Pithoragarh. However, these factors were somewhat less prominent than the socio-economic demographics (employment, education) as they were reflected in fairly smaller percentages. Hence, migration appears to be driven more by the socio-economic demographics than infrastructure deficiencies. However, lack of infrastructure may be considered a hindrance to migration, and also a factor that intensifies the existing socio-economic disadvantages.

Declining land fertility and agricultural production is another important factor, in Uttarkashi (7.14 %), Almora (8.37%) and Tehri Garhwal (6.17%). Diminishing agricultural productivity, due to soil erosion, moisture stress and climate variability, and the abandonment of terraces make agriculture unsustainable, pushing the rural families to alternative livelihood options.

Attacks of wild animals on agriculture have become an important environmental cause of migration. Cropping is deterred by the crop damage caused by monkeys, wild boars, deer and other animals. The major crop damage areas include Almora (10.99%), Pauri Garhwal (6.27%) and Champawat (6.65%). The persistence of these losses and lack of adequate compensation mechanism have led to agriculture abandonment and migration.

Migration with families, though a smaller proportion, indicates a shift from temporary or seasonal migration to permanent relocation. Districts such as Champawat (4.30%) and Rudraprayag (3.26%) show comparatively higher family migration, reflecting long-term dissatisfaction with rural living conditions and the desire for stable access to education, healthcare, and employment. Finally, the category of 'other causes', notably high in Bageshwar (23.65%) and Uttarkashi (19.17%), suggests the influence of additional factors such as social aspirations, marriage, government service postings, natural disasters, and displacement due to development projects. These diverse factors underline the multifaceted nature of migration in the Himalayan context.

Table No. 3 Causes of Migration in the Uttarakhand Himalaya

Districts	Employment and livelihood	Medical facilities	Education facilities	Infrastructure development	Land fertility and production	Wild animal attack on agriculture	Migration with families	Others
Almora	47.78	8.51	11.75	11.75	8.37	10.99	2.68	6.02
Bageshwar	41.39	9.09	14.49	4.32	2.18	3.42	1.45	23.65
Chamoli	49.30	10.83	19.73	4.93	4.73	3.09	2.51	4.87
Champawat	54.90	6.67	10.24	5.46	6.31	6.65	4.30	5.46
Pauri Garhwal	52.58	11.26	15.78	3.03	5.35	6.27	2.53	3.21
Pithoragarh	42.81	10.13	19.52	4.97	4.66	4.08	2.36	11.48
Rudraprayag	52.90	8.64	15.57	4.43	4.27	5.11	3.26	5.72
Tehri Garhwal	52.43	7.84	18.24	3.07	6.17	4.26	2.47	5.52
Uttarkashi	41.77	6.04	17.44	2.29	7.14	4.04	2.10	19.17

Sources: Palayan Ayog Report, 2018

Causes of Migration in the Uttarakhand Himalaya (District-wise)

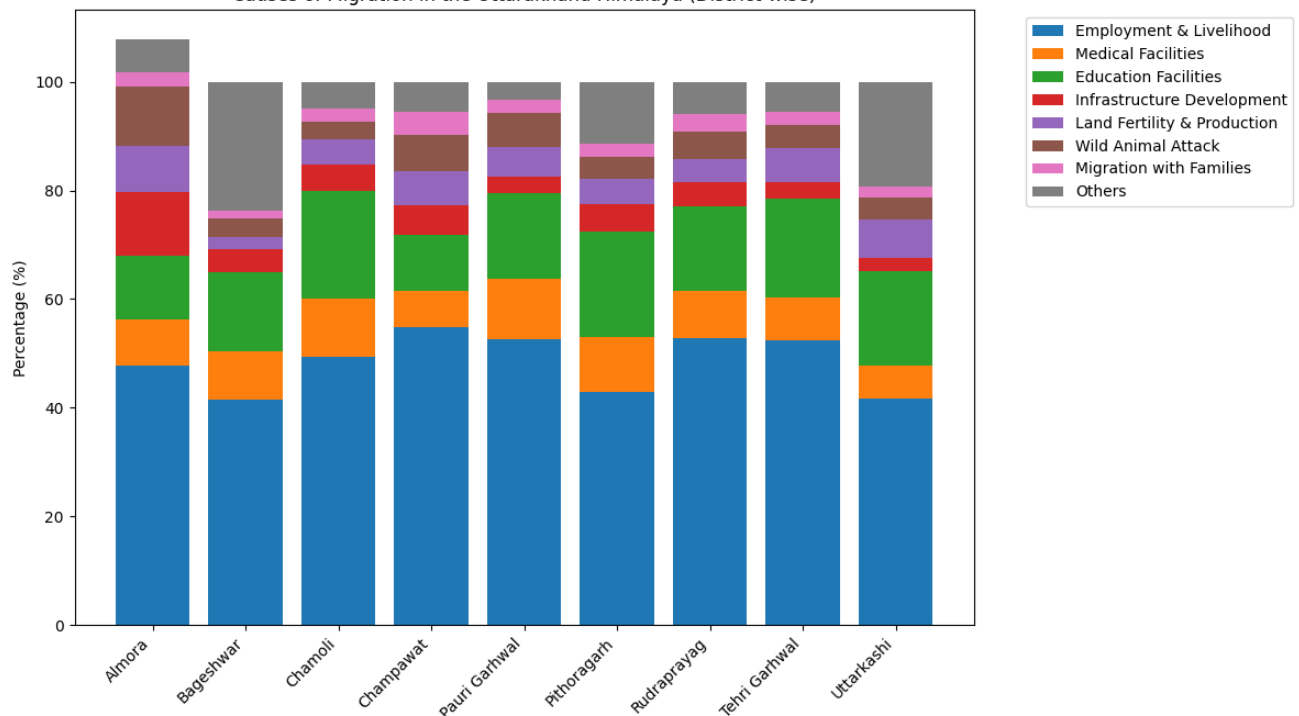


Diagram No. 3 Causes of Migration in the Uttarakhand Himalaya

Conclusion

The patterns of migration to Uttarakhand are complex and they reflect the challenging realities of development in this state. The number of temporarily and permanently migrated people is high among thousands of Gram Panchayats. The high rates of migration are because of high out-migration of people. The quantitative analysis shows how migration to the hill regions is influenced by the environmental constraints, economic constraints, constraints related to development. Quality of development is a major factor influencing the rate of migration. The policies for development are there but the problem is that they are not catered to the individual states, especially, the hill states. So, for Uttarakhand overall, development activities should be undertaken in terms of the location (Hill areas), the status (right now, there are lack of development activities) and the area. The activities for development should be in terms of development of rural infrastructure, promotion of agriculture, non-farm employment and in the areas of education and health.

The findings from this paper suggest a worrying trend of distress migration in the Himalayan regions of Uttarakhand. The phenomenon of temporary migration is widespread in the Himalayan hamlets with the exception of Kedar rural municipality of Garampani district while the people of Patti, Gairatganj, Dharchula and Pauri Garhwal districts and the people of Munsiyari, Ranikhet, Chaubara, Dalhousie and Bageshwar districts have been reported to be away from home for substantial amounts of time. In terms of the impact of migration on the hamlets in terms of people lost,

on the whole, migration from the Uttarakhand Himalaya is mainly caused by economic insecurity and lack of basic services, exacerbated by environmental stress and deteriorating sustainable agriculture. The district-wise differences suggest that livelihood creation, improvement of rural education and healthcare facilities, reducing human–wildlife conflict, and providing sustainable mountain agriculture will be strategic in reducing migratory expenditure from the districts of Uttarakhand placed in the Himalaya.

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