

## **SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION FROM RURAL PUNJAB: A CASE STUDY OF PATIALA DISTRICT**

**Gurinder Kaur<sup>1</sup>, Gian Singh<sup>2</sup>, Dharampal<sup>3</sup>, Rashmi<sup>4</sup>,  
Rupinder Kaur<sup>5</sup>, Sukhvir Kaur<sup>6</sup> and Jyoti<sup>7</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Professor, Department of Geography, Punjabi University, Patiala, E-mail: [gurinder2005@yahoo.co.in](mailto:gurinder2005@yahoo.co.in)

<sup>2</sup>Former Professor, Department of Economics, Punjabi University, Patiala, E-mail: [giansingb88@yahoo.com](mailto:giansingb88@yahoo.com)

<sup>3</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, GGSD College, KheriGurna, Banur  
E-mail: [dharampaleco@gmail.com](mailto:dharampaleco@gmail.com)

<sup>4</sup>Guest Faculty, Department of Geography, Punjabi University, Patiala, E-mail: [rashmi305@gmail.com](mailto:rashmi305@gmail.com)

<sup>5</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Punjabi University, Patiala  
E-mail: [rupinderkaur0076@gmail.com](mailto:rupinderkaur0076@gmail.com)

<sup>6</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Dashmesh Khalsa College, Zirakpur  
E-mail: [drsukhvir.sk@gmail.com](mailto:drsukhvir.sk@gmail.com)

<sup>7</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, GGSD College, KheriGurna, Banur  
E-mail: [gargj10@gmail.com](mailto:gargj10@gmail.com)

Received: 5 September 2020; Revised: 6 October 2020; Accepted: 10 Dec. 2020; Online: 29 December 2020

**Abstract:** Based on the primary data collected from 296 international migrants belonging to 207 households of rural Punjab, the study highlights the problems of 'Brain Drain', 'Capital Drain', and 'Loss of Demographic Dividend'. As many as 96.62 per cent of the people migrated from the age group of 15 to 45 years. A large majority of the migrants (92.57 per cent) belong to the General category. The *Jat* caste dominates among all the castes, with a proportion of 91.56 per cent. Most of the youngsters are migrating just after completing secondary level education. Unemployment, desire to earn more, better living conditions and good administration at destination, and peer pressure are the main reasons for migration of the people from rural Punjab. The process of migration saw a spurt after 2014. The most widely chosen destination countries are Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the U.S.A., and Italy. On an average, the migrants spend Rs.1190572.67 for their migration. This amount works out to Rs. 1529084.97 in case of the student category while it turns to be Rs. 828388.16 in the case of non-student category. Two-thirds of the migrants (65.88 per cent) have sent no remittance to their families. Because of the high cost of migration and low remittances, two-thirds of the households (66.67 per cent) are under debt.

**Keywords:** International migration, brain drain, capital drain, demographic dividend, unemployment, remittances, and debt.

**JEL Codes:** F22, F24, J11, J61, O15

International migration is the dimension that impacts the economic relations between the developed and the developing countries. It is also well recognized that migrant workers make huge contributions to economic and social development in both their host and home countries (Kumar

and Hussain, 2008). Since the 1880s there has been a regular stream of adventurous young men who have left their villages in Punjab to travel overseas. The initial destinations for the migrants were countries closer to home like Singapore and Hong Kong. Later, these became the stepping stones for journeys to more distant lands like Australia, Canada, and the U.S.A. (UNODC, 2009).

After World War II, the Great Britain needed labour for reconstruction; Canada initiated an economic expansion programme and the U.S.A. also opened its doors to Indians. Punjabis made use of all these developments and migrated in large numbers to these countries. Moreover, international migration started with recruitment to the British Army that opened avenues for migration to several other colonies of the British Empire, where Punjabis were posted to maintain law and order. Soon, voluntary migrations started. Among the destinations of early migrants were British colonies in the Far East, New Zealand, Australia, the U.K., Canada, the U.S.A., and Africa, especially East Africa. In 1970s, countries of the Middle East appeared as significant region of destination for migrant workers from India and Punjab too contributed to the pool of migrants (Kapurja, 2018). More recently, migration to countries of continental Europe has come into focus, especially countries of South Europe that have undergone a transformation from countries of origin of migrants to countries of destination (Jacobsen and Myrvold, 2011).

Until recently, Punjab was one of the best performing states in the country in terms of per capita income (highest among all major states in 1992-93). The state is rural in nature, with 62.51 per cent of the total population still residing in rural areas and the remaining 37.49 per cent in urban areas. Total workforce of the state was 9897362, out of which 3522966 were dependent on agriculture and allied activities which accounted for 35.60 per cent (Census, 2011). With the advent of 'Green Revolution', Punjab has emerged as the most advanced state in agricultural development. Overtime, though agricultural sector experienced a decline in the importance in terms of its share in Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) and work force, yet it remains the single most important sector of the state economy (Grover et al. 2017). State's agricultural sector grew at 5.7 per cent per annum during 1971-72 to 1985-86, while corresponding figure for India was 2.31 per cent (Gulatiet al., 2017). Soon, agricultural sector started to lose its sheen. Its growth rate fell to 3 per cent during 1986-87 to 2004-05 and further to 1.61 per cent during 2005-06 to 2014-15 (Gulati et al., 2017). The 'Green Revolution' has brought the negative impact on soil and water level, increased the cost of cultivation, accumulated debt level of the farmers and agricultural labourers and force them to commit suicides. Agricultural

sector's contribution to GSDP, which was about 44 per cent during the 1970s, declined to 39 per cent during the 1990s, further declined to 31 per cent in 2004-05 and to 23 per cent in 2010-11. In Per Capita Income terms, the state slipped to fifth position in 2004-05 and eleventh in 2013-14 at 2004-05 prices (Kapuria, 2018).

Punjab, the leading agricultural state of India, is also home to a vast share of Indians living abroad. The state of Punjab ranks second in terms of sending international migrants after Kerala (The Tribune, 2019). Emigration from Punjab has been consistently growing over last many decades and it ranks among the top states in India from where large scale emigration has happened. As per the Annual Report (2018-19) of Ministry of External Affairs, Punjab had a share of 6 per cent emigrants in the year 2018 only. Punjab has emerged as a testimony to the "Culture of Migration" as the proportion of households who have sent international migrants has improved from 3 per cent in the year 1992-1993 (NFHS-1) to about 11 per cent in 2010-11 (Nanda and Veron, 2015). At state level, the socio-economic differences exacerbates the incidence of emigration as 13 per cent households in rural areas and only 6 per cent households in urban areas showed likelihood to send migrants to international destinations (Nanda and Veron, 2015). In the present study, an endeavour has been made to analyse the socio-economic and demographic aspects of the international migration from rural Punjab.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Since information from the secondary sources is either limited or sketchy, the present study is based on the primary data. For the purpose of the study, five villages from Patiala district have been randomly selected. From these villages, all the households from where persons migrated to other countries during the period from 1951 to 2019 have been surveyed. The study pertained to 296 migrants from 207 households of these villages. The required primary data have been collected from the family members of migrants through the well prepared questionnaire-cum-schedule by the interview method. Standard statistical tools such as mean values and proportions have been used while carrying out tabular analysis; and the results have been shown through pie-chart, vertical and horizontal bar-diagrams and line graph.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

International migration is not about the migration of a single person of a family rather more than one or the entire family. Table 1 reveals that from

the total 207 surveyed households, the number of migrated persons is 296 which clearly reflects the fact that there are multiple migrants from some households. More than two-thirds of households (67.63 per cent) have single migrants and the remaining 32.37 per cent have multiple migrants. The percentage of households with two migrants is 23.67 per cent while 6.76 per cent have three migrants. Only 1.93 per cent households have four migrants. As many as 12 families have entirely migrated to other countries from these five villages.

**Table 1: Number of migrants and households surveyed**

Number of migrants	296
Number of households surveyed	207
Households with single migrant	140 (67.63)
Households with two migrants	49 (23.67)
Households with three migrants	14 (6.76)
Households with four migrants	4 (1.93)
Number of families which entirely migrated	12

*Source:* Field Survey, 2020 *Note:* The figures given in parentheses indicate percentages.

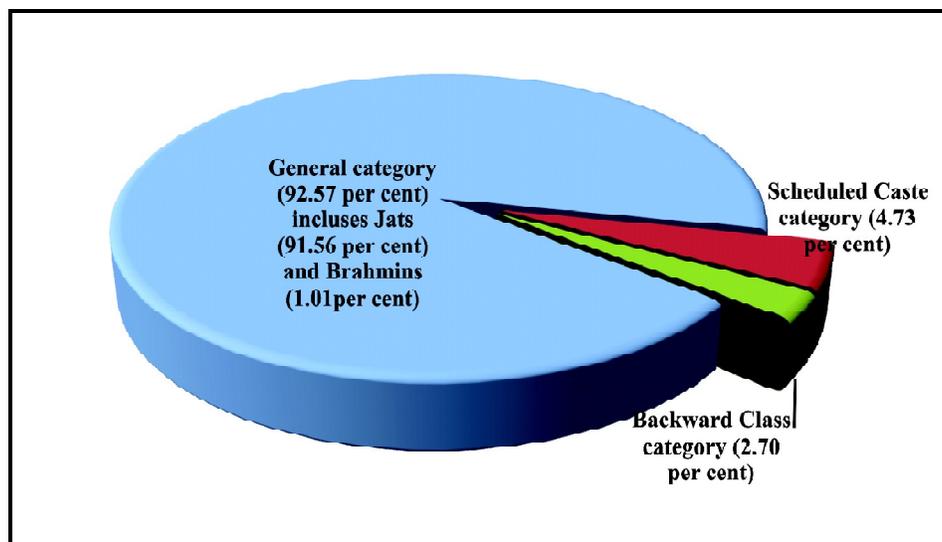
Caste and migration has no direct linkage but are indirectly linked with each other. The influence of caste on migration stems in the economic condition of the household. As per Census 2011, the state of Punjab has 31.94 per cent Scheduled Caste population, i.e., the highest proportion of Scheduled Caste population reported by any other state or union territory of India. The data showing the caste-wise distribution of the migrants are presented in Table 2 and Figure 1. The table highlights that a large majority of the migrants, i.e., 92.57 per cent belong to the General category, 4.73 per cent belong to the Scheduled Caste category and 2.70 per cent are from Backward Class category. The *Jat* caste dominates among all the castes, with the proportion of 91.56 per cent.

Indian society is a closely knit family where there was a culture of joint families. This cultural characteristic faded away in urban areas long time ago but its roots remained intact in the rural areas of India. Punjab prospered widely due to its agriculture that gained its strength from joint family system present in rural areas. However, with the change in socio-economic requirements, the land divisions gained importance and nuclear family system stated becoming an innate feature of rural areas as well. Table 3 reveals that a majority of the migrants, i.e., 56.42 per cent were living in

**Table 2: Caste-wise distribution of migrants**

<i>Category</i>	<i>Number of migrants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
General		
<i>Jat</i>	271	91.56
<i>Brahmin</i>	3	1.01
Sub-total (A)	274	92.57
Scheduled Caste		
<i>Gadriya</i>	8	2.70
<i>Ramdasia</i>	5	1.69
<i>Bazigar</i>	1	0.34
Sub-total (B)	14	4.73
Backward Class		
<i>Mehre/Jhewar</i>	3	1.01
<i>Ghumiar/Parjapat</i>	2	0.68
<i>Nai</i>	2	0.67
<i>Lohar</i>	1	0.34
Sub-total (C)	8	2.70
Total (A+B+C)	296	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2020

**Figure 1: Caste-wise distribution of migrants**

Source: Based on Table 2

the nuclear families while the remaining 43.58 per cent had the joint family system. Almost a similar pattern is observed in the case of General category. Out of the total, 54.02 per cent of the migrants had nuclear family system and 45.98 per cent were living in the joint families. However, in the case of Scheduled Caste and Backward Class categories, a large majority of the migrants, i.e., 92.86 and 75.00 per cent were living in the nuclear families respectively. Only 7.14 and 25.00 per cent of the migrants belonging to Scheduled Caste and Backward Class categories had joint family system respectively.

**Table 3: Distribution of migrants on the basis of type of family**

Type of family	Cast category			Aggregate
	General	Scheduled Caste	Backward Class	
Joint	126(45.98)	1(7.14)	2(25.00)	129(43.58)
Nuclear	148(54.02)	13(92.86)	6(75.00)	167(56.42)
Total	274(100.00)	14(100.00)	8(100.00)	296(100.00)

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Note: The figures given in parentheses indicate percentages.

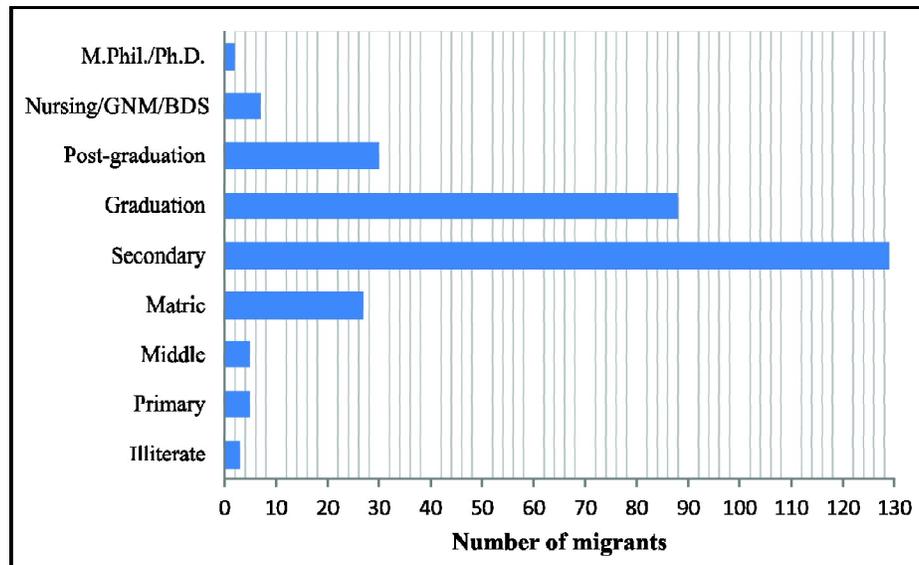
Education and migration share a strong relationship with each other as the better educated person has bright chances of assimilating in the socio-economic environment at the place of destination (Browne, 2017). The migration of highly educated migrants is often referred as 'Brain Drain' because the migrant moves to international destinations after acquiring best of the education and gives their services to the place of destination. The data showing the educational status of the migrants before going abroad are given in Table 5. The table reveals that out of the total 296 migrants, 43.58 per cent migrated after acquiring secondary level education. As many as 29.73 per cent migrated after completing their graduation while 10.14 per cent were post-graduates at the time of their migration. A small proportion of the migrants (2.37 per cent) had the qualification of nursing/GNM/BDS at the time of their migration. Two people (0.67 per cent) were M.Phil./Ph.D. holders when they migrated to the other countries. The analysis clearly highlights that even the people of the state with higher educational level consider a better option to settle in the foreign countries. It is noteworthy that the migrants with low level of education were either the elderly population who migrated along with their families or were female spouses of previously settled male migrants.

**Table 4: Educational status of migrants at the time of migration**

<i>Educational Status</i>	<i>Number of migrants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Illiterate	3	1.01
Primary	5	1.69
Middle	5	1.69
Matric	27	9.12
Secondary	129	43.58
Graduation	88	29.73
Post-graduation	30	10.14
Nursing/GNM/BDS	7	2.37
M.Phil./Ph.D.	2	0.67
Total	296	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Figure 2 clearly shows that most of the persons migrated to the other countries after completing their secondary level education followed by the graduates.

**Figure 2: Educational status of migrants at the time of migration**

Source: Based on Table 4

Age and migration has a strong linkage as the decision to migrate is undertaken mainly by population belonging to young and mature age group. It is primarily because migration is a risky affair and has several challenges and opportunities. Those who belong to active or working age

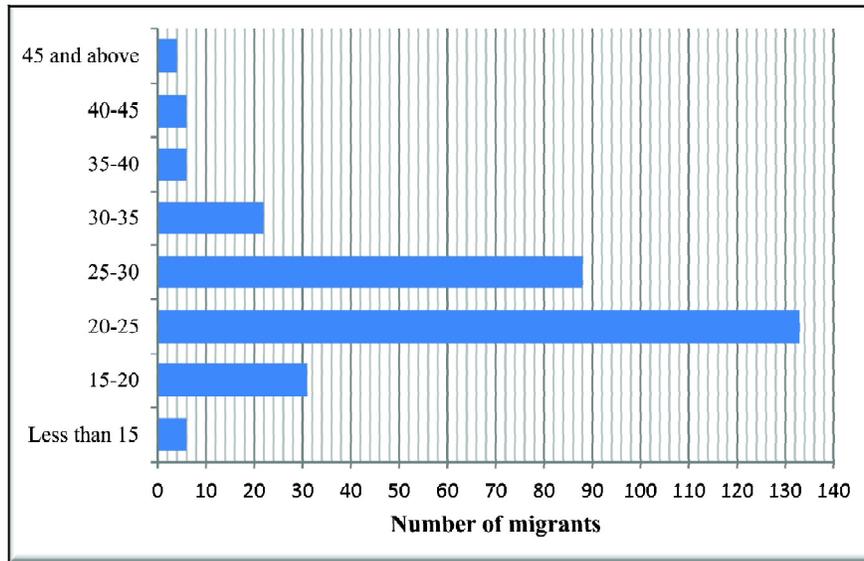
group as the capacity to endure the challenges and encash the opportunities provided by the process of migration. Table 6 gives the data regarding age of the migrants at the time of their migration to the foreign countries. The table shows that a very large majority of the migrants (96.62 per cent) were in the age group of 15 to 45 years at the time of their migration. Out of these migrants, slightly less than three-fourths of the total migrants (74.66 per cent) were in the age of 20 to 30 years when they migrated. This result goes well with the notion that migration in general and international migration in particular is a youth centric phenomenon. This finding of the study matches with another research study conducted by SamitaBehl(2017) which reveals that at the time of migration approximately 78 per cent of the migrants belonged to the age up to 30 years or below. This shows that the migration of youth at their early age somehow signifies that preferences to work for longer durations in the international job markets. Thus, international migration is supported by easy job opportunity in the international unskilled job market and this employment security somehow helps the young migrants to get easy and certain matrimonial alliances. This age group is considered as the most energetic and talented having new ideas of income generation and growth for the country. The study highlights the fact that migration of the young generation translates into a great loss of human resources, with the direct benefit accruing to the recipient countries who have not forked out the cost of educating them. The youth of any country are the most expensive resource because of their training in terms of material cost and time, and most importantly, because of lost opportunity (Dodani and Laporte, 2005).

**Table 5: Age-wise distribution of migrants at the time of migration**

<i>Age (In years)</i>	<i>Number of migrants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Less than 15	6	2.03
15-20	31	10.47
20-25	133	44.93
25-30	88	29.73
30-35	22	7.43
35-40	6	2.03
40-45	6	2.03
45 and above	4	1.35
Total	296	100.00

*Source:* Field Survey, 2020

It is clear from Figure 3 that maximum number of the persons migrated to the foreign countries in the age group of 20 to 25 years followed by the persons in age group of 25 to 30 years.

**Figure 3: Age-wise distribution of migrants at the time of migration**

Source: Based on Table 5

Besides being youth centric, the migration is also a male centric phenomenon. The predominance of males in the migration process is fuelled by high demand of males in the work scenario throughout the world. The male dominated society gives more precedence to male workers instead of their female counterparts and both the skilled as well as unskilled jobs open a major share of their opportunities for the male population. The data given in Table 4 exhibits the sex-wise distribution of the migrants from rural Punjab. The table shows that out 296 migrants, 173 are males and the remaining 123 are females. The males account for 58.45 per cent and the females are 41.55 per cent. A similar pattern is observed in the case of General category. But in the case of Scheduled Caste category, all the migrants are male while in the case of Backward Class category, 87.50 per cent are male and the remaining 12.50 per cent are female.

**Table 6: Sex-wise distribution of migrants**

Sex	Caste category			
	General	Scheduled Caste	Backward Class	Aggregate
Male	152(55.47)	14(100.00)	7(87.50)	173(58.45)
Female	122(44.53)	0(0.00)	1(12.50)	123(41.55)
Total	274(100.00)	14(100.00)	8(100.00)	296(100.00)

Source: Field Survey, 2020 **Note:** The figures given in parentheses indicate percentages.

High proportion of males in the emigration strengthens the fact that in the contemporary world, where almost equal level of education is provided to both the genders, the male counterpart is considered to be the primary bread winner and is given the responsibility to uplift the standard of living of his family. It is worthwhile to note that females also have a significant proportion (41.55 per cent) in the total surveyed migrant population. The female international migration from Punjab is mainly marriage centric where the girls move to international destinations as a spouse. However, in the present Punjab, the scenario has shifted completely as those girls who are educated and have scored high band scores are considered to be a ladder for international migration. Families which can afford money but do not have educated and able boys tend to allure families of these girls and after marrying them off, they sponsor their daughter-in-law's international travel, expenses and education. These girls later call upon their husbands living at the native place on spouse visa and with the passage of time, they work together to secure citizenship of the country of destination and then become a ticket to immigration for their respective families.

Table 7 shows the information regarding the destination countries of the migrants from rural Punjab. The table depicts that although the list of the destination countries is long yet the most widely chosen destination countries are Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the United States, and Italy - where 129, 66, 25, 17 and 16 persons from rural Punjab migrated. This finding of the study matches with another research study (Kapuria and Birwal, 2017) which shows that migration from Punjab has mostly been towards the developed countries of the West.

**Table 7: Country-wise distribution of migrants**

Destination Country	General category			Scheduled Cates category			Backward Class category			Total
	Jat	Brah-min	Gadr- iya	Ramd- asia	Bazi- gar	Mehre/ Jhewar	Ghumiar/ Parjapat	Nai	Lohar	
Canada	125	1		2				1		129
Australia	64	1						1		66
New Zealand	24					1				25
U.S.A.	17									17
Italy	15		1							16
Cyprus	1		4							5
Dubai	1	1		1				2		5
U.K.	5									5

*contd. table 7*

Destination Country	General category		Scheduled Cates category				Backward Class category			Total
	Jat	Brah-min	Gadr- iya	Ramd- asia	Bazi- gar	Mehre/ Jhewar	Ghumiar/ Parjapat	Nai	Lohar	
Germany	3		1							4
Jordan			2	2						4
Bahrain	3									3
South Africa	2								1	3
Malaysia					1	1				2
Saudi Arabia	1					1				2
Singapore	2									2
Spain	2									2
Sweden	2									2
Kuwait	1									1
Philippines	1									1
Portugal	1									1
Thailand	1									1
Total	271	3	8	5	1	3	2	2	1	296

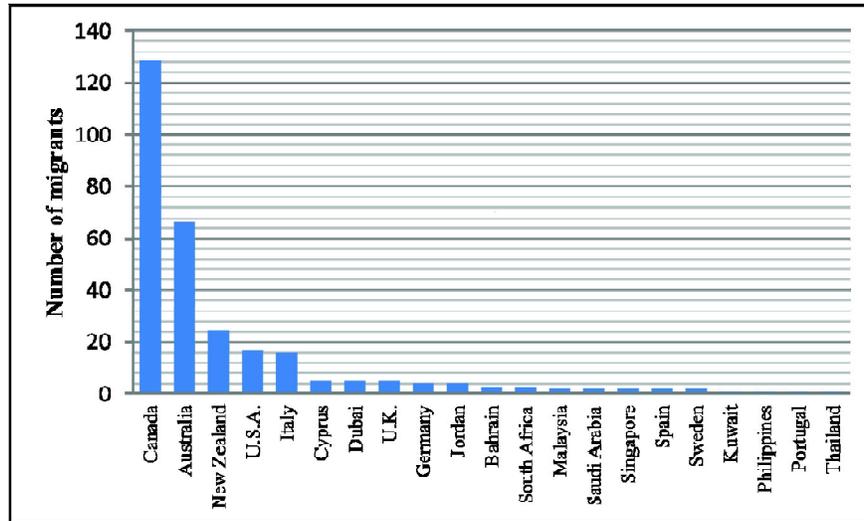
Source: Field Survey, 2020

With the Canadian government being the most liberal among the developed countries in the grant of Permanent Residency, and opening up as many as 200 colleges to international students, Punjabi youth are making full use of the opportunity. As many as 1.25 lakh students from the state chose Canada this year for education - while only 25,000 picked Australia, New Zealand, the U.S.A., and the U.K., where laws and policies have become very stringent (The Tribune, 2018). The table further shows that in the case of General category, the most preferable destination countries are Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the United States, and Italy. However, in the case of Scheduled Caste category, Cyprus and Jordan are the most preferable destination countries where four persons each from this category migrated to Cyprus, and Jordan. Two persons from Backward Class category migrated to Dubai, and one person each from this category migrated to Canada, Malaysia, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and Saudi Arabia.

It is clearly evident from Figure 4 that the most preferable destination country for the migrants of rural Punjab is Canada, followed by Australia, New Zealand, the U.S.A., and Italy.

The details of the farm-size categories of the migrants' families are given in Table 8. The table reveals that out of the total families of migrants from rural Punjab, the maximum proportion of the families, i.e., 24.64 per cent

Figure 4: Country-wise distribution of migrants



Source: Based on Table 6

have land holdings in the range of 2.51 to 5.00 acres. Slightly more than 20 per cent of the families have land holdings of more than 10 acres. This is followed by 17.39, 14.01 and 13.04 per cent of the migrants' families who have land holdings in the range of 7.51 to 10.00 acres, less than 2.51 acres, and 5.01 to 7.50 acres respectively. Out of total, 10.63 per cent of the migrants' families have no farm land.

Table 8: Distribution of migrants on the basis of farm-size categories

Farm size (In acres)	Caste category			
	General	Scheduled Caste	Backward Class	Aggregate
Landless	4(2.15)	12(92.31)	6(75.00)	22(10.63)
less than 2.50	26(13.98)	1(7.69)	2(25.00)	29(14.01)
2.51-5.00	51(27.42)	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	51(24.64)
5.01-7.50	27(14.52)	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	27(13.04)
7.51-10.00	36(19.35)	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	36(17.39)
10.01 and above	42(22.58)	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	42(20.29)
Total	186(100.00)	13(100.00)	8(100.00)	207(100.00)

Note: The figures given in parentheses indicate percentages.

Source: Field Survey, 2020

The caste-wise analysis of the table shows that majority of the families belonging to the Scheduled Caste and Backward Class categories are

landless. The data in the table have an important implication that international migration is too expensive task. Mostly the Jatcasteis capable to afford it as they have land holdings which can be mortgaged for raising the funds.

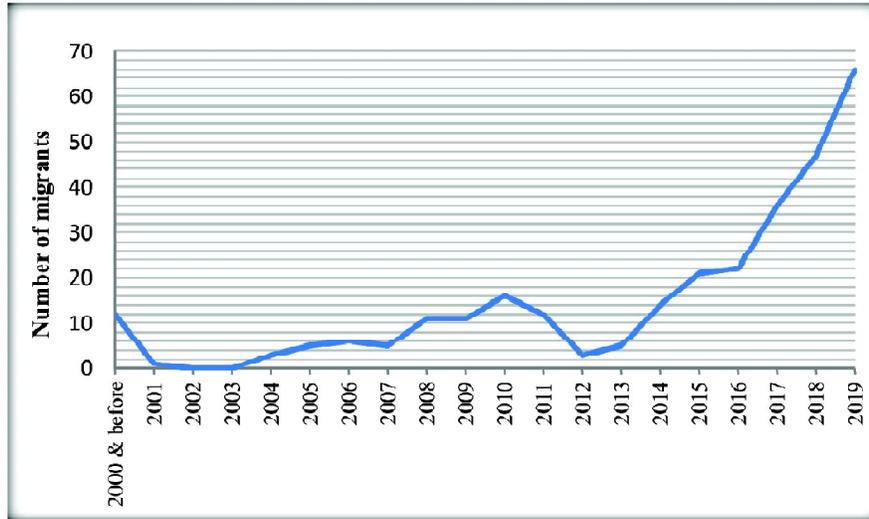
A look at Table 9 and Figure 5 reveals that out of the total 296 migrants from rural Punjab, 22.30 per cent of the people migrated in 2019, 15.88 per cent in 2018, 12.16 per cent in 2017, 7.43 per cent in 2016, 7.09 per cent 2015, 5.41 per cent in 2010 and less than 5 per cent in the other years. These figures clearly highlight the fact that the process of migration saw a spurt after 2014. Travel agents engaged in facilitating the Canadian visa for students said that the trend has seen a spurt since 2016, when around 75,000 students from Punjab had gone to the country (The Tribune, 2018).

**Table 9: Distribution of migrants according to year of migration**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of migrants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
2019	66	22.30
2018	47	15.88
2017	36	12.16
2016	22	7.43
2015	21	7.09
2014	14	4.73
2013	5	1.69
2012	3	1.01
2011	12	4.05
2010	16	5.41
2009	11	3.72
2008	11	3.72
2007	5	1.69
2006	6	2.03
2005	5	1.69
2004	3	1.01
2003	0	0.00
2002	0	0.00
2001	1	0.34
2000 and before	12	4.05
Total	296	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2020

The channel of migration refers to the way adopted by migrants during the migration process. Throughout the world, migration is attempted through both legal and illegal channels. Where legal channel is time consuming and involves less risk, the illegal migration is an attempt to

**Figure 5: Distribution of migrants according to year of migration**

Source: Based on Table 9

enter other country by bypassing the administrative and legal set up of the country, thereby making it a highly risky affair. One of the positive aspects of the study is that in 92.91 per cent cases, the channel of migration is legal while only in 7.09 per cent cases, it is illegal. The table further reveals that out of the illegal migrants, 4.05 per cent of the people migrated to the other countries on work visa while 3.04 per cent on visitor visa (Table 10). As UNODC (2009) report shows a large number of Punjabi youth under the impression of finding greener pastures in foreign lands, is trapped into the agent-smuggler nexus. Illegal status in destination countries only makes them vulnerable to exploitation.

**Table 10: Distribution of migrants on the basis of channels of migration**

<i>Channels of migration</i>	<i>Number of migrants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Legal	275	92.91
Illegal	21	7.09
Total	296	100.00
Types of visa for illegal migration		
1) Work	12	4.05
2) Visitor	9	3.04
Total	21	7.09

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Note: The figures given in parentheses indicate percentages.

Table 11 exhibits that more than half of the persons (51.69 per cent) migrated on study visa while slightly more than one-fourth, i.e., 25.34 per cent on work visa. As many as 17.23 per cent of the persons migrated on spouse visa whereas a small proportion of the persons (3.72 per cent) migrated on visitor visa. Only 2.03 per cent of the persons have family based or blood relation type of visa to migrate abroad. The table further shows that among the Scheduled Caste and Backward Class categories, maximum proportion of the persons migrating to the foreign countries for work purpose as they have no job in the country. However, in the case of General category, 54.01 per cent of the persons migrated for study purpose. Only 21.53 and 18.25 per cent persons from General category have work visa and spouse visa respectively to migrate abroad.

**Table 11: Type of visa for migration**

Particulars	Caste category			
	General caste	Scheduled Caste	Backward Class	Aggregate
1) Student	148(54.01)	3(21.43)	2(25.00)	153(51.69)
2) Work	59(21.53)	11(78.57)	5(62.50)	75(25.34)
3) Spouse	50(18.25)	0(0.00)	1(12.50)	51(17.23)
4) Visitor	11(4.01)	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	11(3.72)
5) Family based/ blood relation	6(2.19)	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	6(2.03)
Total	274(100.00)	14(100.00)	8(100.00)	296(100.00)

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Note: The figures given in parentheses indicate percentages

If anyone wants to migrate to the foreign countries for acquiring higher education, working, professional recognition or for the permanent residency, then he/she is required to present evidence of English language proficiency. There are some basic tests of English language such as IELTS/TOEFL/GRE/SAT/PTE which are accepted by the foreign countries where English is the main mode of communication. The details regarding the basic test of English language passed by the migrants to go abroad are presented in Table 12. The table shows that out of total 296 migrants, more than two-thirds of the migrants (68.24 per cent) have passed the test while remaining 31.76 per cent have not passed any such type of test.

The reasons or the factors that affect migration are also called drivers of migration. These are usually multitude in number as the decision to migrate is never influenced by a single factor; rather it is a combination of several contributing factors that play a decisive role in inducing or inhibiting

**Table 12: Basic tests of English language passed by migrants to go abroad**

<i>Particulars</i>	<i>Number of migrants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Migrants having English language test, i.e., IELTS/TOEFL/GRE/ SAT/ PTE	202	68.24
Migrants not having any english language test	94	31.76
Total	296	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2020

migration. The decision to migrate to international destinations is always a tricky one as this type of migration contains high risks as well as high gains. The factors that affect migration are usually categorised as push and pull factors. These factors vary for both the place of origin and place of destination. The push factors include increasing unemployment, agricultural distress, population growth, and social issues like drug menace etc. The international destinations also generate several pull factors such as economic development, better educational and administration facilities, family unification, better living condition, greener pastures of employment, high remuneration from work etc. When the migrants or their family members are interviewed regarding the reasons for the migration then they cited the following push and pull factors (Table 13):

**Table 13: Drivers of migration\***

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Particulars</i>	<i>Number of migrants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
A.	Push factors		
1.	Unemployment	154	52.03
2.	Peer pressure	73	24.66
3.	Drug menace	27	9.12
B.	Pull factors		
1.	Desire to earn more	137	46.28
2.	Better living conditions and good administration at destination	126	42.57
3.	Family migration	13	4.39
4.	Acquiring higher education	6	2.03

Source: Field Survey, 2020\*Multiple reasons

- In the case of 52.03 per cent migrants, their family members confessed that unemployment is the main reason for migration of their children.
- As many as 46.28 per cent of the family members of migrants admitted that their children's desire to earn more motivated them for migration.

- Better living conditions and good administration at destination attracted 42.57 per cent of the migrants.
- Slightly less than one-third of the people (24.66 per cent) migrated to the foreign countries because they feel peer pressure, as their family members stated.
- As many as 9.12 per cent of the family members of migrants cited that their children migrated abroad because of the drug menace in Punjab.
- A small proportion of the people (4.39 per cent) migrated because their families are settled in the foreign countries.
- Only 2.03 per cent of the people migrated to the foreign countries for acquiring higher education, as admitted by their family members.

The above analysis clearly reflects that unemployment, desire to earn more, better living conditions and administration at destination, and peer pressure are the main reasons for migration from rural Punjab.

The study shows that 153 persons migrated to the foreign countries for study purpose. Therefore, the information regarding the courses opted by the students in the foreign countries is given in Table 14. The table shows that more than one-fourth of the students (26.14 per cent) opted degree/diploma courses in the stream of commerce and management. This is followed by 10.46, 9.80, 7.84, 4.58 and 2.62 per cent of the students who opted degree/diploma courses in the stream of non-medical, medical, hotel management, IT, and arts respectively. Interestingly, the parents of 38.56 per cent of the students don't know about the course opted by their wards.

**Table 14: Courses opted by the student migrants in foreign countries**

<i>Particulars</i>	<i>Number of migrants</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Degree/diploma in commerce and management	40	26.14
Degree/diploma in medical	15	9.80
Degree/diploma in non-medical	16	10.46
Degree/diploma in hotel management	12	7.84
Degree/diploma in IT	7	4.58
Degree/diploma in arts	4	2.62
Don't know	59	38.56
Total	153	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2020

The data pertaining to occupation of the migrants prior to their migration and after the migration from rural Punjab is given in Table 15.

The table highlights that more than half of the migrants (52.03 per cent) were the students prior to their migration. Slightly less than one-fifth of the migrants (18.92 per cent) were farmers. As many as 11.48 per cent of the migrants reported that they were unemployed and the same proportion of the migrants, i.e., 11.48 per cent were doing their household work.

**Table 15: Occupation of the migrants prior to and after migration**

<i>Particulars</i>	<i>Prior to migration</i>	<i>After migration</i>
1) Agriculture	56 (18.92)	5 (1.69)
2) Household work	34 (11.48)	19 (6.42)
3) Private job	10 (3.38)	96 (32.43)
4) Study	154 (52.03)	111 (37.50)
5) Unemployed	34 (11.48)	0 (0.00)
6) Labour	4 (1.35)	5 (1.69)
7) Government job	1 (0.34)	0 (0.00)
8) Own business/self-employment	2 (0.68)	12 (4.05)
9) Driving	0 (0.00)	46 (15.54)
10) Others	1 (0.34)	2 (0.68)
Total	296 (100.00)	296 (100.00)

*Source:* Field Survey, 2020

*Note:* The figures given in parentheses indicate percentages.

As far as the occupations of the migrants after the migration are concerned, the table reveals that the maximum proportion of the migrants, i.e., 37.50 per cent is pursuing their study in the foreign countries. Less than one-third of the migrants, i.e., 32.43 per cent are in private jobs while 15.54 per cent are in the occupation of driving in the foreign countries. It is evident from the analysis that Punjabis have migrated to various countries of the world to meet the demand of less skilled workers. A research study conducted by Kapuria and Birwal (2017) also produces the same results.

The data regarding the expenditure incurred by the migrants for migration to the foreign countries are presented in Table 16. The table

exhibits that the maximum proportion of the migrants (27.02 per cent) spends in the range from Rs. 15 to 20 lakh for migration. Slightly less than 24 per cent of the migrants spend less than Rs. 5 lakh for migration. This is followed by 15.53, 14.86, 11.83, and 4.40 per cent of the migrants who spend in the ranges from Rs. 10 to 15; 5 to 10; and 20 to 25 lakh respectively. Only 2.36 per cent of the migrants spend Rs. 30 lakh and above for this purpose.

**Table 16: Expenditure-wise distribution of migrants**

Expenditure (In Rs., lakhs)	Types of visa					
	Student	Work	Spouse	Visitor	Family based/ blood relation	Aggregate
Less than 5	6 (3.92)	33 (44.00)	19 (37.25)	7 (63.64)	6 (100.00)	71 (23.99)
5-10	14 (9.15)	21 (28.00)	8 (15.69)	1 (9.09)	0 (0.00)	44 (14.86)
10-15	29 (18.95)	13 (17.33)	3 (5.88)	1 (9.09)	0 (0.00)	46 (15.53)
15-20	68 (44.44)	5 (6.67)	6 (11.77)	1 (9.09)	0 (0.00)	80 (27.02)
20-25	28 (18.31)	2 (2.67)	5 (9.80)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	35 (11.83)
25-30	6 (3.92)	0 (0.00)	6 (11.77)	1 (9.09)	0 (0.00)	13 (4.40)
30 and above	2 (1.31)	1 (1.33)	4 (7.84)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	7 (2.36)
Total	153 (100.00)	75 (100.00)	51 (100.00)	11 (100.00)	6 (100.00)	296 (100.00)

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Note: The figures given in parentheses indicate percentages.

In the case of student visa, the maximum proportion of the migrants (44.44 per cent) spends in the range from Rs. 15 to 20 lakh for the migration. A report posted in The Tribune (2018) also explains that the emigration process comes at a cost- Rs. 15 to 22 lakh for the first year of study, depending on the institute, course and country. Multiplied by the number of students flying out, that amounts to approximately Rs. 27,000 crore going out of Punjab each year on account of student education. In the case of non-student type visa, the maximum proportion of the migrants spends less than Rs. 5 lakh for migration.

The data showing the average amount of funds arranged by the migrants from different sources given in Table 17 highlight that the migrants spend, on an average, Rs.1190572.67 for their migration. This amount works

out to Rs. 1529084.97 in case of the student category. On the other hand, the migrants belonging to non-student category spend Rs. 828388.16 for this purpose.

**Table 17: Average amount of funds arranged by migrants from different sources**

S. No.	Sources	Student Category	Others	Aggregate
1.	Family savings	505555.56 (33.06)	290185.36 (35.03)	401508.47 (33.72)
2.	Loan from banks	452941.18 (29.62)	141958.05 (17.14)	302702.71 (25.42)
3.	Selling of land/plot/ornaments/vehicle/ animals agricultural machinery	215359.48 (14.08)	193986.01 (23.42)	205033.79 (17.22)
4.	Money-lenders	141503.27 (9.25)	118671.33 (14.33)	130472.97 (10.96)
5.	Loan/help from relatives	116339.87 (7.61)	58342.66 (7.04)	88320.95 (7.42)
6.	Funding by would be in-laws	68627.45 (4.49)	13286.71 (1.60)	41891.89 (3.52)
7.	Co-operative societies/banks	28104.58 (1.84)	10209.79 (1.23)	19459.46 (1.64)
8.	Employers/institutions	653.58 (0.05)	1748.25 (0.21)	1182.43 (0.10)
	Total	1529084.97 (100.00)	828388.16 (100.00)	1190572.67 (100.00)

Source: Field Survey, 2020 Note: The figures given in parentheses indicate percentages.

As far as the aggregate sources of funding are concerned, more than one-third proportion (33.72 per cent) of the total expenditure, i.e., Rs. 401508.47 comes from the savings of the families of the migrants. It has been observed that the migrants arrange 25.42 per cent of the total expenditure from banks which amounts to Rs. 302702.71. In some of the cases, the migrants have to sell their land/plot/ornaments/vehicle/animals/ agricultural machinery for arranging the funds. In the present study, this source of funding has contributed Rs. 205033.79 which forms 17.22 per cent of total cost of migration. The study further reveals that the migrants also take loans from money-lenders which provide 10.96 per cent of the total funds which amounts to Rs. 130472.97. It is worth mentioning here that relatives of the migrants and even would be in-laws have also to bear the cost of their migration. The data shows that the contribution of relatives in total cost of migration is 7.42 per cent (Rs. 88320.95). As far as the cost of migration borne by would be in-laws is concerned, it is Rs. 41891.89 which is 3.52 per cent of the total migration cost. The migrants also received Rs.

88320.95 from their relatives in the form of loan/help. The relatives contribute 7.42 per cent of the total funds. The migrants received only Rs. 19459.46 and 1182.43 from co-operative societies/banks and employers/institutions respectively which form 1.64 and 0.10 per cent of the total funds used for migration respectively

As far as the sources of funding among the student and non-student categories are concerned, a slight different pattern has been observed. The data shows that migrants of student category are taking more loans from banks (29.62 per cent) than the other migrants (17.14 per cent). On the contrary, the other migrants are raising more funds through selling of their land/plot/ornaments/vehicle/animals/agricultural machinery (23.42 per cent) and through money-lenders (14.33 per cent) while the student migrants are raising less funds through these sources with the proportions of 14.08 and 9.25 per cent respectively. It is pertinent to note here that the proportion of funding by would be in-laws is more in student category migrants than other migrants. While the proportion of funding through the other remaining sources is almost same among the student and the other migrants.

Migration becomes a favourable experience for the families whose migrant members start sending remittances after joining the workforce at the place of destination. The term 'remittance' refers to the monetary

**Table 18: Remittances inflow to the migrants' families**

a) Has the family received any remittances?	Number of migrants	Percentages
Yes	101	34.12
No	195	65.88
Total	296	100.00

b) Amount-wise distribution of migrants		
Amount (In Rs.)		
Less than 50000	22	7.43
50000-100000	24	8.11
100000-150000	18	6.08
150000-200000	10	3.38
200000-250000	5	1.69
250000-300000	7	2.36
300000-350000	7	2.36
350000-400000	3	1.01
400000 and above	5	1.69
Total	101	34.12

Source: Field Survey, 2020

transfers made by migrants to their country of origin. These can also include investments, deposits and donations made by migrants in the country of origin (OSCE, IOM, ILO 2006). However, studying abroad is an expensive affair with a variety of costs involved like tuition fees, living expenses and travel expenses, etc. Many students opt for part-time jobs abroad while studying to meet of their extra expenses. To attract international students, many countries allow students to engage in some kind of part-time jobs to help them funding their expenses. While some countries ask students to apply for separate work permits to work during studies, others let the students to work on their student visa itself, although, only for restricted hours usually spanning 10-20 hours a week (Kaur, 2019). Table 18 shows that only slightly more than one-third of the migrants (34.12 per cent) have sent remittances to their families while two-thirds of the migrants (65.88 per cent) have sent no remittance to their families.

The table further shows that out of 34.12 per cent migrants who have sent remittances, 74 migrants (25 per cent) have sent the remittances of less than Rs. 200000. Only 1.69 per cent of the migrants have sent the total remittances of Rs. 400000 and above to their families.

Because of the high cost of migration and low remittances, two-thirds of the families (66.67 per cent) reported that they are under debt (Table 19).

**Table 19: Debt position of migrants' families**

Amount (In Rs., lakhs)	Caste category			
	General	Scheduled Caste	Backward Class	Aggregate
Zero	67 (36.02)	1 (7.14)	1 (14.29)	69 (33.33)
less than 5	32 (17.20)	7 (50.00)	6 (85.71)	46 (22.22)
5-10	44 (23.66)	5 (35.72)	0 (0.00)	48 (23.19)
10-15	23 (12.37)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	23 (11.11)
15-20	12 (6.45)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	12 (5.80)
20 and above	8 (4.30)	1 (0.14)	0 (0.00)	9 (4.35)
Total	186 (100.00)	14 (100.00)	7 (100.00)	207 (100.00)

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Note: The figures given in parentheses indicate percentages.

From indebted households, 45.55 per cent households are under debt of up to Rs. 10 lakh. The households which are under debt of Rs. 10-15 lakh and Rs. 15-20 lakh are 11.11 and 5.80 per cent respectively. Even 4.35 per cent are such households which are under debt of Rs. 20 lakh and above.

The caste-wise analysis of this issue highlights that the maximum proportion of indebted households belong to Scheduled Caste category (92.86 per cent) followed by Backward Class category (85.71 per cent) and General category (63.98 per cent).

### **CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The results of the study and field survey conducted in the rural areas of Punjab have the following important implications:

- The study reveals that 96.62 per cent of the people migrated in the age group of 15 to 45 years. This age group is considered as the most energetic and talented having new ideas of income generation and growth for the country. Most of the youngsters are migrating for study purpose just after completing secondary level education. Even the people of the state with higher educational levels consider a better option to settle in the foreign countries. More than half of the family members of migrants (52.03 per cent) confessed that unemployment is the main reason for migration of their children. Therefore, the Central and State governments must take strong initiatives for creating sufficient employment opportunities by implementing pro-people approach so that Punjabi people have not to send their family members abroad.
- As many as 9.12 per cent of the family members of migrants cited that their children migrated abroad because of the drug menace in Punjab. Therefore, the Central and State governments must take strong steps to control the drug menace in the state.
- On an average, the migrants have spent Rs.1190572.67 for their migration. This amount is Rs. 1529084.97 in case of the student category while it turns to be Rs. 828388.16 in the case of non-student category. Further, more than one-third proportion of the total expenditure comes from the savings of the families of the migrants. The study also shows that two-thirds of the migrants (65.88 per cent) have sent no remittance to their families. Only 74 migrants (25 per cent) have sent the total remittances of less than Rs. 200000. Because of the high cost of migration and low remittances, two-thirds of the families (66.67 per cent) are under

debt. It is again a serious problem that compels the farmers and agricultural labourers to commit suicides. Nowadays, international migration has become an expensive task. International migration from rural Punjab doesn't only results in 'Capital Drain', but it also involves 'Brain Drain' and 'Loss of Demographic Dividend'. Therefore, the Central and State governments should create sufficient employment opportunities alongwith other measures to overcome these problems.

- The people are so eager to go abroad that they don't hesitate to go illegally as the study shows 7.09 per cent such cases. The illegal status in the destination countries only makes them vulnerable to be exploited by the foreigners. The problem of illegal migration should be solved by creating awareness among the youth against illegal channels of migration, and to improve educational outcomes of the youth to increase their employability in the country as well as in other countries. Besides, the government also needs to act strictly, through legislation and implementation, to break the agent-smuggler nexus.
- Since 42.57 per cent of the family members have cited that their children migrated to the foreign countries because of the better living conditions and good administration at destination. The Central and State governments should considerably improve the living conditions and administration in the state and country.

### *Note*

The authors are thankful to Bebe GurnamKaur Memorial Educational Centre, Isru, Ludhiana for sponsoring this study.

### *References*

- Behl, S. (2017). International migration and extent of remittances: A case study of rural Punjab. *International Journal of Economic and Business Review*, 5(3), 136-146.
- Browne E. (2017). Evidence on education as a driver for migration, Retrieved from [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/598086a0ed915d022b00003c/K4D\\_HDR\\_Migration\\_and\\_Education.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/598086a0ed915d022b00003c/K4D_HDR_Migration_and_Education.pdf)
- Dodani. S. and Laporte, R.E. (2005). Brain drain from developing countries: how can brain drain be converted into wisdom gain? *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*, 98(11), 487-491.
- Government of India. (2011). *Census of India*. Director of Census Operations, Punjab. Retrieved from <http://censusindia.gov.in/>.
- Grover, D.K., Singh, J.K., Kaur, A. and Kumar, S. (2017). *State Agricultural Profile-Punjab*. Agro-Economic Research Centre, Department of Economics and Sociology, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana.

- Gulati, A., Roy, R. and Hussain, S. (2017). *Getting Punjab Agriculture Back on High Growth Path: Sources, Drivers and Policy Lessons*. ICRIER, New Delhi.
- Jacobsen, K.A. and Myrvold, K. (eds.) (2011). *Sikhs in Europe: Migration, Identities and Representations*. Ashgate, U.K.,
- Kapurja, S. (2018). International migration from Punjab and challenges for governance. *Panjab University: Research Journal (Arts)*, XLV (1), 1-19
- Kapurja, S. and Birwal, D. (2017). International migration from Punjab: Trends and challenges. *Researchpaedia*, 4(1), 27-36.
- Kaur, G. (2019). Overseas migration of students from Punjab. *International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews*, 6(1), 1053-1059.
- Kumar, S. and Hussain, Z. (2008). *Managing International Labour Migration from India: Policies and Perspectives*. ILO, Sub Regional Office for South Asia, New Delhi.
- Ministry of External Affairs (2019). *Annual report 2018-2019*. Retrieved from [http://www.mea.gov.in/Uploads/PublicationDocs/31719\\_MEA\\_AR18\\_19.pdf](http://www.mea.gov.in/Uploads/PublicationDocs/31719_MEA_AR18_19.pdf)
- Nanda, A.K & Veron J. (2015). *Dynamics of International Out-migration from PUNJAB, Report on PIMS*. INED, Paris and CRRID, Chandigarh, 1,38.
- OSCE, IOM, ILO (2006). *Handbook on Establishing Effective Labour Migration Policies in Countries of Origin and Destination*. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), International Organization for Migration (IOM), International Labour Office (ILO), Geneva
- The Tribune (2018). Cost of foreign dreams for patients in Punjab. July 29. Retrieved from <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/punjab/cost-of-foreign-dreams-forparents-in-punjab-rs-27-000-cr/628584.html>
- The Tribune (2019). Unsettling migration's underbelly, March 03. Retrieved from <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/archive/features/unsettling-migrations-underbelly-737217>
- UNODC (2009). *Smuggling of Migrants from India to Europe and in particular to U.K.: A Study on Punjab and Haryana*. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, New Delhi.

**To cite this article:**

Gurinder Kaur, Gian Singh, Dharampal, Rashmi, Rupinder Kaur, Sukhvir Kaur and Jyoti. Socio-Economic and Demographic Analysis of International Migration from Rural Punjab: A Case Study of Patiala District. *Journal of Asian Economics, Accounting and Finance*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 2020, pp. 137-161