INTRODUCTION

An important area of emphasis in migration research over the past several decades has been the ‘issues of conflicts between migrants and the locals’ or the ‘creation of slums due to poor, rural migrants’, ‘migrants and their life conditions and health’, etc. Seldom, in our country has one tried to study issues like ‘Life Satisfaction of the Migrants’ or ‘Social Inclusion’. Questions about the economic, physical, psychological and social well being of migrants have served, either directly or indirectly, as the predominant focus of the migrant research. It is these kinds of questions that have increased the understanding of the processes and problems of migrants especially those who are living in slums and have led indirectly to the development of the society around them.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Migration is defined by UNESCO as ‘crossing of the boundary of a less potential geographical area for a certain minimum period of time. It includes the movement of land-less labourers, refugees, displaced persons, uprooted people as well as economic migrants’. Internal migration refers to a move from one area (a province, district, municipality or village) to another within the same country. According to Classical theories, migration is a rational decision made by an individual to move from a less advantageous situation, to a more advantageous one.

Following major reasons prompt migration:

- Living below poverty line in the local area
- Non-availability of adequate employment
- Frequent failure of monsoon and famine
- Heavy borrowings from money lenders
- Inadequate infrastructure and lack of any upcoming employment projects
- Political uncertainty and disturbances like Naxalite movements
- Lack of proper education facilities
- Urge to find nascent avenues to secure better living standards
- Ethnic seclusion by upper caste people

A very high rate of internal migration has been seen in recent years in India. More people migrate due to lack of opportunities in their native place rather than with a spirit of exploration, creating strain on the infrastructure and social problems in the region they move to. Maharashtra, Gujarat, the south Indian states and other states in northern parts of the country like Haryana, Punjab and Delhi have become attractive destinations for the migrant population. Faster urbanisation and
industrialization of these areas have generated more jobs and better infrastructure. Employment, by far, remains the biggest cause of migration in the country (Singh P.K. 2010).

According to the census of India 2001, out of about 98 million total intra-state and inter-state migrants in the country during last decade, 61 million have moved to rural areas and 36 million to urban areas. Migration stream out of rural areas (73 million) to another rural areas was quite high (53 million) in comparison to from rural to urban areas (20 million). About 6 million migrants went to rural areas from urban areas. On the basis of net migrants by last residence during the past decade, i.e., the difference between in – migration and out – migration, in each state, Maharastra stands at the top of the list with 2.3 million net migrants, followed by Delhi (1.7 million), Gujarat (0.68 million) and Haryana (0.67 million) as per census. Uttar Pradesh (-2.6 million) and Bihar (-1.7 million) were the two states with largest number of net migrants migrating out of the state. There are various reasons for migration as per information collected in Census 2001 for migration by last residence. Most of the female migrants have cited ‘Marriage’ as the reason for migration, especially when the migration is within the state. For males, the major reasons for migration are ‘work/employment’ and ‘education’.

Studies have found that the inter-state movement is not very high and most people remain within the same state after migration due to linguistic problems. Though considered by many as a natural and, at times, a beneficial process leading to availability of skilled/semi-skilled and unskilled labourforce at lower wages, it has led to several problems in the Indian scenario. Despite the fundamental right cast in the Indian Constitution permitting the freedom to reside in any part of the country, experience has shown that it has also created friction in the society. (Singh, 2010)

According to the census of India, migrant is usually defined as a person who has moved from one politically defined area to another similar area. In Indian context, these areas are generally a village in rural and a town in urban. Thus a person who moves out from one village or town to another village or town is termed as a migrant provided his/her movement is not of purely temporary nature on account of casual leave, visits, tours, etc.

Urban migration has created a conflict between existing urban residents and the migrants from rural areas. The migrants feel they are discriminated against since they are permitted to work only at lower remuneration on those arduous and unpleasant jobs that urban residents hesitate to do. On the other hand, it is general
feeling among the urban locals that since migrant people are usually more willing to work on lower wages, they dent the prospects of locals in the area getting jobs thus creating an animosity against them among the locals. Thus they create pressure on the job market and start competing with the local populate. There is a general feeling among the local population that some slums are formed by these poor migrants from rural areas and sometimes social and ethnic unrest is created and has even lead to violence in some parts of India. One such slum is Dharavi. The origin of the word slum is believed to have come from the Irish phrase 'S lom e' meaning 'it is a bleak or destitute place.' Slums symbolize urban poverty and dense population without basic infrastructure or amenities. For the families living in them, they create unhealthy, hazardous and unsafe conditions. Poverty, illiteracy, under-employment, diseases, alcoholism, drug addiction, psychological disorders, etc. are rampant in slum areas. UN has listed out the main features of a slum, which are poor access to safe water, sanitation and other infrastructure; poor structural quality of housing; overcrowding; low socioeconomic status of its residents and insecure residential status. In many slums, especially in poor countries, many live in very narrow alleys that do not allow vehicles like ambulances and fire trucks to pass. The lack of services such as routine garbage collection allows rubbish to accumulate in huge quantities. The lack of infrastructure is caused by the informal nature of settlement and inadequate planning for the poor by government officials. The slums are not mere curses on the society, but they do have certain advantages as under:

- Low cost workers are readily available to the manufacturing and service sector units.
- Skilled workers such as carpenters, masons, plumbers, electricians, etc. are accessible to the society at affordable costs.
- It gives livelihood to poor people who otherwise would have become beggars or anti-social elements.

For instance, a mega-slum like Dharavi in Mumbai is a hub of business activity such as leather work, cottage industries, waste matter recycling, etc. Unlike Chinese citizens who need passes to enter Shanghai and Beijing (Zu, 2003), Indians have the freedom to enter Mumbai or elsewhere in India without any paperwork and this reflects in daily influx of migrants to Mumbai, most of whom are poor and end up living in slums of Mumbai.