

## Agricultural Performance and Rural Migration in India

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### Abstract:

India is an agricultural country because large number of population is depends on agriculture sector, direct or indirectly. The agriculture sector was dominant in the country at one time; therefore the share of agriculture in the India's national income was more than fifty per cent. But, after that period agriculture share has been continuously decreasing due to overtake of service and industry sector. To enhance the growth and development of the sector, the government of India has started planning programme and in every plan the government has made good provisions but the growth rate of this sector has not satisfactory. The population employed in agriculture sector has increased but the percentage of employed population in agriculture sector has been decreased. Agriculture sector is unable to provide employment opportunity, better living standard, and high income, therefore rural population is migrating to urban areas. Also, due to ever happening drought, flood, cyclone, pests, crop disease, etc the sector is in crisis. In short, due to various reasons agricultural sector is not profitable and this sector is playing a role as one of the push factor.

**Key words:** *Agriculture, Rural-urban migration, Causes of migration*

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

India is known as an agrarian country because large number of population is depends on agriculture sector, direct or indirectly. The agriculture sector was dominant in the country at one time; therefore the share of agriculture in the India's national income was more than fifty per cent. But, after that period agriculture share has been continuously decreasing due to overtake of service and industry sector. To enhance the growth and development of the sector, the government of India has started planning programme and in every plan the government has made provisions but the growth rate of this sector has not satisfactory. The population employed in agriculture sector has increased but the percentage of employed population in agriculture sector has been decreased. Agriculture sector is unable to provide employment opportunity, better living standard, and high income, therefore rural population is migrating to urban areas. Around 11 per cent population is migrated due to the reason of work or employment and almost 1 and 2 per cent population migrated due to the reason of business and education respectively. Also, due to ever happening drought, flood, cyclone, pests, crop disease, etc the sector is in crisis. In short, due to various reasons agricultural sector is not profitable and this sector is playing a role as one of the push factor.

The performance of agriculture sector is explained by considering the role of agriculture under different heads.

## 1.2 Share of Agriculture Sector in Total Gross Domestic Product

India known as an agrarian country because large number of populations is depends on agriculture sector, direct or indirectly. Agriculture sector was dominant in the country at one time; therefore the share of agriculture in the India's national income was more than fifty per cent. But, after that period agriculture share has been continuously decreasing due to overtake of service and industry sector. The details are given in the table 1.1

**Table 1.1**  
**Share of Agriculture Sector in Total Gross Domestic Product**

Sr. No.	Year	Percentage Share of Agriculture in GDP
	1950-51	56.5
	1960-61	53.0
	1970-71	45.9
	1980-81	39.7
	1990-91	34.0
	2000-01	24.7
	2010-11	14.5
	2011-12	13.9
	2012-13	13.9
	2013-14	13.9
	2014-15	15.11
	2015-16	17.5
	2016-17 (PE)	17.4
	2017-18 (AE)	16.4

Source: Central Statistics Office/ Economic Survey of India / Datta and Sundharam, (2016), "Indian Economy", S. Chand & Company Pvt. Ltd., Ram Nagar, New Delhi-110 055. Page no 533.<sup>1</sup>

The above table reveals that the share of agriculture in GDP was around 55 per cent. As the process of industrialization and economic growth gathered momentum under Five Year Plans with manufacturing and service sectors growing rapidly and agriculture sector limping

along. The percentage share of agriculture in GDP declined and reached a level of 13.9 per cent in 2013-14. But from then the share of agriculture has started to increase and it would reached up to 16.4 percent in the year 2017-18 as per advanced estimate. It is clear from the above table that the share of agriculture in India's national was major at one time. After the year 1950-51 the share of agriculture has been decreasing continuously, while the share of industry and service sectors is increasing.

Year	Total Working Population	Population Employed on Land	Cultivators	Agricultural Laboures
51	0			
61	8	3	0	
71	0	7		
81	4	9		
91	5	5	0	
01	4	4	7	7
11	1	3	8	4

(in millions)

Source: Data Compiled from various sources

The above table shows the population engaged in agriculture. The population employed in agriculture sector had increased from 98 to 263 million during the year 1951 to 2011. But, when we consider the percentage of employed population in the sector then it is cleared that the population employed on land has decreased from 70 per cent to 54.6 per cent out of total working population in the country. Furthermore, the population of cultivators has seen increased from 70 to 118.7 million. But, when we considered the percentage of cultivators then it is seen that the percentage of cultivators has decreased from 50 per cent to 24.6 per cent during the year 1951 to 2011.

### 1.3 Population Engaged in Agriculture

Agriculture is the backbone of Indian economy, around 70 per cent population are engaged in the sector direct or indirectly. It provides employment to around 60 per cent population. Naturally, there are tremendous populations are involved in the agriculture sector. The details are given in the table 1.2.

**Table 1.2**

#### **Population Employed in Agriculture Sector in India**

### 1.4 Trends of Agriculture Exports in India

India is the largest producer of milk, fruits, coconuts and tea in the world, the second largest producer of wheat, vegetables, sugar and fish and third largest producer of tobacco and

rice. Improved irrigation techniques in India, together with greater technology and more ready availability of machinery, have increased India's crop output<sup>2</sup>. As per the available data the share of agriculture in total exports was more than 36 per cent but this share has reduced up to 10 per cent in the recent year. The table 1.3 explained it in details.

**Table 1.3**

**Agriculture Export in India**

Sr. No.	Year	Percentage Share of Agriculture Export
01	1950-51	36
02	1960-61	43
03	1970-71	33
04	1980-81	28
05	1990-91	19
06	2000-01	15
07	2010-11	10
08	2011-12	12
09	2012-13	15
10	2013-14	13
11	2014-15	13
12	2015-16	12
13	2016-17	10

Source : Data Compiled from various data

It is seen from the above table that the percentage of agriculture export was 18.5 per cent in the year 1990-91. It is increased in the year 1996-97 up to 20.3 per cent. From that year the percentage export of agriculture has continuously decreased till the year 2010-11. Again export take up ward direction up to 15 per cent. In short, averagely the percentage share of agriculture export in total export was 19.92 per cent in the country.

**1.5 Plan wise Growth of Agricultural Sector**

The government of India tried to increase or sustain required agricultural growth by making ample provision in the every five year plan. Agricultural development was the main aim of the first five year plan. Till the twelfth five year plan government has made enormous fund provisions for the sector. In spite of these the sector did not achieve substantial growth. The rate of growth of agricultural sector is ranging between 2 to 3 per cent.<sup>3</sup>

**1.6 Plan Wise Government Outlay on Agriculture Sector**

For the development of agriculture sector, the government of India has made good provision in the first five year plan. i.e. 600 crores. It was the 31 per cent of total plan expenditure. The detail about the plan wise outlay has given in the table 1.5.

**Table 1.5**

**Plan Wise Government Outlay on Agricultural Sector**

(Rs. In crore)

Five year plan	Total Plan Expenditure	Govt. outlay on Agriculture and Allied Sector	Percentage of Outlay on Agriculture and Allied Sectors to Total Outlay
1 <sup>st</sup> Plan	1,960	600	31
2 <sup>nd</sup> Plan	4, 670	950	20
3 <sup>rd</sup> Plan	8, 580	1, 750	21
4 <sup>th</sup> Plan	15, 800	3, 670	24
5 <sup>th</sup> Plan	39, 430	8, 740	22

6 <sup>th</sup> Plan	1, 09, 300	26, 100	24
7 <sup>th</sup> Plan	2, 18, 730	47, 100	23
8 <sup>th</sup> Plan	4, 75, 480	1, 01, 590	21
9 <sup>th</sup> Plan	8, 59, 200	1, 76, 217	20.5
10 <sup>th</sup> Plan	15, 25, 639	3, 05, 055	20
11 <sup>th</sup> Plan	36, 76, 936	7, 23, 465	19.7
12 <sup>th</sup> Plan	76, 69, 807	13, 23, 119	17.3

Source: Planning Commission, Various Five Year Plan Document

The table 1.5 discloses the plan wise government expenditure on agriculture sector. It is seen that each plan there has been good provisions of fund for the sector. In the first five year plan the government expenditure was Rs. 600 crores. It was rose up to Rs. 13, 23,119 crores in the twelfth five year plan. But when we observe the percentage of expenditure on agriculture sector to total expenditure then it is seen that the government expenditure has reduced from 31 per cent to 17.3 per cent during the first to twelfth five year plan. There has been need to pay attention towards agriculture sector for the sufficient growth and development of the sector.

### 1.7 Migration

Migration is a natural process that often happens depending on the socio-economic, demographic, cultural, political and environmental factors related to the migrant people. There are different types of migration are found in our country like, rural to urban, urban to rural, rural to rural, urban to urban, migration within states and migrations within countries. Generally, there are different factors are responsible for migration which is known as pull and push factors. Push and pull factor responsible for people’s migration. Push factors are those that enforce a person, to leave place of origin and to go to some other place due to various reasons like, poverty, unemployment and natural calamity, better opportunity, high wage, relatives or friends. On the other hand, pull factors indicate the factors which attract migrant to an area (area of destination), like, employment and higher education opportunities, higher wages facilities, better working condition<sup>4</sup>, better living condition, political or religious freedom, enjoyment, education better medical care, security, family links, industry, etc.

### 1.8 Decade wise flows of Internal Migration in India

As we know that the people migrates from one place to another place due to push and

pull factors and migration is relative concept. Migration is possible in both the way as internal or external. The following table shows the internal migration in India.

**Table: 1.6**

**Decade wise Flows of Internal Migration in India**

Years	Population (in millions)	Migration as Percentage of its Total Population
1951	361.1	...
1961	439.2	33.0
1971	548.2	30.4
1981	683.3	30.6
1991	846.4	27.4
2001	1027.0	32.9
2011	1210.2	25.98

Source: Census of India. Migration Data Table D-1/ Datta and Sundaram (2016), "Indian Economy", S. Chand & Company PVT. LTD., New Delhi, Page 54.<sup>5</sup>

The table 1.6 shows the trends of population in India. In the year 1951 the population of India has increased from 361.1 million to 1210.2 million during the period 1951 to 2011. The populations has increasing trends. Due to the pull and push factors migration has taken place in India. Almost 33 per cent population migrated in the decade 1961. It was 30.4, 30.6, 27.4, and 32.9 per cent population migrated in decade 1971, 1981, 1991 and 2011 respectively. During the decade 2011 around one

forth population has migrated and out of this total migration almost 70 percentage population is migrated from rural to urban areas in India.

### 1.9 Trends of Rural Urban Population

Due to urbanization population has tent to migrate from rural to urban areas for better living. Industry and service sector growing in sufficient manner and it attracting rural population by providing employment opportunity. Following table indicates the trends of rural and urban population.

**Table: 1.7**

**Trends of Rural Urban Population**

(Population in percentage)

Census Year	Urban Population	Rural population	Percentage Increase in Urban Population During Decade
1951	17.29	82.71	+43.2
1961	17.97	82.03	+25.3
1971	19.91	80.09	+38.0
1981	23.34	76.66	+46.8
1991	25.71	74.29	+35.6
2001	27.78	72.22	+31.2
2011	31.15	68.85	31.8

Source: Census of India 2011

The table 1.7 indicates the trends of rural urban population since 1951. It is seen that there was 17.29 urban and 82.71 rural populations in India in the decade 1951. In the decade 2011 the urban and rural population was 31.15 and 68.85 per cent respectively. It is seen from the table 1.7 that the urban population has increased from 17 per cent to 31 per cent but the rural population has decreased from 82 per cent to 68 per cent.

**Table: 1.8**

**Intra-State Migration in India**

Sr. No.	States	Rural to Urban Migration (%)
1.	Mizoram	39.1
2.	Meghalaya	27.4
3.	Nagaland	26.8
4.	Arunachal Pradesh	26.1
5.	Gujarat	25.9
6.	Tamil Nadu	23.3
7.	Haryana	21.9
8.	Maharashtra	21.2
9.	Karnataka	21.2
10.	Jammu & Kashmir	21.1

*Source: Data Highlights – Table D1, D2 & D3 Census of India 2001*

The above table shows the intra state migration of top ten states in India. Almost from 20 to 40 per cent population was migrated from rural to urban areas. The highest rural population migrated from the state of Mizoram (39 per cent) and the lowest rural population migrated to urban areas from the state of Jammu & Kashmir (21 per cent.). Among the top ten states, almost more than 25 per cent rural population was migrated to urban areas from the states of Mizoram, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, and Gujarat. And, from the states of Tamil Nadu, Haryana, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Jammu & Kashmir, almost 21 to 23 per cent population was migrated from rural to urban areas.

**1.10 Reasons for migration in India**

There are various reasons that are responsible for the rural to urban migration in India. Agriculture is the main occupation of the rural population. But, now the performance of agriculture sector is not sufficient at the national and the international level. Indian agriculture is usually described as a gamble in mansoon<sup>5</sup>. Due to heavy dependence on rainfall, decreasing population of cultivator decreasing share in GDP, land fragmentation, Decline in Government Investment are some causes for poor performance which pushes rural population towards the urban areas in search of job, income, better living

standard, etc. the following table shows the various reasons for migration.

**Table: 1.9**

**Reasons for Migration in India**

Sr. No.	Reasons	2001 (%)	2011 (%)
01	Work/Employment	14.7	10.22
02	Business	1.2	0.96
03	Education	3.0	1.77
04	Marriage	43.9	49.35
05	Moved after birth	6.7	10.57
06	Moved with households	20.9	15.39
07	Other	9.7	11.74

*Source: Census of India, 2011. / Anju Bala, "Migration in India: Causes and consequences" International Journal of Advanced Educational Research ISSN: 2455-6157; Volume 2; Issue 4; July 2017; Page No. 55<sup>6</sup>*

The table 1.9 discloses the reasons for migration in India. It is seen from the table that tendency of migration has reduced in 2011 as compare to the 2001. Generally, people are migrated from one place to another place due to various reasons such as work/employment, Business, Education, Marriage, etc. almost 11 per cent population migrated due to work/employment in 2011. And 0.96, 1.77 and 49.35 per cent population is migrated due to reason of business, education and marriage respectively. Work/employment is the major reason/cause for migration in India. Almost 14

per cent and 10.22 per cent population migrated due to only work/employment reason in the decade 2001 and 2011 respectively.

### 1.11 CONCLUSIONS

India is an agricultural country and most of the populations are depends on agriculture sector direct or indirectly. Therefore, growth of Indian economy is well connected to the agriculture sector. The share of agriculture has come down up to 17 percent where the share of agriculture sector was more than 50 per cent at once time. There were large number of working population are engaged in agriculture sector. But the percentage of cultivators in this sector has reduced up to 24.6 per cent. Another important point is observed that the plan expenditure of government on agriculture sector also decreased which will force the sector to less development condition. Agriculture sector is unable to provide employment opportunity, better living standard, and high income, therefore rural population is migrating to urban areas. Around 11 per cent population is migrated due to the reason of work or employment and almost 1 and 2 per cent population migrated due to the reason of business and education respectively. Also, due to ever happening drought, flood, cyclone, pests, crop disease, etc the sector is in crisis. In short, due to various reasons agricultural sector is not

profitable and this sector is playing a role as one of the push factor.

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