

PUNJABI SPEAKING PEOPLE OUTSIDE PUNJAB IN INDIA, 2011

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The number of Punjabi speaking people in the world is estimated at 126.6 million (*Ethnologue*, 2018). Pakistan partakes 91.5 million or 72.2 per cent of them; India 33.1 million or 26.2 per cent; and rest of the world (notably the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada and Australia) 1.98 million or 1.6 per cent. Punjabi speaking people in Pakistan are Muslims, in India predominantly Sikhs and the Hindus, and in other countries a mix of the three religious communities, with their roots in India or Pakistan.

Among 33.13 million Punjabi speaking people recorded by the 2011 Census of India, 24.92 million or 75.2 per cent were found in their home state of Punjab and 8.21 million or 24.8 per cent were distributed among other parts of India. The percentage of this linguistic community living outside their home state was the highest among all major linguistic groups in the country (Table 1). They are commended for making outstanding contribution to socio-economic development of areas wherever they are settled.

Table 1

India: Percentage of Various Linguistic Groups * Living outside their Home State, 2011

Language Group	Percentage	Language Group	Percentage
Assamese	1.41	Odia	7.49
Kashmiri	1.72	Tamil	7.64
Dogri	3.20	Telugu	12.89
Maithali	3.87	Manipuri	13.57
Bodo	4.50	Bengali	19.07
Gujarati	6.37	Punjabi	24.78
Marathi	6.70	Santali	55.62
Malayalam	6.97	Konkani	57.27
Kannada	6.99	Nepali	60.52

Source: Census of India (2011): State-wise Distribution of Population by Scheduled Languages in India, Part I.

*Hindi, Sindhi, Sanskrit and Urdu have been excluded, since these were not specific to any single state in terms of their affiliation.

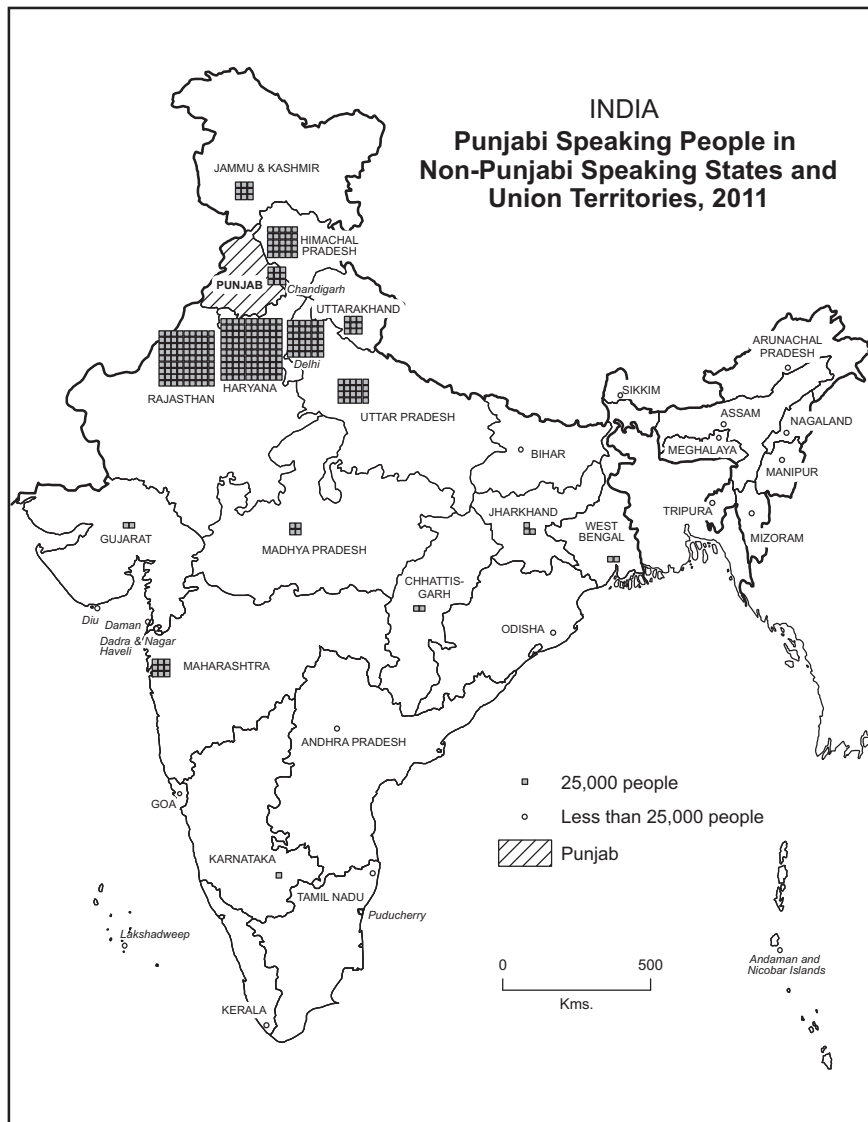
Among Punjabi speaking people outside Punjab, no less than 75.0 per cent were concentrated in its neighbouring states of Haryana, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh, Chandigarh (UT), and the NCT, Delhi (Table 2). Most of them were displaced persons from Pakistan and had settled/were settled here after partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947. The inflow of the displaced persons was so massive that many of them had to be rehabilitated in parts of Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. Similar was the case of the Jammu region of Jammu and Kashmir (Map 1). In villages in contiguity with Punjab, many of the Punjabi speaking people were native to these places.

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Table 2
India: Number of Punjabi Speaking People outside Punjab, 2011

State/UT	Total	Male	Female	Percent (Total)
Haryana	2,400,883	1,251,882	1,149,001	29.25
Rajasthan	2,274,342	1,183,773	1,090,569	27.71
Delhi	873,477	446,986	426,491	10.64
Himachal Pradesh	615,022	310,618	304,404	7.49
Uttar Pradesh	508,736	269,489	239,247	6.20
Maharashtra	280,192	145,718	134,474	3.41
Uttarakhand	263,310	137,505	125,805	3.21
Chandigarh	232,516	120,109	112,407	2.83
Jammu & Kashmir	219,193	124,834	94,359	2.67
Madhya Pradesh	139,658	73,993	65,665	1.70
Jharkhand	78,712	42,097	36,615	0.96
Chhattisgarh	65,425	34,282	31,143	0.80
Gujarat	63,288	34,667	28,621	0.77
West Bengal	61,080	33,120	27,960	0.74
Karnataka	25,981	13,832	12,149	0.32
Andhra Pradesh	24,413	12,941	11,472	0.30
Assam	23,313	13,534	9,779	0.28
Odisha	19,470	10,554	8,916	0.24
Bihar	10,467	5,763	4,704	0.13
Tamil Nadu	6,565	3,628	2,937	0.08
Meghalaya	4,540	2,498	2,042	0.06
Arunachal Pradesh	3,674	3,200	474	0.04
Nagaland	2,249	1,856	393	0.03
Goa	1,959	1,136	823	0.02
Sikkim	1,954	1,732	222	0.02
A & N Islands	1,565	855	710	0.02
Kerala	1,380	924	456	0.02
Manipur	1,370	996	374	0.02
Tripura	997	892	105	0.01
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	414	252	162	0.01
Mizoram	349	315	34	0.00
Daman & Diu	222	125	97	0.00
Puducherry	121	64	57	0.00
Lakshadweep	4	3	1	0.00
Total	8,206,841	4,284,173	3,922,668	100.00

Map 1



Note: Though every state and union territory in India has Punjabi Speaking people, yet three-fourths of them living outside their home state are confined to Punjab's neighbouring Hindi speaking states and union territories.

Even prior to independence, Punjabi speaking people had started migrating eastward to Kolkata, Jamshedpur, Patna, Kanpur and other cities. This process slowed down over time to assume gradually a westward shift toward cities like Mumbai, Pune and Ahmedabad. These places were also destination for some displaced persons from Pakistan at the time of partition. Overall the presence of Punjabi speaking people was well marked in big industrial-commercial cities, cantonment towns and places of Sikh pilgrimage.

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Table 3

India: Distribution of Punjabi Speaking Population by States/Union Territories, 2011

State/UT	Total	Male	Female	Percent (Total)
Punjab	24,917,885	13,056,758	11,861,127	75.22
Haryana	2,400,883	1,251,882	1,149,001	7.25
Rajasthan	2,274,342	1,183,773	1,090,569	6.87
Delhi	873,477	446,986	426,491	2.64
Himachal Pradesh	615,022	310,618	304,404	1.86
Uttar Pradesh	508,736	269,489	239,247	1.54
Maharashtra	280,192	145,718	134,474	0.85
Uttarakhand	263,310	137,505	125,805	0.79
Chandigarh	232,516	120,109	112,407	0.70
Jammu & Kashmir	219,193	124,834	94,359	0.66
Madhya Pradesh	139,658	73,993	65,665	0.42
Jharkhand	78,712	42,097	36,615	0.24
Chhattisgarh	65,425	34,282	31,143	0.20
Gujarat	63,288	34,667	28,621	0.19
West Bengal	61,080	33,120	27,960	0.18
Karnataka	25,981	13,832	12,149	0.08
Andhra Pradesh	24,413	12,941	11,472	0.07
Assam	23,313	13,534	9,779	0.07
Odisha	19,470	10,554	8,916	0.06
Bihar	10,467	5,763	4,704	0.03
Tamil Nadu	6,565	3,628	2,937	0.02
Meghalaya	4,540	2,498	2,042	0.01
Arunachal Pradesh	3,674	3,200	474	0.01
Nagaland	2,249	1,856	393	0.01
Goa	1,959	1,136	823	0.01
Sikkim	1,954	1,732	222	0.01
A & N Islands	1,565	855	710	0.00
Kerala	1,380	924	456	0.00
Manipur	1,370	996	374	0.00
Tripura	997	892	105	0.00
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	414	252	162	0.00
Mizoram	349	315	34	0.00
Daman & Diu	222	125	97	0.00
Puducherry	121	64	57	0.00
Lakshadweep	4	3	1	0.00
Total (INDIA)	33124726	17340931	15783795	100

By comparison, the migration of Punjabi speaking people to South Indian states and North-East region was of small magnitude. The four South Indian states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala and the union territory of Puducherry together recorded less than sixty thousand Punjabi speaking people. The figure for the entire North-East region was also on the lower side of forty thousand. Only some cities like Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Chennai held some attraction from them.

Nonetheless there was no state or union territory which was without Punjabi speaking people (Table 3). Family migration was typical in their case. This is indicated by their sex being almost the same in most parts of India as in their home state. Several states in the North-East region emerge as an exception where many of them were posted as defence or security personnel.

In popular perception, the Sikhs and Punjabi language go together. Such an observation needs to be put in proper perspective. The 2011 Census of India placed the number of Punjabi speaking people at 33.13 million while that of the Sikhs at 20.83 million. This presented a difference of 12.30 million. Moreover, 0.20 million Sikhs outside Punjab had recorded a language other than Punjabi as their mother tongue. The implication is that Punjabi was spoken by 12.50 million people other than the Sikhs. This is based on an assumption that every Sikh in Punjab was Punjabi speaking. One could say that while practically every Sikh was Punjabi speaking, every Punjabi speaking was not essentially Sikh.

It follows from the above that while around one-fourth of Punjabi speaking people in the world lived in India, about one fourth of them in India resided outside their home state of Punjab. Among those living outside Punjab, over three-fourths were concentrated in its neighbouring or nearby Hindi predominant states or union territories. The remaining were scattered in big metropolitan cities like Mumbai, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, and Chennai, big cantonments like Pune and Jabalpur, and Sikh pilgrimage places like Nanded.
