Cultural Melting Pot: An Analysis of Mysuru City, India

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Abstract

Internal migration, driven by the desire for a better life, has been a longstanding phenomenon. Migrants and policymakers would benefit from understanding whether migrants' outcomes align with their aims and prospects. Migration involves a series of stages and is, therefore, regarded as a process. Often, a lack of awareness, challenges in adapting to the new environment, the complexity of the local system, language barriers, cultural differences, and negative experiences can cause distress to migrants. Furthermore, it can have either a negative or positive impact on the mental well-being of this population. Due to globalisation, modernisation, advancements in technology, and progress across various domains, migration and its effects on human well-being have become pressing issues. Therefore, this study aims to explore the impact of migration on the happiness of migrants, drawing on research conducted in the heart of Mysuru city. The study reveals that migrants are content in their new locations and are hesitant to return to their places of origin.

Keywords: migration, employment, poverty, happiness, development, internal migration

Introduction

Ever since man has existed on this earth, he has moved from one place to another. People migrate for numerous reasons, but the primary motivation for changing residences is to improve their living conditions or escape debt and poverty. Migration is also a social phenomenon that stimulates human life and the environment. Although the reasons for this movement have evolved, individuals are sometimes forced to leave their place of residence due to natural disasters, terrorism, poverty, unemployment, overpopulation, wars, or social and religious conflicts. In such situations, they are compelled to relocate. Migration can

be broadly characterised into two types: international and internal migration, the latter involving movement within a state, country, or continent. Internal migration affects the economic, social, and psychological aspects tied to this transition phase. It impacts poorer segments but also has ramifications for the economy as a whole, while sending and receiving regions, as well as the migrants and their families, are arguably more affected by migration than international migrants (Srivastava, 2011a).

Internal migration in India: With the exponential rise in population, millions of people migrate each year. As India is the second-most populous country in the world, approximately 450 million people are reported to migrate within India, according to the 2011 census. Village studies supported by Deshingkar, Start, and Farrington (2006) reveal a high level of outmigration from poor, drought-prone

areas of backward states, such as Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Bihar, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh, to industrialised states due to opportunities in the informal sector. Migration consists of a series of stages and is, therefore, considered a process. Often, a lack of awareness, difficulties in adjusting to the new environment, the complexity of the local system, language barriers, cultural disparities, and hostile experiences can cause distress for migrants. Furthermore, this has an adverse effect on the mental well-being of such populations. This paper focuses on the internal movement of people in India, specifically comparing the non- migrant and migrant populations residing in Mysuru, Karnataka. It also illustrates how migration impacts the community and its individuals, and vice versa. Mysuru district is an administrative district in the southern part of Karnataka, India, and serves as the administrative headquarters of the Mysuru division. According to provisional reports from Census India, the total population of Mysuru City in 2011 was 8,93,8,93,062, while its urban/metropolitan population was 9,90,9,90,900. Primary data was collected using a pre-defined, well-structured questionnaire for the present study. The survey was conducted around the Mysuru Royal Palace, located in the heart of the city. The core of the city is the most vibrant area in terms of economic activities. Migrants, upon arriving in the city, can readily find jobs in this core area. The core is characterised by frequent land-use changes, encompassing industrial, residential, commercial, administrative, and consumption areas. Thus, an attempt has been made to study the factors affecting the happiness of both migrants and non-migrants in Mysuru.
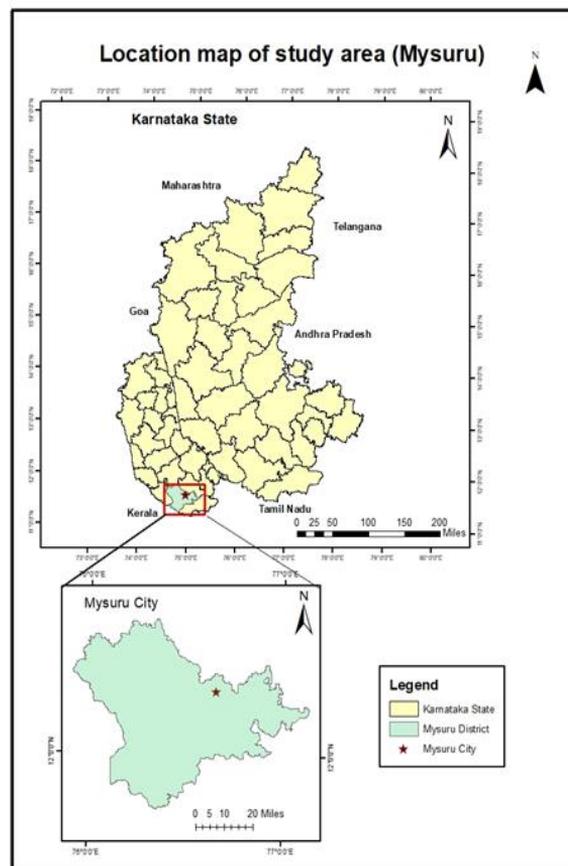
Study Area

Mysuru is the southernmost city of Karnataka, situated at an altitude of approximately 770 metres above mean sea level, at a longitude of 76° 39' East, and a latitude of 12° 39' North. The total area measures

128.42 sq. km. According to the 2011 census, it is home to a population of around 938,386. Mysuru is a diverse and vibrant city, boasting marvellous architecture that includes palaces and gardens, alongside its significant historical importance, making it a centre of attraction. In contemporary times, it has preserved its pride by remaining one of the most culturally stable and economically vital cities, with a diverse population that consistently lives in harmony. Therefore, it was chosen as the study area as it exemplifies cultural assimilation and attracts people from all over the country seeking opportunities.

Figure 1

Study Area

Objective

To analyse the factors affecting the happiness of migrants and non-migrants in the study area.

Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis (Ho): There is no correlation between the happiness and income of respondents.

Need for the Study (Significance)

The study was conducted to assess a comparative analysis of migrants and non-migrants in the central business district (CORE) area of Mysuru city, Karnataka. According to a UNESCO report entitled 'Social Inclusion of Internal Migrants in India,' three out of ten Indians are internal migrants (UNESCO, 2013). As per the Census of India migration tables, the population of internal migrants in India increased from 309 million in 2001 to 400 million in 2011. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the issue of internal migration. Often, migration histories reveal records of integration, assimilation, and acculturation — a two-way exchange between recent migrants and the native, dominant society. These are the frequently unexamined issues behind the gradual changes in our customs, foods, and language (Khairkar, 2008). Migration has

never been considered an important demographic phenomenon, such as fertility and mortality, due to the small volume of internal migration relative to the total size of the population (Bose, 1983). Only a few researchers and government departments have undertaken studies in the form of projects and reports on migration. This study is a modest attempt to solve issues related to the conditions of migrants and non-migrants in the study area.

Materials and Methods

The survey was conducted to collect primary data in the core area of Mysuru city in January 2023. We gathered population data on residents and migrants. In the questionnaire, we included questions on both qualitative and quantitative aspects. We collected information regarding educational qualifications, basic amenities, transportation facilities, climate information, internet access, family size, sanitation and drainage availability, and medical and healthcare conditions of respondents in Mysuru city. A total of 22 locals and 18 migrants were considered. Preference was given to migrants who moved in the last five years, while non-migrants willing to provide information were considered for the study.

The data collected shows that most respondents are residents of Mysuru city, accounting for around 55 per cent of the total respondents. However, it cannot be denied that the remaining 45 per cent are migrants, mostly internal migrants. The migrants are from various regions of India, including Bihar, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, and many more.

Sample Design

This study compares migrants and non-migrants in Mysuru city regarding their socio-economic aspects, including living standards. A well-structured questionnaire was employed in this study. Subsequently, the population and sample ratio were finalised.

According to the provisional reports of Census India, the population of Mysuru city in 2011 was 89,062. With its urban/metropolitan population at 990,000, this study considered 7.6042 samples per lakh people. Migrants and locals often face social issues, such as conflicts over land and employment (occupation), as noted by Sons of Soils (Weiner, 1978). The samples collected included both migrant and local residential information, facilitating the comparison of primary data from migrants and local people in Mysuru city. In Bengaluru, the capital city of Karnataka and an international IT hub, immigration has influenced the city significantly, leading to considerable social assimilation (Sen & Nagendra, 2020). In contrast to Bengaluru, Mysuru is the cultural capital of Karnataka, maintaining a traditional setup. The Mysuru Royal Palace, located at the heart of the city, is one of its most renowned international tourist attractions. In addition to preserving Kannada's cultural heritage, the palace area serves as a commercial hub, providing numerous employment opportunities within the city. Therefore, conducting comparative studies concerning migrants and non-migrants is more effective in Mysuru than in Bengaluru or any other city.

Table 1

Background of Respondents

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Gender	40	1.92	.27	1	2
Age	40	34.47	13.52	12	64
Family Members	40	2.77	1.46	1	8
Female Members	40	2.55	1.62	1	10
Occupation	40	2.2	.648	1	4
Income (000)	40	45.52	22.60	20	90
Basic Amenities	40	1	0	1	1
Plan to Return	40	.17	.38	0	1
Tourists Season	40	1.47	.51	1	2
Disaster faced	40	1.97	.16	1	2
Allied Activities	40	.05	.22	0	1
Name of Crops	40	.15	.58	0	3
Irrigation Type	40	1.22	.70	0	3
Govt. schemes	40	.42	.50	0	1
Happiness	40	.87	.33	0	1

Family Size

In the present study, family size and male-female structure have been taken into account. This study observed that the sex ratio of local families is 107 males for every 100 females, while the ratio for migrant families is 113 males per 100 females. The overall sex ratio for this study sample is 109 males per 100 females, indicating a higher male population than female in the region. Moreover, this study demonstrates that the presence of local people exceeds that of migrants in the Mysuru market region, although the number of migrants is also substantial.

Place of Origin of Respondents

Concerning the origin of the respondents, the majority are local residents of Mysuru, which is well-known for its rich legacy of businesses and stable commercial activities in the Central Business District (CBD). Specifically, 28 respondents hail from Mysuru. Recognised as the cultural capital of Karnataka, Mysuru is also one of the major commercial cities in the state, renowned for its educational institutions, universities, and boards. Consequently, many students migrate to Mysuru primarily for educational purposes.

In addition to local respondents, individuals from various districts in Karnataka, including Bellary, Kotte, Hassan, and Mangalore, have also participated in the survey, with each district represented by one respondent. Furthermore, skilled and non-skilled workers from different parts of the country have migrated to Mysuru. In regions with high population densities and limited economic opportunities, such as Northern India, many residents face issues related to low per capita income. States like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Rajasthan have notable push factors that contribute to this migration.

In contrast, South India, particularly Karnataka, offers better job opportunities and a higher per capita income, serving as a pull factor that attracts skilled and unskilled workers to Mysuru. The survey includes four respondents from Bihar, three from Rajasthan, and two from Uttar Pradesh, illustrating the migration patterns observed in this sample.

Educational Qualifications of Respondents

Educational qualifications refer to the official confirmation, typically in the form of a certificate, diploma, or degree, that certifies the successful completion of an educational program or stage. Achievement of an education program denotes the victory of specified learning objectives, typically validated by assessing acquired knowledge, skills, and competencies.

The Indian education system faces several issues, the most significant of which is inadequate education stemming from poverty.

Statistics show that children living below the poverty line have considerably lower chances of succeeding in school compared to their peers. Without a proper education, many individuals remain unemployed and are compelled to live in poverty for the remainder of their lives. Conversely, education is frequently out of reach for the impoverished.

The observations from the collected samples are interpreted as follows: out of four illiterate individuals, one is a migrant, which constitutes 25 per cent. Of 16 individuals, 87 per cent of locals are educated up to SSC. Of 6 individuals, 33.3 per cent of migrants have completed their education to HSC, whereas 66.67 per cent of locals have done HSC. From the data on 13 individuals who have completed their undergraduate degrees, 76.92 per cent are locals, while the remaining 23.08 per cent are migrants. In total, four individuals have completed their education to the level of post-graduation, of which 77.5 per cent are locals and the remaining 22 per cent are migrants.

An overview of the study of educational qualifications in Mysuru reveals that the locals are highly educated compared to migrants. This may be attributed to financial circumstances. Migrants, primarily acting as breadwinners, are mostly here to earn money for their livelihoods, leaving them with very little time for education, and they often engage in business activities from a young age.

Reasons of Migration

There are numerous causes of migration from rural to urban areas. The following are the key factors identified in various studies: influences from friends and family, income maximisation, rapid industrialisation, inadequate rural infrastructure, cultural disparities, equitable distribution of economic benefits, residential satisfaction, the desire for a better lifestyle, personal fulfilment, social mobility, aspirations for social status, and others.

It has been noted that there are two major reasons for migration: economic and educational. From the data collected, 9 out of 40 respondents are from outside of Mysuru city in Karnataka state, making up around 22.5 per cent.

Regarding the economic reasons for migration, several factors come into play, particularly employment opportunities. Employment opportunities represent the most significant driving force. Approximately 83.4 per cent of all migrants are drawn to the city for its job prospects. The promise of better employment has spurred migration. Individual relocations often follow. Employers across different sectors are influenced by frequent transfers, choosing to settle in the city where they have opportunities to relocate.

The transfers of parents also impact migration, resulting in entire families relocating to urban centres. Other key drivers of migration include education and business. Roughly 16.6 per cent of migrants are primarily attracted to the city for educational opportunities, as it provides excellent educational facilities and lucrative business prospects that draw people to the city centre. However, the factors related to marriage are not particularly significant among the causes of migration.

Age Structure

The Royal Mysuru Palace served as the focal point of the research study. This area lies at the heart of the city and is considered its core. Understanding the population's age structure can provide insights into the country's future condition. This phenomenon is known as a demographic dividend. A larger proportion of individuals under 15 years of age is currently regarded as a demographic dividend; this population will eventually become part of the workforce, contributing to an economic boom for the country. Based on the collected data, of the forty respondents included, one was below the 15-year age group, 37 respondents within the 16- to 59-year age group, and two respondents above the 60-year age group. This indicates that 92.5 per cent of the total respondents were in the working-age group, 5 per cent were aged 60 and older, and 2.5 per cent

were below the age of 15. These results clearly show that the majority of the population in the core area comprises wage earners or economically active individuals who work to earn a living. Such jobs typically require minimal skills or none at all, and often necessitate physical strength. Generally, working-class jobs demand less education. Unemployed individuals or those supported by a social welfare programme are frequently included in this labour category. Occasionally, they earn a meagre wage, sufficient for themselves and their families. At the core, the respondents share the same intention to work, facilitating their interaction. Consequently, they lead their lives peacefully.

Age Composition of the Migrants and Locals in Mysuru City

Migration is age-selective. People are most likely to migrate when they are young; an increasing share of older individuals in the region's population may lead to a decline in migration. (Zaiceva et al., 2008). The group below 15 years old is entirely represented by the migrant community, constituting 2.5 per cent of the entire population sample. In contrast, 100 per cent of older respondents come from local communities, making up 5 per cent of the total sample population, while the working-age group includes both migrants and locals. The results indicate there are no migrants in the

above-60 age group. Therefore, it can be interpreted that older individuals are hesitant to migrate. Of the total migrants, 88.89% belong to the working-age group. This is primarily because migration occurred for economic (unskilled) jobs and higher education in Mysuru city.

Out of the total respondents, 88 per cent are happy, and only 12 per cent are unhappy with their situation in Mysuru city. A two-sample T-test was conducted on 40 individuals to examine the effect of income and happiness on migrants and non-migrant respondents. There was no significant interaction between the effects of income and happiness on migrant and non-migrant populations (p-value = 0.99). There was no significant interaction between the effects of income on migrants and non-migrant respondents (p-value = 0.32) (Table 2).

Table 2

Two-Sample T-test With Equal Variances

Number of obs.   =   40   R-squared   =   0.3224

Root MSE   =   .50795   Adj R-squared = -0.0164

Source	Partial SS	df	MS	F	Prob>F
Model	3.1916667	13	0.24551282	0.95	0.519
Income	3.1610544	10	0.31610544	1.23	0.321
Happiness	0.00038941	1	0.00038941	0	0.969
Income # Happiness	0.00119048	2	0.00059524	0	0.998
Residual	6.7083333	26	0.25801282		
Total	9.9	39	0.25384615		

Table 3

Pearson Correlation Coefficient

Variables	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
(1) Happiness	1.000					
(2) Age	-0.145	1.000				
(3) Gender	-0.108	0.060	1.000			
(4) Occupation	-0.118	0.100	-0.059	1.000		
(5) Income	-0.211	-0.049	-0.142	0.185	1.000	
(6) Disaster experienced	-0.061	0.269	-0.046	0.050	0.154	1.000

There was no significant effect of happiness on migrants (p-value = 0.97). Here, we accept the null hypothesis: there is no correlation between the happiness of respondents and their income. Pearson's correlation was employed to analyse the relationship between respondents' happiness and the factors influencing people's happiness, such as age, gender, occupation, income, and natural calamities experienced in the study area. Results indicated a strong negative correlation at a 95% confidence level (Table 3) between respondents' happiness and the aforementioned factors. Based on the results of the correlation coefficient, the null hypothesis has been accepted.

Preferred Season by Tourists

In Mysuru City, numerous tourists visit the palace throughout various seasons. Sample analysis revealed that 20% of tourists prefer the winter season. In summer, most schools across the Indian subcontinent observe holidays, yet only seven per cent of people opt for summer tourism, despite schools and colleges being closed. In southern India, summer prevails, resulting in a lower percentage of tourists during that season. During spring, 13 per cent of tourists favour this time for travel. Those who earn their wages from tourist activities tend to experience better earnings during the winter season.

The government needs to increase the number of facilities for tourists to attract more tourists in the summer season. This will boost the economy for businesses that are directly or indirectly dependent on tourism.

Conclusion

This study sheds light on the complex process of migration and its effects on the well-being of individuals in Mysuru City, India. Internal migration, driven by the pursuit of a better life, remains a significant factor in shaping the socio-economic landscape of urban centres like Mysuru. While migrants often face various challenges such as adjusting to new environments, overcoming language barriers, navigating intricate local systems, and dealing with cultural differences, these obstacles do not overshadow the positive outcomes they experience. The study reveals that, despite initial difficulties, migrants in Mysuru report high levels of happiness and satisfaction with their new lives. This satisfaction is largely due to the opportunities presented by globalisation, modernisation, and advancements in technology. As a result, many migrants are unwilling to return to their native places, indicating that the benefits of their migration outweigh the challenges they face. The findings emphasise that migration, although a multifaceted process, can have a positive impact on migrants' overall

well-being, enhancing their quality of life and providing them with better prospects for the future. Policymakers and migrants themselves can gain valuable insights from these results, which highlight the importance of addressing the challenges faced by migrants while also capitalising on the opportunities for growth and integration in urban environments. Ultimately, the study highlights the importance of migration as a catalyst for social and economic mobility in contemporary society.

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