

Factors Contributing to International Migration of Youth in Doaba region of Punjab Nawanshahr and Garhshankar, Punjab- An Empirical Study

Deepika,

Assistant Professor in Mathematics,
B.A.M. Khalsa College, Garhshankar,
Email-id deepika@bamkc.edu.in

Dr. Janki Aggarwal,

Associate Professor in Commerce,
B.A.M. Khalsa College, Garhshankar,
Email-id Janki.aggarwal@bamkc.edu.in

Abstract

Migration across international borders is a historical process. In recent years it has picked up varying magnitude and direction. In Punjab, the Doaba region, a veteran of migratory trends, has witnessed changed patterns. Currently the focus is on sending students overseas. International migration has been associated with acute events manifested in long term patterns, making it difficult to predict the trends and patterns pertaining to a particular geographical region with any precision.

Methodology

The present paper intends to study the socio-demographic variables and contributing factors for international migration among the youth of Nawanshahr and Garhshankar regions.

Focus and Findings

The objective of the paper is to determine the significant migration-related contrasts of the Doaba region as represented by Nawanshahr (Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar or SBS Nagar) and Garhshankar area comprising a major part of the Doaba region of Punjab.

Scope

The trends of migration of the youth from a specific area have tremendous impact on the economy and market of any region. It deserves special attention and has broad policy implications at the State and National levels.

Keywords: International Student; Migration; Brain Drain; Study Abroad;

1. Introduction

India is the biggest source for international migrants after Mexico and China. International migrants are persons living in a country other than their country of birth or a country other than their country of citizenship. According to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) data, Indians currently dwell in 199 countries

(Ministry of External Affairs 2018).

Historical evidence shows that overseas migration has been occurring since centuries. In 1834, when slavery was abolished in the British Empire, the requirement for more labour to work in their colonies opened up a gap of livelihood opportunities for countries like India. During the colonial period, the

British government had also opened up the doors to its academic institutions for Indians to study abroad. Around the 1970s the extraction of petroleum products and construction work in the Gulf countries was at its peak. This brought about the emigration of Indians to the Gulf countries. After 1990, the demand for software professionals increased in the Western countries and a wave of migration to Western countries was initiated.

Punjab, more explicitly the Doaba region, has been observed to be a hotspot for waves of migration since the pre-Independence days of India. In earlier times, students would go abroad to pursue Masters' qualification in their subject. Over time, however, the trend to study overseas expanded rapidly and in the recent couple of decades students are going abroad for undergraduates students. Students migrate from the Doaba region to the world and this trend has grown significantly because of numerous reasons. The 'pull' factor for attracting migrants from Punjab to other countries has largely been the opportunity to work in foreign countries at higher emoluments. Potential students are fascinated by the high standards of living attained by the people of developed countries. Lack of opportunities for employment in India and the comparatively less appreciation of work in terms of remuneration has been the major reason for this youthful brain drain.

2. Need for the Study

Punjab has been a vital player in the supply of students and professionals to the main stream employment opportunities. Despite the fast growth in the movement of students globally, the study of international student migration, particularly from Punjab, is a relatively ignored field. It is very important for any region or even nation to

beware of the patterns, reasons and effects of migration trends on the population and consequently the economy as reflected in the remittances and loss of traditional occupations besides drain of human capital. A review of the literature contributed by various workers gives significant evidence of studies aimed at students who had migrated but very few surveys have been conducted on students planning to migrate. If the Doaba region of Punjab state is considered it was found that most of the studies have been done using secondary data. Primary data is essential to know the trends of change that happened in Punjab during the last few decades. This study would add to the knowledge of other scholars and have important policy implications for the government.

3. Research Methodology

(i) Data Collection

The study is based on primary data using a non-experimental exploratory research design. Online mode was used for collecting data from aspirants planning to settle abroad. Tools in the form of a structured questionnaire consisting of 20 close-ended questions were loaded on the Google platform. The questionnaire was developed based on a literature review of the works of other scholars as also the reports of the Government of Punjab. These questions pertained to basic personal information, future plans for study and work factors responsible for motivating students to choose other countries for higher studies. The variables included are age, gender, status, socio-economic, religion, habitat, place, occupation, income, qualification and others.

(ii) Sampling Technique and Sample Size

Non-Probability convenience sampling technique has been used for the survey. The sample size was 71 migration

aspirants. Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling technique where samples are selected from the population only because they are conveniently available to the researchers; this is a common non-probability sampling method, because of its cost-effectiveness, speed and ease of availability. A quantitative research approach has been used to explore answers to international student migration issues in Nawanshahr and Garhshankar districts of Punjab.

4. Review of Literature

Migration has influenced different aspects of life of both the country of origin and the host country. The scale and direction of migration have never been uniform. The salient features of the literature contributed by various researchers concerning different aspects of migration are presented in the following paras.

Certain theorists have looked at migration in terms of opportunities. The most important among them was Stouffer (1940) who found migration to be the basis for “intervening opportunities”. The decision of the person migrating is influenced by the employment opportunity available to him in the country of destination. Stouffer (1940) emphasised that if a person has more opportunities between the country of origin and country of destination he will prefer the place nearest to the domestic or native place.

It was Everett Lee (1966) who first formulated a theory of migration. He delineated the presence of certain ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors that determine migration in the economy. The push factors repel people from an area while the pull factors attract people to a particular country of destination. Migration depends on the relative strength of these factors. Migration increases with time and the state of progress of society. James A.

Hallock (2007) conducted a study on physician migration based on the flow of medical students to the US for post-graduation. He highlights there are many medical schools in the world that are producing doctors not only for their domestic country but also for the international market.

Michiel B. (2010) attempted to find answers to questions like ‘why migrate’, what are the ‘pull-push’ factors and models of outflow of Indian origin people who had moved to Australia.

Samita Behal (2017) had conducted a survey on 120 emigrants’ households spread across three districts of Gurdaspur, Ferozepur and Jalandhar. Economic benefits like remittances were found to be the major factors motivating the youth of Punjab to migrate. Various socio-economic ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors are responsible like the presence of employment opportunities in the international market and poverty eradication on the domestic front.

Gurinder Kaur (2019) surveyed 200 farm households of four districts of Punjab and observed that male migration was in a larger proportion as compared to the female migration and most of the students preferred Australia and Canada because of the liberal policies of those countries.

S. IrudayaRajan and Neha Wadhawan (2013) in their study on 112 prospective students applying for student visas to UK observed that a large number of students apply for scholarship but very few receive. Although the cost of studying abroad is much higher than in India but students prefer to choose studying abroad because of improved work opportunity and value of the qualification internationally.

5. Objective

The main objectives for this research are:

1. To study the patterns of international migration in Nawanshahr and Garhshnakardistricts comprising major parts of the Doabaregion of Punjab.
2. To assess the factors contributing to sustained international migration trends among the youth of this region.

6. Scope of study

Recent researches show that migration is fast paced in the northern region of India and Punjab is among the top States of the northern region. Migration is a global phenomenon that is the result of economic, social, political, cultural, health, environmental and educational 'push' and 'pull' factors. To explore answers to the overseas movement issues of a selected area, a survey was conducted for gathering primary data because the information from available secondary sources was inadequate. The focus of this study is primarily two areas of the Doaba

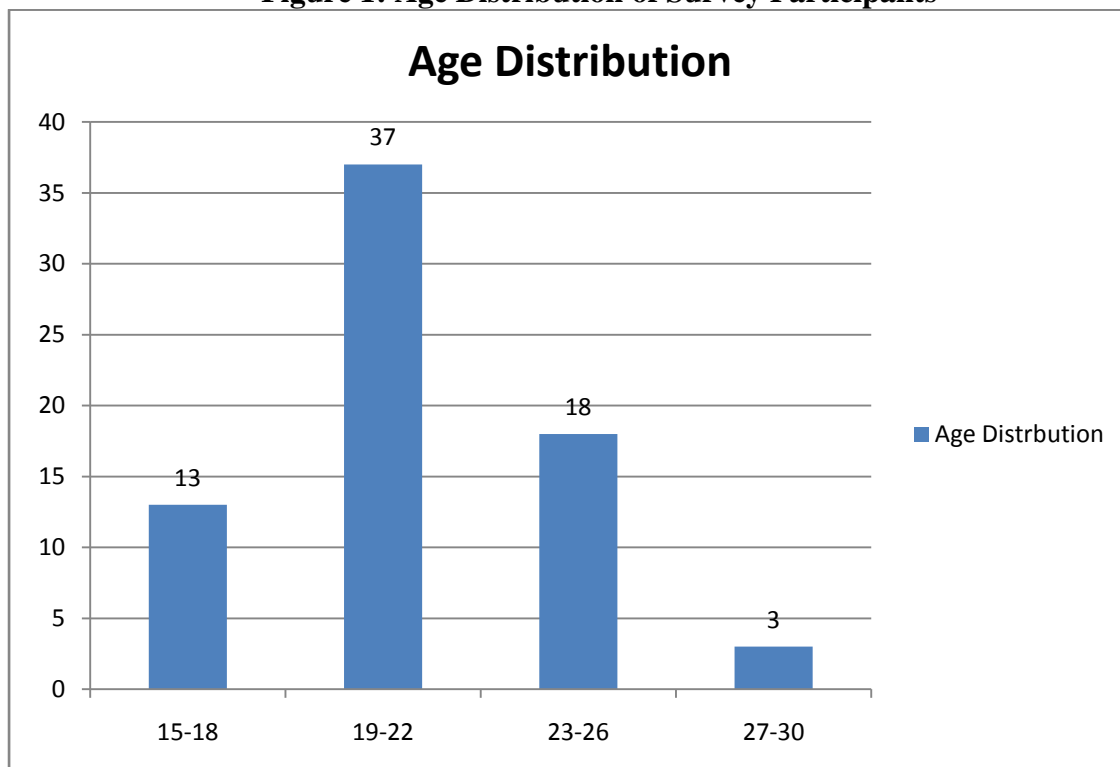
region i.e. Nawanshahr and Garhshankar because of the following reasons:

- The traditional Doaba region is the first among all regions of Punjab that has been most affected by the migration process.
- This region is the most influenced and yet has been rather neglected by most researchers on the subject.
- The college students' strength has been decreasing in the selected cities which makes it a significant impact of migration.

This paper incorporates the volumetric and quantitative attributes of individual population groups who are planning to study abroad during the period of the survey. Their social, demographic and economic descriptions are the focus of the study.

7. Data Analysis and Discussion

Figure 1: Age Distribution of Survey Participants



The ages (in years) of the students have been categorized into four groups. The maximum proportion of over 50 percent of the students, are in the age group of 19-

22 while the least proportion are in the age range of 27-30.

Table 1: Gender Distribution of Survey Participants

Sr. No.	Gender	Frequency	Percentage
1	Male	18	25.35
2	Female	53	74.65
	Total	71	100

The data findings show that the questionnaire was filled by more female candidates (25.35 percent) than male candidates (74.65 percent). From these observations, it can be seen that more males have been traditionally motivated

towards going abroad to study in the Nawanshahr and Garhshankararea. This could probably be due to the conservative mindset inherent in the population of that area in particular and Punjab in general.

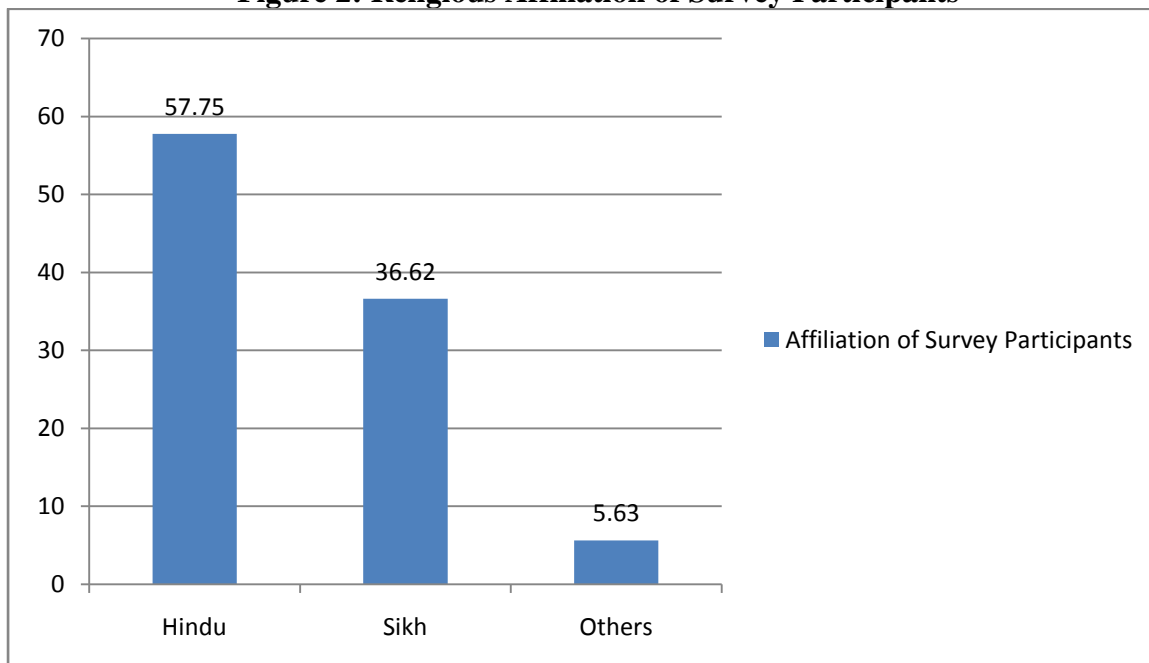
Table 2: Marital Status of Survey Participants

Sr. No.	Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
1	Married	6	8.45
2	Unmarried	65	91.54
	Total	71	99.99

It was interesting to note that only small percentages (8.45 percent) of the respondents were married while all other (91.54 percent) were unmarried. This gave

further evidence that it was the males who were migrating in greater numbers to learn and train for lucrative livelihoods abroad.

Figure 2: Religious Affiliation of Survey Participants



The religious affiliations of most of the

aspirants wanting to go abroad belonged to the Hindu Community (57.75 percent) while 36.62 percent are followers of the Sikh religion and 5.63 percent did not

want to share information on their religion or other community specifics.

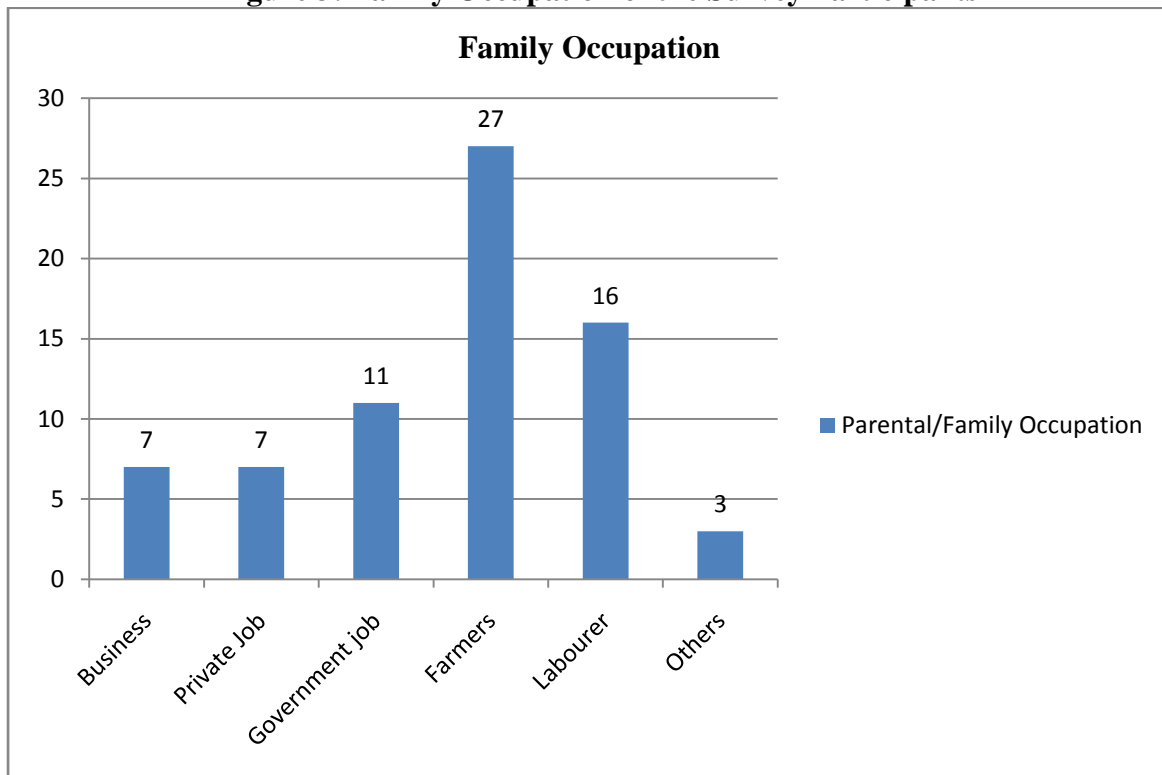
Table 3: Location of Residence

Sr. No.	Location	Frequency	Percentage
1	Rural	58	81.69
2	Urban	13	18.31
	Total	71	100.0

Discussing the location of their residence, the respondents stated that more than 80% are from rural areas while only 18 percent were from the urban area. The findings

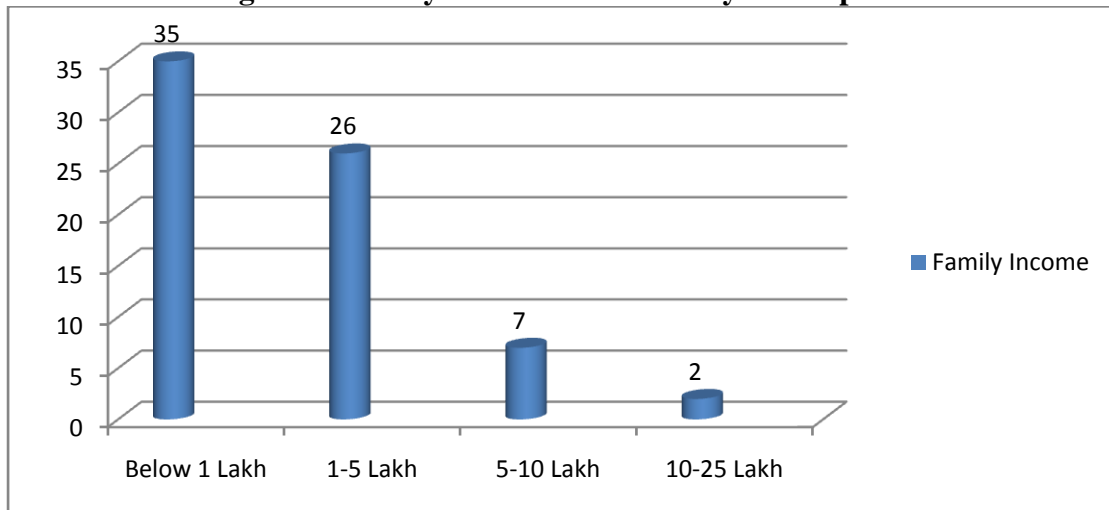
show that more people from villages are heading for foreign countries to complete their further studies.

Figure 3: Family Occupation of the Survey Participants



The survey findings showed that the largest proportions of the respondent's families are from agricultural background while another large segment comprised of agricultural and other forms of labour. A sizeable proportion also are working in government jobs while similar representation is observed of those who are in private jobs and are having their own business. Thus, it is apparent that the trends of out-migration are observed more among the agricultural families.

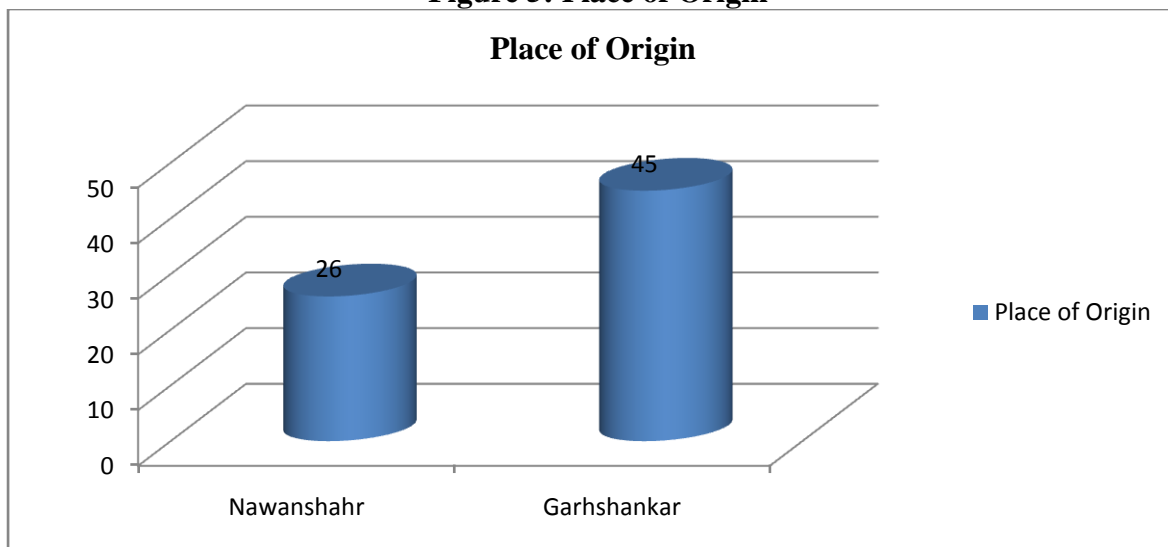
Figure 4: Family Income of the Survey Participants



When comparing the family income of the survey participants, it was observed that the larger proportion of the respondents had an income of less than INR 1 Lakh and these were followed by families that were earning upto INR 1.5 lakh a year.

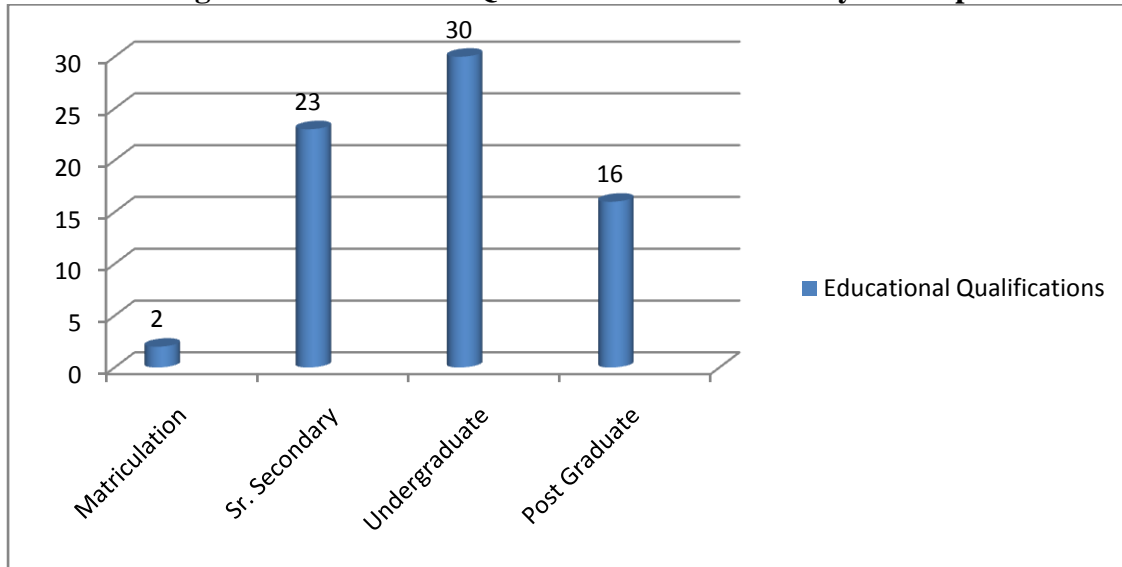
They were followed by those who were earning between INR 5 to INR 10 lakh a year and a very small proportion reportedly earned between INR 10 to INR 25 lakh a year.

Figure 5: Place of Origin



The respondents were categorized on the basis of their place of origin. The larger proportions were from Garshankar while the lesser number were from Nawashahr or Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar as it is currently called.

Figure 6: Educational Qualifications of the Survey Participants



When examining the academic qualifications of the respondents it was observed that the maximum proportion

had completed their education upto the graduation level in India and wished to go abroad for further studies.

Figure 7: Country of Destination for Out Migrants

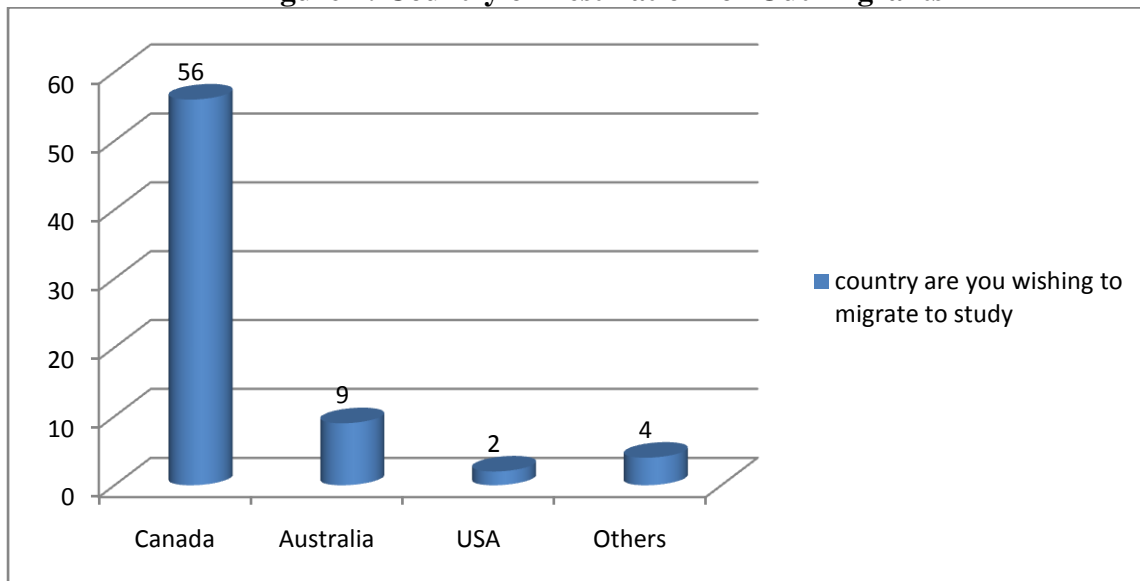


Figure 6 shows the inclination of the respondents in choosing the destination country. From the above data it is clear that Canada is the maximum favoured

destination country of the respondents. Almost all students reported that they preferred studying in Canada while small proportions reported a preference for Australia, U.S.A. and other countries.

Table 4: Reasons for Preferring other Countries as a Study Destination

Sr. No.	Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
1	Career Opportunities	44	61.97
2	Quality of Education	10	14.08
3	International Travel	1	1.41

4	Life Style	6	8.45
5	Want to Experience different culture	7	9.86
6	Others	3	4.23
	Total	71	100.0

Table 4 shows the frequencies of various factors responded to as being responsible for out-migration by the students. It is clear from the data that the most attractive reason for migration among students is the availability of career opportunities and suitable employment subsequent to the completion of the study programmes.

8. Research Findings

The present study is an attempt to recognize and highlight the various socio-demographic variables and factors responsible for international student migration. The report has analyzed that a majority of the migration is taking place among the 19 to 22 years old youth who were largely unmarried (91.54%) and male (over 75 percent). There were 57.75 percent of the respondents who adhered to the Hindu religion and 36.62 percent followed Sikhism. Most aspirants are from rural areas and their families (38.03%) are from agriculture backgrounds. This can have serious implications for India where almost 1/3 of GDP is dependent on agriculture and Punjab is one of the major hubs of agriculture. As most households had reported the maximum annual income of about INR 1.5 lakh a year, it could be observed that studying abroad is expensive as it involves high course fee, travel expenses, living expenses, etc. To fulfil these requirements, people opt for loans from banks which are an additional burden on the family. In fact most students said that after migration they would have to take up part-time jobs during their study to take care of their expenses.

Due to its liberal policies, the Canadian Government had made Canada a favourite

destination country for most of the people (78.87%) planning to study abroad and the second place of choice is Australia (12.68%). The remaining respondents were observed to choose USA, New Zealand, Hungary as destinations. The results also emphasize that the level of education attained by a majority of the respondents planning to study abroad was either senior secondary (32.39%) or undergraduate (42.25%) level. Most of the students of this region are planning to pursue graduation or post-graduation from other countries after qualifying only the basic qualifications in India. The attraction of career opportunities and lucrative employment (61.79 %) are found to be the significant causative reason among all the factors considered for student migration, the other preferred reason is the quality of education (14.04 %).

9. Summary and Conclusions

The research findings have revealed the recent trends and broad patterns of international student migration in the study area. It highlighted the push and pull factors that motivated students to study abroad. The poor income of the family and the lure of better emoluments on obtaining gainful employment abroad proves very attractive for the prospective out-migrants. It was observed that most aspirants moving towards developed countries, came from poorer households, therefore the 'pull' of higher studies complemented the 'push' of economic factors were the main reason for migration. The majority of migration trends are observed from rural areas and their families who are dependent largely upon the agricultural field. The agricultural sector is a very important player in Punjab's economy. It can be a serious economic imbalance problem if

most of the youth from agriculture moves to other countries for a better lifestyle and alternative career options. The government needs to give high priority to rural development and the agriculture sector to check the flow of migration of youth from Punjab. Measures like generation of employment opportunities and improvement in quality of education should be taken up immediately. Out-migration in large numbers can change demographic profiles of communities. This aspect needs to be focussed upon as most of the youngsters are moving out leaving just the older generation to work on the land making it an imbalanced situation for the country of origin.

Moreover, recently India is not observed as a country of origin only rather it is quickly becoming a country of destination as well. Many students from Asian countries like Bangladesh, Nepal and China prefer India for further and professional studies. Even students of African countries are choosing India for work and education. The consequent brain drain prevents the country from investing further in human capital. There is an urgent need to reflect on these trends so that upgradation of the educational as well as employment facilities can be checked well in time in this once prosperous region of Punjab. The migratory trends thus are both ways. It is for the educationalists to decide how the students need to be nurtured on their home ground giving them the skills necessary to seek gainful employment.

10. Delimitations of the study

The limitations of the study include the fact that the sample size chosen is small and chances are that the sample may not be truly representative of the population. This study is restricted to a particular area. Sometimes the respondents do not give the exact information due to certain personal reasons.

11. Future Implications

The study raises numerous opportunities for future research important government and policymakers in the field of migration. This study is restricted to particular areas and the literature review shows that limited work has been conducted in these areas. The researchers have used a framework to explore the main reasons for the out-migration of the youth. The study is at a preliminary stage as the sample size taken is small. Further, research is necessitated to refine and further elaborate the findings.

References

1. Hallock, J.A., McKinley, D.W. and Boulet, J.R. (2007), "Migration of doctors for undergraduate medical education", *Journal medical teacher*, Vol.29 No. 2-3, pp. 98-105.
2. Zachariah K.C. & Rajan, S. Irudaya (2015) "Dynamic of emigration and Remittances in Kerala: Results from the Kerala Migration Survey 2014" *Working Paper* 463
3. Kaur, Gurjinder (2019), "Overseas Migration of Students from Punjab", *IJRAR - International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews*, Vol. 06 No. 1, pp. 1053-1059.
4. Taylor, Steve and Singh, Manjit (2013), "Punjab's Doab Migration Development Nexus: Transnationalism and Caste domination", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 43 No. 24, pp. 50-57
5. Erdal, Marta (2012), "A Place to Stay in Pakistan: Why Migrants Build Houses in Their Place of Origin", *Population, Space and Place*, Vol. 18 No. 5, pp. 629-41.
6. Upadhyay, Carol and Mario, Rutten (2012), "Migration, Transnational Flows, and Development in India: A Regional Perspective", *Economic & Political Weekly*, Vol. 47 No. 19, pp. 54-62
7. Gupta, S. P. and Prajapati, B. L. (1998), "Migration of Agricultural Labourers in Chattisgarh Region of Madhya Pradesh: A Micro Level Study", *The Indian Journal of Labour Economics*, Vol. 41 No. 4, pp. 707-15.
8. Michiel, B. (2010), *Imagined Mobility: Migration and transnationalism among Indian students in Australia*, Anthem Press, London, New York.

9. Rajan, S. Irudya and Wadhwan, Neha (2013), *India Migration Report 2014*, Routledge India, London
10. Piore, Michael J. (1979), *Birds of Passage: Migrant Labor and Industrial Societies*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
11. Retrieved from:
https://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/133049/7/07_chapter%202.pdf
12. Retrieved from:
https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/migrationreport/docs/InternationalMigration2019_Report.pdf