

## CHAPTER-VI

# **CONSEQUENCES OF MIGRATION OF RICKSHAW PULLERS AND CONSTRUCTION WORKERS ON THEIR HOUSEHOLD ECONOMY AND THE ECONOMY OF SMCA**

### **6.1 Introduction**

Almost all developing countries that have been concerned with the size and growth of their urban populations believe that internal (rural-urban) migration has been the prominent factor contributing to urban growth. Although high population growth is a serious problem in most developing countries, internal migration puts even greater strain on cities. Internal migration takes different forms and patterns, but the most significant is the movement from rural areas to urban centers. Rural-urban migration is responsible for the depopulation of some rural areas and the influx of people into towns and cities. Migration of RPs and CWs to SMCA has a definite impact upon the household economy at the native places and the economy of SMCA. Among the migrant RPs and CWs, the temporary migrants only remit money to their native places to feed, dress and educate their family members. They have migrated to SMCA mainly due to inadequate earnings and unemployment at the villages. The other factors for migrating to SMCA are the job opportunity and easy absorption in rickshaw pulling and construction work.

### **6.2 Migration Status**

In our field survey we have found that migrants among the CWs are higher than the RPs (Table-6.1). Temporary migrants among the RPs

are higher than that of CWs and in opposition, circular migrants among the CWs is higher than the RPs. Once more higher percentage of permanent migrants is seen among CWs than RPs.

**Table-6.1**

**Distribution of RPs and CWs According to Migration Status**

	Non migrants	Migrants			Total migrants
		Temporary	Permanent	Circular	
<b>RPs</b>	48[23.41]	89[56.68]	14[8.91]	54[34.39]	157[76.59]
<b>CWs</b>	4[1.95]	39[19.40]	24[11.94]	138[68.56]	201[98.05]

*Source: field survey*

*Note: Row percentage in brackets*

**6.3 Use of Remitted Money**

The average daily income of RPs is Rs. 110.30 and Rs. 85 for CWs. Our data reveal that the earnings of both RP and CW are adequate enough so that they can save and remit money to their families at villages [Table-6.2]. In case of CWs, 94% of them remit more than 65% of their earnings and 92% of the RPs remit the same to their native places. In aggregate 93% of RPs and CWs remit more than 65% of their earnings to their native places. The family members at villages spend the remitted money for different purposes for upgrading their levels of living. Among the families of RPs, 94.38% used the remitted money for daily consumption of food, 67.41% used money for education, 51.38% used for house repairing, 24.71% used for investment in agriculture and 22.48% used for loan repayment on mortgaged in land.

**Table-6.2****Distribution of RPs and CWs According to Percentage of Income Remitted to the Native Places**

	<50%	50%-65%	>65%
<b>CWs</b>	5.12	53.86	41.02
<b>RPs</b>	7.86	33.75	58.42
<b>Total</b>	7.03	39.84	53.19

*Source: field survey*

Among the CWs, 87.18% families used remitted money for daily consumption of food, 56.41% used for house repairing, 43.49% used for education and 41.02% used for investment in agriculture [Table-6.3]. Thus it is evident that the earnings of both RPs and CWs contributed a lot to their household economy in the form of daily food consumption, investment in agriculture, education and house repairing. There is no doubt that the household economy of both RPs and CWs are getting benefited from the money remitted by them.

**Table-6.3****Distribution of RPs and CWs According to Use of Remitted Money to the Native Places**

	RPs	CWs
<b>Consumption</b>	94.38	87.18
<b>Investment</b>	24.71	41.02
<b>Loan repayment</b>	13.48	10.25
<b>Mortgaged in land</b>	9	5.12
<b>Education</b>	67.41	43.49
<b>House repair</b>	51.68	56.41

*Source: field survey*

On the other hand, expansion of village markets is taking place with the increase of the village consumption with the remitted money. In this way both the household economy and the economy of the villages is improving day by day with the remitted money which is earned by plying rickshaws and doing construction work at SMCA by the two

groups of workers. In this way a large amount of money is getting transferred day by day from urban economy to village economy and improving the living standards of the village residents. Or we can say that the money getting is redistributed among the poor peoples from rich people.

On the other side of the picture, the economy of SMCA is also getting benefited from the existence of the migrant workers of both Rickshaw Pulling and Construction Work. Most of the circular and temporary migrant RPs take their meal at the hotels and deposit their daily earnings to the hotel owners. The owners then subtract the hotel bill from the deposited money and return to the puller at the end of the week. Most of the circular and temporary migrant CWs also do take their meals at the hotels. In this way a portion of their earnings is invested at the SMCA economy. They also invest their earning in the form of rent paid to the rickshaw owners, commission given to the middleman, rent paid for rented house, purchasing of cloth, consumption of pan, bidi, cigarettes, tea etc.

#### **6.4 Population Growth Rate**

Siliguri municipal corporation area have witnessed high rate of population growth owing to the process of natural growth supplemented by migration. It is evident from Table-6.4 that while for both West Bengal and Darjeeling district the decadal population growth during 1991-2001 ( 17.77 and 23.79) exhibits lower than the decade 1981-1991 ( 24.73 and 26.91), SMCA experiences much higher growth rate in 1991-2003 ( 117.73) than 1981-1991 (40.53), which is highest among all cities and towns in west Bengal.

**Table-6.4****Population Growth Rate (Decadal)**

	1971-1981	1981-1991	1991-2001	1991-2003
<b>West Bengal</b>		68077965 (24.73)	80366461 (17.77)	-
<b>Darjeeling</b>		1299919 (26.91)	1582754 (23.79)	-
<b>SMCA</b>	154378 (58.36)	216950 (40.53)	284602 (31.18)	472374 (118)

Source: District census handbook 2001, 2004

Value in the parenthesis shows percentage.

**6.5 Population Density and Sex Ratio**

Table-6.5 exhibits that, the population density in SMCA (14160) for 2001 is much higher compared to West Bengal (903) and Darjeeling district (511). But in case of sex ratio, SMCA represents (877) lower than West Bengal (934) and Darjeeling district (937). The overall sex ratio for 2001 in SMCA is 884 and the sex ratio among the slum population is 888. Thus the percentage of women among the slum areas is higher than the non slum areas of the SMCA.

**Table-6.5****Population Density and Sex Ratio**

	Population density		Sex ratio	
	1991	2001	1991	2001
<b>West Bengal</b>	767	903	917	934
<b>Darjeeling</b>	413	511	914	937
<b>SMCA</b>	13961	14160	824	877

Source: district census handbook 2001, 2004

## 6.6 Number of Households at SMCA

Total number of house hold at SMCA has increased from 42700 in 1991 to 58126 in 2001 showing 36.12% growth [Table-6.6]. The growth rate of household in west Bengal (25.58) is much lower than the SMCA. Population below poverty line has declined to 22.40% as compared to above 26% in 1991.

**Table-6.6**

### **Number and Growth of Households at SMCA**

	<b>1991</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>Growth rate</b>
<b>SMCA</b>	42700	58126	36.12
<b>West Bengal</b>	12514414	15715915	25.58

*Source: district census handbook 2001, 2004*

## 6.7 Slum Population at SMCA

There are total 151 slums in the city and 35.77 % of the total population (1, 68,217 persons) lives in slums in 47 wards as compared to 48 slums (in 1 – 30 wards) in 1991with 21.30% within limits. Total 34,330 households live in slums at present having average household size of 4.9.

### **Slum Profile:**

Slums are located along the River Mahananda, Fuleswari and Jorapani on the Railway lands and in the heart of the city near railway town station. Due to ineffective development controls and regulations slums have developed on the riverbeds and on the railway lands resulting into degrading urban environment and unhealthy living conditions. 80% of the slum dwellers are migrants from Bihar, Assam, other parts of West Bengal, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan and 69 % of are staying for more than 10 to 15 years. Except for some slums on

railway lands all other slums are notified slums. 76 % of the households are living in the Kutchha house and 18.3 % of the households live in semi pucca and pucca house.

### **6.8 Urban Amenities**

Siliguri is located in the narrow corridor connecting Northeast with the rest of India with Bhutan in the Northeast, Bangladesh in the south and Nepal in the west. Proximity to the international borders with Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, and also China places Siliguri at a strategic significance. In respect of trade, commerce and tourist traffic Siliguri occupies an extremely important position for Sikkim, Assam, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh.

Over the years SMCA has been the terminus of the poor and migrant people of different adjacent districts and neighbouring states/countries. 80% of the permanent migrants at SMCA are from Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh. About one lakh people are coming daily to this city for earning their livelihoods. In order to accommodate these vast numbers of influx of people, SMCA had to provide all sorts of infrastructural and commercial facilities to these people matching with their demands. Total Educational institutions (formal and non-formal schools and colleges) have increased from 113 in 1991 to 332 in 2004 showing a growth of 193.80% over the decade [District Census hand book 1991 and 2004] [Table-6.7].

**Table-6.7**

**Educational institutions in SMCA**

<b>Educational institutions</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>Growth rate</b>
Primary school	80	173	116.25
Middle school	6	7	16.66
High school	14	19	35.71

Higher secondary school	9	19	111.11
College/open university	3	7	133.33
Technical school and colleges	1	7	600
Non formal institution	00	100	10000
Total	113	332	193.80

Source: district census handbook 2001, 2004

Total number of private nursing homes almost doubled in 2001 compared to 1991 level (37 and 20 respectively [BCDA, 2007, Siliguri]. Total number of medical institutions has increased from 3 in 2000 to 14 in 2003. But total number of beds and doctors available remains stagnant through out the period [Table-6.8]. Total number of hotels and lodges has increased from 234 in 1991 to 619 in 2001 [hotels owner association, Siliguri]. Medical shops of both retail and wholesale has increased remarkably from 420 in 1991 to 700 in 2001 of which 60% are unregistered [BCDA, 2007, Siliguri]. Total number of commercial establishments has grown to 45230 (33% are registered and 67% are unregistered) in 2001 from 23876 in 1991 showing 100% growth rate [FOCIN, 2007, Siliguri]. Over the years migrant peoples are getting absorbed in occupations like motor garage assistant, sweet shop assistant causing number of garages to increase from only 8 in 1984 to 160 in 2001. Factory and workshops has grown to 1140 in 2001 from 367 in 1991.

**Table-6.8**  
**Medical Institutions at SMCA**

Medical institutions	2000	2003
Hospitals	1	1
Health centers	0	11
Clinics	1	1
Dispensaries	1	1
Total beds	250	250
Doctors	42	44

Source: district census handbook 2001, 2004

Number of motor vehicles has increased enormously in Darjeeling districts showing a growth rate of 150.17% during 1996-2004 of which more than 50% are at SMCA [Table-6.9].

**Table-6.9**

**Distribution of Motor Vehicles at Darjeeling District**

<b>Vehicles \ Year</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>Growth Rate</b>
Scooters and motor cycles	13592	52172	283.84
Goods vehicle	6319	6573	4.01
Motor cars	14183	28117	98.24
Taxi	3255	3925	2.58
auto	155	3039	1860.64
<b>Total</b>	<b>37504</b>	<b>93826</b>	<b>150.17</b>

*Source: district census handbook 2001, 2004*

The law and order situation in Siliguri is under control reflecting the total number of cognizable cases (dacoity, robbery, burglary, murder, rioting, arson offence against women etc] over the period of 1998 to 2006 with in Siliguri subdivision has revealed stable situation [Table-6.10]. The rationale behind the stable situation is that, the peoples are earning satisfactory income and fulfilling their needs with peace and harmony.

**Table-6.10**

**Total Number of Cognizable Cases Reported with in Siliguri Subdivision**

<b>Cases \ Year</b>	<b>Total case Reported</b>
1998	1212
1999	1283

2000	1203
2001	1246
2002	1576
2003	1404
2004	1292
2005	1222
2006	1316

*Source: Office of the additional  
Super-intendant of police, Siliguri.*

## **6.9 Markets**

Considering the need for commercial facilities of the town and lack of adequate infrastructure three markets have been established in the town through Integrated Development of Small and Medium Towns [I.D.S.M.T.] funds. They are D. I Fund market, Vivekananda Mini Market, and Subhaspally Market at three different locations of the town. Establishment of these markets has no doubt helped in improving the commercial activities of the town.

A good number of markets / shopping complexes have already been set up in different areas of Siliguri and outskirts of the town. Some important market complexes are:

Vivekananda Super Market, B.R. Ambedkar Market Complex, Khudiram Bose Market, Champasari Road Side Market, D.I Fund Market (a new shed has been erected), Haider Para Market Complex, S.J.D.A Market, Bidhan Market, Fuleswari Fish & Meat market.

We could know that to construct some more market complexes with aim of meeting every day demand of the common people and also to create job opportunity or business opportunity for the educated/uneducated youths of the localities. In view of this, the following market complexes have been identified and taken up and few have already been started under I.D.S.M.T. – programme.

Siliguri Corporation has taken numbers of developmental activities under various Government projects and various self-employment programmes to upgrade their living standards. Three Centrally Sponsored and State Sponsored programmes including National Slum Development Program (NSDP), Integrated Low Cost Sanitation Scheme (ILCS), and Valmiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana (VAMBAY) are in operation for slum improvement in Siliguri city. These programs are taken up by Urban Poverty Eradication Cell of Siliguri Municipal Corporation and implemented by CDS (Community Development Societies) in different wards. ILCS is a very successful programme. Total 12,547 low cost sanitation units are constructed under this scheme and total 80 % of the slum dwellers have access to safe mode of sanitation due to this program. Total 881 families have benefited under shelter for shelter less Scheme of NSDP. However, as the slum population increases over time due to immigration of different categories of informal sector workers due to push and especially pull factors, it becomes difficult to the part of the city administration to improve the living environment of the slum dwellers on a substantive basis.

From the above delineation the increasing scale of development activities undertaken and completed by the city managers is clearly visible. All these activities are making the SMCA a centre of attraction where the migrant population can enjoy the greater opportunities of employment, health, education and better amenities than in other areas to make life and lifestyle more easy, comfortable, modern and worth living. Values of land and property in the SMCA are therefore soaring of unimaginable heights.

Congestions in the city roads are naturally increasing with in the number of vehicles and population. However, the number of crimes is more or less stable over the last several years. Number of vehicular accidents is also increased.

Thus growth of informal sector in SMCA gives rise to economies of scale. Industries benefit from concentrations of suppliers and consumers which allow savings in communications and transport costs. SMCA also provides big differentiated labour markets and helps in accelerating the pace of technological innovation. Growth also allows economies of scale in such services as water supply and electric power to be exploited. Educational institutions, hotels, medical institutions and other market places have shown substantial growth. Against these benefits, a major consequence of rural-urban migration in SMCA is over-urbanisation. Along with the rapid spread of urbanisation show the way to prolific growth of huge slums. Today, slum settlements represent over 35% of the urban population in SMCA. With the expansion of the city, the cost of providing basic services also rises enormously. Over-urbanisation and its related problems (pollution, noise and congestion) are examples of negative externalities. The presence of such externalities causes a market to operate inefficiently.