

## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis is concerned with short term/seasonal/circular migration for work from rural India. It attempts to describe and critically analyse the magnitude of such migration from the available secondary and primary sources of data and will try to bring out the relevance of such migration from rural West Bengal.

According to the 64<sup>th</sup> round of the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) on Employment, Unemployment and Migration (2007-8) there were 324 million internal migrants in India, which is almost 29 per cent of the total population, 140 million of whom were workers. On the remittance front, the NSS estimates reveal that international remittances received in India comprised about half of the domestic remittances received. The results also indicate that ninety-one per cent of migrants in rural areas and 59 per cent of migrants in urban areas in India had migrated from a rural region.

Rural migrants thus constitute a large proportion of short-term /seasonal/circular migrants who move for work/employment related reasons. The 55th (1999-2000) and the 64th rounds (2007-8) of the NSSO tried to quantify short duration migration. Estimates of short-term migrants vary from 15 million (NSSO 2007-8) to 40 million (Srivastava, 2011) to 100 million (Deshingkar and Akter 2009). Research on the socio-economic characteristics of this stream of migrant workers and the impact of migrant earnings on the rural household incomes, is thus necessary for an understanding of this crucial segment of India's labour force. A brief overview of the chapters of this thesis is given below:

The first chapter introduces the research topic; reviews the available literature relevant to the study, states the research questions and the research methodology followed during study. The second chapter is intended to describe and critically evaluate the results obtained from the secondary database available i.e. the Census and the NSS surveys and compare their methodology with that of various primary surveys on internal migration.

The third chapter is intended to describe and critically evaluate the results obtained from the secondary database i.e. the NSS survey with special focus on West Bengal.

The fourth chapter introduces the villages which will be studied as the origin of the migrant worker. For this purpose I study the villages of West Bengal which were surveyed by the Foundation for Agrarian Studies as part of the 2010 West Bengal Round survey of the Project on Agrarian Relations in India (PARI).

The fifth chapter is intended to compare the socio-economic conditions of migrant and non-migrant households in the study villages.

The sixth chapter analyses the difference between migrant and non-migrant households with respect to rural household incomes.

The seventh chapter studies the migrant worker at the destination. The samples for this study are the migrant construction workers from West Bengal who migrate to the Ernakulam district of Kerala.

The demographic and socio-economic characteristics of migrant workers is studied in this chapter.

The final chapter summarizes the specific findings of the chapters of the thesis.