Rural–urban migration is a phenomenon that is found associated with level of economic development. Rural people have agriculture as their main occupation that has relatively lower productivity per worker as compared to the urban non-farm occupations. It is, thus, a reflection of occupational mobility from less remunerative agricultural sector to more productive urban manufacturing and service sectors. According to Neo-classical economists, migration is positive and necessary concomitant to development. The process of migration helps in making labour supply and demand adjustment and a shift of surplus labour-force from agriculture to non-agricultural sectors. The development economists, such as, Kuznets, Lewis, opined that economic growth was associated with a gradual shift of workforce from agriculture to non-agricultural sectors, leading to population agglomeration and urbanization.

The State of Uttar Pradesh is primarily rural, with an urbanization rate of only 21 per cent as per the 2001 census. It comprises 70 districts which are divided on the basis of the geographical location into four regions, namely, Western, Central, Bundelkhand and Eastern. In term of socio-economic development, there exists a vide disparity across regions, gender and social groups. For instance, population and area of Western and Eastern Regions are almost same but there is a mark difference in their level of socio-economic development. Gender disparity in life expectancy, literary rate, work participation rate and sex ratio are also found significant.
The study focuses on the different aspects of rural to urban migration such as social, demographic and economic. It highlights social status, religion and other related information and also analyzes how the population distribution has affected this phenomenon and simultaneously the effect of migration and population structure. Economic dimensions are the nucleus part of the study so it pays more attention to them. The study identifies various economic factors that affect the rural-urban migration. Some factors are pull factors and some are push factors in the rural-urban migration. The study examines these factors and identifies which factor is more dominating in explaining variation in the rural-urban migration in the State.

Study of magnitude, pattern and determinants of rural-urban migration is quite relevant, especially in a State like UP which comprises over 75 per cent of total population in the rural area. As the State is large in population and area, there exists a wide variation in the magnitude and pattern of various socio-economic parameters of development and as a result, a mark difference in the level of development persists across geographical regions and social groups. Western Uttar Pradesh is the most developed regions, whereas Bundelkhand is the most backward region of the State. As the study intends to examine the inter-regional variation in the trends, patterns and determinants of rural-urban migration, it would shed light on whether incidence of out-migration from the rural area is high in the backward or the developed region. Although, there have been some studies on the theme in India, including Uttar Pradesh, the importance of this study lies in the fact that it will be based on the recent data on migration collected from Population Census 2001 and will cover all the 70 district of the State. The role of push and full factors, as proposed to be examined, highlight the fact whether out-migration is due to lack of rural development activities (distress migration) or due to fast growth of urban area and
increasing human capital base of rural workforce whose employability is high in both rural and urban non-farm sectors. The study intends to not only add to the existing literature on the subject but also to be a valuable input for framing the appropriate rural development policies to abating unwarranted inflows of rural labour force to the urban areas.

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(Raj Singh)