CHAPTER II
MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
2.1. Introduction:

This chapter provides a general theoretical background on the determinants of migration. Theories are constructed in order to explain and predict the master phenomena (e.g. relationships, events or the behaviour). The theoretical framework of the study is a structure that can hold or support a theory of a research work. It presents the theory which explains why the problem under study exists. A theoretical framework guides the researcher, determining what variable to measure, and what statistical relationship to look for.

Migration is an interdisciplinary subject. There are different theories on migration which are given by demographers, economists, sociologists and geographers to examine the process of migration. These theories explain why people migrate and the reason for their migration. So the study of migration is not confined to a single scientific domain.

2.2. Size, Direction, Motivation and Mechanism of migration:

Theory building in the field of migration is more than a century old now. The first systematic attempt towards the conceptualization of migration was made by Ravenstein in 1885 in his paper ‘the laws of migration’. He derived these laws from an analysis of inter-county movements within Britain during 19th century using census data on birth-place. He saw migration as an inseparable part of development and, asserted that the major causes of migration are economic. His major laws and trends were mainly concentrated with the volume and direction of migration. Ravenstein has postulated seven laws pertaining to migration. His first law says that migration depends on distance. The volume of migration decreases with distance. The number of people moving from one place to another decrease with the increase in distance and also as the distance increases, migrants have a preference for large cities i.e. centers of commerce and industry. His second law of migration is concerned with the stages of
migration. Migration takes place in stages, and the gaps left by the migrants in the rural areas surrounding an urban-industrial center are filled up by migrants from other remote areas. His third law of migration says that every major current of migration generates compensating counter stream. His fourth law of migration says that the natives of towns have low degree of mobility in comparison to their counterpart in the countryside. His fifth law emphasizes the sex selective nature of migration. Generally females outnumber males among the short distance migrants. Sixth law of migration says that there is a correspondence between level of technology and magnitude of migration i.e. with the increase in the level of technology, number of migrants and distance travelled by them also increase. Seventh law of migration emphasizes that economic motives have generally been the dominant factor leading to migration.

Applicability of Ravenstein’s laws has been verified through a number of studies. His laws are very popular even today. Ravenstein neglected a large number of intervening variables such as socio-economic factors in his laws. His theory is included in the category of neo classical theories. This theory of migration generally fails to explain why some people in a certain country or region migrate while others do not and, why people tend to migrate between particular places in a spatially clustered, concentrated, typically non-random fashion.

Several attempts have been made in migration research in search of a specific population size and distance relationship. Most studies show migration to be inversely related to distance. George K. Zipf (1949) applied the principle of least effort to the movement of goods, information and people in a social system. According to him such movements in a social system are so organized as to minimize the total work of the system. The magnitude of movement between two communities can be expressed by following formulas:

\[
M_{ij} = K \frac{P_i P_j}{D_{ij}}
\]

Where \(M_{ij}\) is the magnitude of movement between the two communities \(i\) and \(j\), \(P_i\) and \(P_j\) are the populations of the respective communities, \(D_{ij}\) is the distance
between the two communities and \( K \) is a constant of proportionality. According to the Zipf, the magnitude of migration between any two places is directly proportional to the product of the population and inversely related to the distance separating them. A longer distance therefore reduces the number of migrants between two places or areas. He tried this principle in the course of his study of migration between American cities and found an inverse relation between the number of migrants and distance between various cities. In several empirical studies it is found to be operating. But later Hagerstand realized that there are many difficulties into its applications, because the rate of change in interaction over distance varies in time according to the place and according to social composition and also on the basis of means of transport and communication.

Though many authors agree that distance is the major determinant of volume and direction of migration, but many theories looked at migration of population not in mere terms of distance but also in terms of ‘opportunities’. It is realized that migration is primarily motivated by search for occupational opportunity and that its volume and direction are primarily influenced by job opportunities.

In 1940, S.A. Stouffer presented his theory of Intervening Opportunities. His theory was an attempt to improve upon Zipf’s Principal of Least efforts. Stouffer in his study claimed that there is no necessary relationship between mobility and distance (Stouffer, 1940:846). The volume of migration is affected by intervening opportunities with increasing distance. According to his model number of migrants from an origin to a destination is directly proportional to the number of opportunities at destination and inversely proportional to the number of intervening opportunities between the origin and destination. The relationship between the number of migrants and intervening opportunities can be expressed as follows:

\[
Y = \left( \frac{\nabla x}{x} \right) K
\]

Where, \( Y \) is the expected number of migrants, \( \nabla x \) is the number of opportunities at the destination, \( x \) is the number of intervening opportunities and \( K \) is a constant.
In 1960, Stouffer further modified his theory of intervening opportunities and added a concept of competing migrants. According to the new model during a given time interval, the number of migrants from city 1 to city 2 is the direct function of the number of opportunities in city 2 and an inverse function of the number of opportunities intervening between city 1 and city 2, and also the number of other migrants for the opportunities in city 2. The revised formula is expressed as under:

\[ Y = \left( \frac{X_1}{X_B X_C} \right) K \]

Where, \( Y \) is the number of migrants moving from city 1 to city 2, \( X_1 \) is the number of opportunities in city 2, \( X_B \) is the number of opportunities intervening between city 1 and city 2, \( X_C \) is the number of competing opportunities in city 2 and \( K \) is a constant. The volume of migration from one city to another is the function of as much the attraction of one city as the repulsion from the other. So, another component that pushes people from city 1 is introduced in the numerator. The final formula is expressed as following:

\[ Y = \left( \frac{X_0 X^a}{X_B X_C} \right) K \]

Where \( X_0 \) is the number of out-migrants from city 1 and a, b, c are parameters to be determined empirically. \( X_I \) is defined as the total in-migrants in city 2, \( X_B \) is defined as the total number of in-migrants in a circle centered midway between city 1 and city 2. \( X_C \) is the defined as the total number of out-migrants from a circle centered on city 2 with the distance between the two cities as its radius.

The theory of migration which takes into account ‘opportunity and distance’ as determinant of size and direction of movement has been successful in describing many migration patterns, but it has one major shortcoming. One of the major factors which has not been given due consideration in this theory, is that map of ‘opportunities actually available’ to the migrants is not identical to the corresponding ‘mental map’ (Khan, 1983: 6). The migrants do not know about the opportunities. Moreover their knowledge is accompanied by varying degrees of uncertainties, since the transformation from the actual map to the mental map is very much function of
the information available to and utilized by individual migrant. The characteristics of information are important in assessing directional pattern of migration.

However, the above discussed laws/models are basically concerned with size and direction of migration. They do not say anything about motivation and mechanism which are two important aspects of migration. Not only these but the models also suffers from another shortcoming that it tends to describe rather than explain migration.

‘Push and Pull Theory’ was developed in order to explain the causes or motivation for migration. This theory basically based on individual choice and equilibrium. The push and pull attributes of place of origin and destination, is recognized by Donald J. Bouge. He suggested that there are positive and negative aspects of migration provoking situation. Migration may occur as a search for opportunities to improve one’s lot in life. In this case destination exerts a pull on migrants. Migration can also occur as a result of undesirable social and economic situations. These situations constitute expulsive ‘push’ of the community. Migration generally takes place when the positive ‘pull factors’ at the place of destination outweigh the negative ‘push factors’ at the place of origin. Most of the researchers who have applied the ‘push-pull’ framework have assumed that various environmental, social, demographic, and economic factors determine migration decisions. Two main forces are typically distinguished to create the ‘pushes’ and ‘pulls’: (1) rural population growth causing a Malthusian pressure on natural and agricultural resources, and pushing people out of marginal rural areas, and (2) economic conditions (higher wages), luring people into cities and industrialized countries. Whether migration occurs crucially depends on the skills and knowledge of migrants and conditions in the specific economic sectors where they are likely to find employment both at the origin and destination. Such sectoral differences may even explain migration from areas (or countries) with higher on averagewages to poorer areas.

There are certain scholars like Myrdal, Prothero who consider only push as a potent reason for migration, while there are others like Sovani, Base, Trewartha who
disagree and assert that migration occur due to a complex interaction of ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors (Khan, 1983: 7). Push and pull theory has long been one of the most important theories in migration and it is proved to be useful for listing the factors affecting the migrating movement, but it has a limitation which curbs its utility to a great extent. This theory does not explain under similar situations why some people migrate and other does not. It does not take into account how migrants perceive their worlds and relate to their kin, friends, and community members.

Finally because of its indifference to personal aspirations of people involved in migration, push-pull theory is not able to explain return migration and the simultaneous occurrence of out-migration and in-migration from and to the same locality or area, nor does it pay attention to the impacts of migration, and the way it may alter the structural contexts both at the destination and origin. In other words, the ‘push-pull’ model is a static model focusing on external factors that “cause” migration that is unable to analytically situate migration as an integral part of broader transformation processes, and therefore seems of limited analytical use.

Lee’s conceptual model on migration which incorporates push and pull factors operating at the places of both origin and destination, tried to overcome this limitation. He proposed that each person is constantly exposed to the factors at the place of origin some of which are negative factors while others are positive factors. Negative factors encourage people to move out whereas positive factors tend to keep people tied or bound with the place of origin. Furthermore, between origin and destination stands a set of intervening obstacles in various forms like distance, physical barrier, language and cultural differences. The decisions to move or not to move result from the evaluation of all these factors. Such evaluation is carried out objectively but by exposure to different kind of conditioning. The model proposed by Lee has been very successful in explaining the mechanism of migration i.e., why one decide to migrate and how migration takes place.

Lee has visualized the process of migration as the product of three different sets of factors relating to the place of origin, the destination and intervening obstacles as perceived by the individual. Factors like the socio-economic conditions,
characteristics and the stage of life-cycle of an individual, lead to variations in the individual perception in respect to these factors. Each individual has unique perceived knowledge about the possible destinations and his/her decision to migrate is guided by the perceived advantages associated with the destination. On the basis of this belief, Lee has conceptualized a set of hypotheses concerning the volume of migration, streams of migration and characteristics of the migrants. With regard to the volume of migration, the first hypothesis says that volume of migration within a given territory varies with diversity of areas includes in that territory. His second hypothesis says that the volume of migration varies with diversity of people. Areas where there is homogeneity in terms of race, ethnicity, traditions, education, income etc. are marked with relatively lower migration. The third hypothesis emphasizes that the volume of migration is related to the difficulties involved in surmounting the intervening obstacles. The greater obstacles will leads to less migration. The fourth hypothesis says that volume of migration fluctuates with fluctuations in economy, increasing with economic expansion and decreasing with economic depression. The fifth hypothesis says that unless severe checks are imposed, both volume and rate of migration tend to increase with time. Finally the sixth hypothesis emphasizes that the volume and rate of migration vary with the state of progress in a country or area. Population of developed areas is more mobile than of the less developed regions.

With respect to the development of streams and counter-streams, Lee suggested that migration occurs in the form of well-defined streams and it proceeds along well-defined routes to highly specified destinations. Further, he says that every major stream of migration gives rise to a counter stream. The efficiency of streams of migration is higher if the major factors behind such a stream are ‘push’ factors at the point of origin. These factors are generally more compelling than the ‘pull’ factors. Likewise, Lee suggests that the efficiency of streams and counter streams tends to be lower if the origin and destination are similar. Next he says that migration streams will be more efficient if there are greater intervening obstacles. Generally the migrants who overcome great obstacles do so under compelling circumstances. His final proposition outlines that efficiency of migration streams varies with economic
conditions, being higher during times of prosperity and lower in times of economic depression.

Lee has suggested a set of hypotheses relating to characteristics of migrants also. His first hypothesis says that migration is selective. The selection is called positive when it is for high quality migrants and negative when the situation is opposite. His second hypothesis says that migrants responding to pull factors at destination tend to be positively selective. Such people are generally not under the compulsion to move and they move due to perceived better opportunities at the destination. Third hypothesis emphasizes that migrants responding largely to the push factors at the place of origin are negatively selective. Generally the push factor at the place of origin operates most stringently against the persons who have failed economically and socially. The uneducated and unskilled people are more likely to be forced to migrate in contrast to the skilled and educated people. Fourth hypothesis says that taking all migrants together, the selection tends to be bi-modal. For any given origin some of the people are responding to the pull factors at the destination while the others are responding to the push factors at the place of origin. Fifth hypothesis emphasizes the degree of positive selection increases with the increasing intervening obstacles. The obstacles en-route weed out some of the weak and incapable migrants. Sixth hypothesis says that propensity to migrate is higher during certain stages of the life cycle. Migration is thus age specific. Generally the young working age groups are more likely to migrate than the elderly people and young children. Seventh hypothesis says that characteristics of the migrants tend to be intermediate between the characteristics of the population at the origin and the population at the destination. It is because the migrants are already to some degree like the population at the destination and also because they are unlike the population at the origin and certain push factors warrant their migration.

On the basis of above discussion one can say that migration is a function of the interplay of a number of push and pull factors. It means that there should be a cause for leaving the original place as well as an attraction of a possible destination. Without any of these two conditions being fulfilled no movements of population are
possible at any level national or international. The population has to be uprooted from
the area of origin and at the same time an area to which these people can move should
be available. Otherwise, the lack of destination will not allow the movement however
strong the push may be. Likewise, without a push factor, again no movement is
possible even through the attraction of a new place may be quite strong. All the
factors encouraging emigration of people from the area of origin, such as extreme
poverty, political or religious suppression, unhealthy climate, military action or
danger to life due to any other cause etc. are part of the overall push factor. On the
other hand better employment opportunities, comfortable living, more resources in the
form of virgin land or valuable minerals, social and religious freedom are the pull
factors. It is a whole set of factors, both push and pull, that are responsible for any
movement of people from one place or region to the other.

2.3. Differential Migration and Consequences of Migration:

Differential migration is the selectivity of certain persons or the tendency of certain
group to be more migratory than others. The reason of selectivity has been already
described by Lee in his model. He said that persons respond differently to the set of
negative and positive factors at the place of origin and destination. Certain
differentials like age, sex, marital status, occupational and social status which are
found to be important in particular place and time. Migration is also likely to be sex
selectivity but whether those who move out are largely males depend on varieties of
regions. In less developed countries migration is predominantly male. Migration
selection operates also in terms of marital status. The usual generalization is that
migration is weighted on the side of simple young adult in the less
developed
countries; it is predominantly unmarried males who migrates but in developed
countries married seems to be as mobile as single. Further some occupational groups
seem more likely to migrate than do other.

Another important aspect of migration is the consequence of migration. Since
migration tends to be age and sex selective, the migration of younger persons from the
place of origin may help to reduce, at least temporally, the rate of population growth
both through the loss of the outmigration and through reduced fertility levels. At the
same time such age selectivity contribute to an older population at the place of origin with attendant implication for future social change, health conditions, mortality levels etc. The selectivity of out-migrants with more educated and skilled persons may also represent a serious loss to the place of origin of trained individuals who could provide talent and leadership essential for social and economic development. The impact of migration is not restricted to the change in migrant’s place of origin, but also causes serious implications for the population in the place of destination. Many problems associated with rapid urbanization are the result of rural-urban migration. Overcrowding, slums, difficulty of waste disposals, traffic congestions, housing shortage, poor water supply are closely associated with heavy movements of population in urban areas. The studies concentrating mainly on the consequences of migration are scarce. Mostly consequences of migration are studied as a part of migration pattern and discussion are mainly limited to demographic consequences, like effect on balance of population, changes in age, sex composition etc. Economic and social consequences of migration have not been given much attention. Talking about problems of over urbanization as a consequence of migration in big cities Ganguli (1978) said that in many large cities of India, the supply of labour exceed the absorptive capacity of cities, so that on the whole the rural employment or underemployment is converted into large scale urban unemployment.

The above discussed laws, theories, models and hypothesis of migration shows that after Ravenstein, scholars mainly concentrated on distance and opportunity as an explanatory factor for migration, which give birth to ‘theory of intervening opportunity’ and ‘competing migrants’. Late came the theory of ‘push and pull’ to explain the cause of migration. Based on which Lee has developed his model. However the overall success made so far in migration theory is not very impressive. A theoretical framework which can include all the hypothetically relevant factors of migration and can specify the interaction with each other in empirically testable form and thereby serve as guidance to future research work is not yet produced. This poses a challenge for migration researchers.
The most popular rural to urban migration model is that of Todaro. Todaro model observes that rural to urban migration acts as equilibrating force equalizing rural and urban expected income. He regarded migration as a two stage phenomenon. According to Todaro model, in the first stage, the unskilled rural workers migrate to an urban area and initially spend on certain period of time in the urban traditional sector. In the second stage, they eventually attain jobs in more permanent modern sector. In Todaro model the decision to migrate from rural to urban areas is fundamentally related to two principal variables viz. (i) the urban-rural real income differentials and (ii) the probability of obtaining an urban job. The basic hypothesis of probabilistic migration model of Todaro is that informal sector employment is a temporary staging post for new migrants on their way to formal sector employment. It assumes two permanent sectors in the economy, one is rural sector specializing in production of agricultural goods and the other is modern urban sector. The urban sector is divided by Todaro into two sub-sectors (i) modern sector (akin to formal sector) and (ii) traditional sector (similar to informal sector) which includes all the workers not regularly employed in the urban modern sector, that is, overtly employed, underemployed or sporadically employed and those who are employed in petty retail trades and services. There are four basic features of Todaro model. First, migration is stimulated primarily by rational economic considerations of relative benefits and costs. Second, the decision to migrate depends on ‘expected’ rather than actual urban-rural wage differentials. Thirdly, the probability of obtaining an urban job is inversely related to the urban unemployment rate. Lastly, migration rates in excess of urban job opportunity growth rates are not only possible but also rational and probable in the face of continued positive urban-rural ‘expected’ income differential. In Todaro Model, ‘expected’ gains are measured by (i) the difference in real income between rural and urban job opportunities, and (ii) the probability of a new migrant obtaining an urban job. Todaro model has introduced a new insight in the study of rural-urban migration behavior which can be made applicable to the less developed countries.

Disparities of various kinds are to be viewed as the price paid by man for development gains. Initially, they are thought to be result of differential locational attributes and uneven distribution of resources, but later it was realised that human
factors such as motivation, skill, economic ability plays a more important role. This
resumed in the communities from certain areas participating more effectively in the
development process compared to those in other states.

Regional inequalities exist in both developed and developing countries. However in
developed countries all inhabitants have an assumed level of minimum
subsistence. On the other hand in developing countries the basic problem is to provide
a minimum level of subsistence to a large proportion of the population. While in
developed countries, the planners have to deal with relative poverty, in the developing
countries they have to deal with absolute poverty. Therefore in the developing
countries regions exists where the proportion of population below the minimum
subsistence level is substantially higher compared to other richer regions. Though at
the initial stage, regional differences are created by differences in resource
endowments, some areas being rich in natural resources like good agriculture soil,
minerals etc., in many cases economic activity is initiated at a particular place because
of political, social and other considerations.

Though emphasis is often laid on the differences in per capita income,
differences have also been noted with respect to other indicators like industrial
development, agriculture productivity, investment and credit facilities etc. Moreover
increasing emphasis is being laid on the other human development indicators like
literacy rate, life expectancy, mortality rates, gender inequalities etc. In terms of
standard economic and social indicators the disparity within India is quite remarkable
in the areas of food grain production, per capita income, industrial sector, educational
level and other indicators.

India with its fertile plains and seasonal rainfall of the monsoon type has been
dominated by the agrarian sector of production. From pre-independence to now there
are ups and downs in the field of agriculture. Before there were no technology,
instrument and high yielding variety seeds, resulting low production. In India there
are some regions which are comparatively more fertile than the other regions. For
example area of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Tamilnadu is more
fertile than Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Manipur etc. There are some
states which are known for a particular crop. Agriculture has not only been the most
important productive sector in the Indian economy but has been a major source of
employment to millions of people. The food grain production varies from state to
state. The high figure of food grain production is found in Punjab and Haryana is
possibly the result of high yielding variety seeds since the mid1960s. The lower figure
of Kerala, West Bengal and Bihar may partly be explained by higher population
density.

Regional disparities are also found in industrial sector. Factory and industries
are concentrated in the environs of some large metropolitan cities or in some regions
of some states. Thus, there are differences in levels of industrial development between
these states and regions and the rest of the country. These have led in turn to large
differences in income, consumption and levels of social development in these areas
and those in the rest of the country. The initial distribution of industries in India was
determined by the development of transport by British to meet their own interest like,
concentration of jute industry in West Bengal and Cotton industry in Maharashtra,
Gujarat etc. However today in terms of number of factories vary from state to state.
As per 2003-04 data Tamilnadu tops the list followed by Maharashtra, Andhra
Pradesh and Gujarat (Statistical Abstract of India, 2005-06). On the other hand
Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Himachal Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa have a low
number of factories. So in the states where literacy level is very low the residents of
the state are likely to be deprived of the opportunities to participate in the process of
industrialization as well as economic development.

Regional disparities can be seen in the level of education also. In India, the
literacy rate has been increasing steadily, but still too slowly over the last few
decades. The Census of India has calculated the country’s overall literacy rate at 65
percent in 2001, up from about 43 percent in 1981 and 52 percent in 1991. The male-
female gap in literacy improved from 26.6 percent in 1981 to 21.6 percent in 2001,
but remains large. There are significant inter-state inequalities in literacy rates. Even
in 2001, Bihar, the state with lowest literacy rate below 50 percent, was about 18
percentage points below the national average. For female literacy, the gap was even
wider at about 21 percent. By contrast, Kerala, the state with the highest literacy in India, had an average literacy rate of 90.92 percent, with more than 86 percent female literacy.

There is a sharp increase in regional inequality in India during the 1990s. In 2002-2003, the per capita Net State Domestic Product (NSDP) of the richest state, Punjab, was about 4.7 times that of Bihar, the poorest state. This ratio had increased from 4.2 in 1993-1994. This has been highlighted by Ghosh and Chandrasekhar (2003), who showed that inter-state inequality increased sharply in India during the reform period. As they pointed out, based on per capita SDP, the basic hierarchy of the Indian states remained the same during the reform period, with Punjab, Haryana and Maharashtra at the top, and Bihar and Orissa at the bottom. They also noted that the gap between the richest and poorest states opened up considerably after 1990-1991.

Comparable estimates of the 50th (1993-1994) and 55th (1999-2000) rounds of National Sample Survey data reveal that inequality increased both in rural and urban India. State level data also showed that not only had the income gap between the poorest and the richest states increased during the 1990s, but urban inequality increased for all the major states in India. One of the reasons behind the increased income inequality observed in India in the post-reform period has been the stagnation of employment generation in both rural and urban areas across the states. Open unemployment increased in most parts of the country, and the rate of growth of rural employment hit an all times low. Declining employment elasticity in several sectors, including agriculture, is one of the main reasons behind this decline. Low employment generation in the agriculture sector has also been associated with a steady, but significant increase in casualisation of the labour force in India. Due to large scale downsizing and privatization of public sector units, employment generation in the organized sector also suffered. However, the services sector performed relatively better during this period. The employment growth rate in this sector was higher than in other sectors of the economy. Particularly in some sub-sectors like information technology, communication and entertainment, employment generation and wages increased substantially in this period. However, these sectors
employed only a very small section of the labour force, and their impact on the overall employment scenario has been minimal. One countervailing force to the lower employment generation has been increased economic migration. This has been especially important in certain regions and provided an important alternative source of transfer income to local residents through remittances.

A number of policies adopted during the reform period essentially increased the level of inequality in India. Liberalization of trade helped some sectors where India was internationally competitive, but it also negatively affected the other sectors. The agriculture sector, as well as small and medium enterprises which account for the bulk of employment, were the worst hit by the trade liberalization undertaken by policymakers since the mid-1990s. The inflow of FDI into India has only marginally improved gross domestic capital formation, but its incidence has been confined to some very small pockets, both geographically and sectorally. This has increased inter-state and inter-sectoral inequalities in the country.

Recent trend emerging from 2001 census shows that migration has picked up during 1991-2001 after India’s economic liberalization that was initiated in 1991. As per 2001 census 30.07 percent of population is classified as migrants in India. The country embarked upon new economic policy in 1991 with the underlying principles of liberalization and privatization. As a result of the new approach, the interregional inequality in income levels has sharply widened and it seems have affected the migration process in the country (Bhagat, 2009 and Hassan, 2007).

2.4. Concluding Remarks:

There are several theoretical frameworks available in the literature on migration. Most of them visualize population mobility in terms of unequal availability of economic opportunities over space. Population mobility is therefore treated as an instrument that maintains balance between ‘man and natural resources’. India’s economic landscape has from the beginning been marked with great amount of regional variation. Both geographical as well as historical factors are reported to have led to this disparity. The extent of regional inequality that was on the minimal soon after independence started growing after the introduction of new ‘seed-water-fertilizer’ technology popularly
known as green revolution in the mid-1960s. The process of divergence became rapid from somewhere in the late 1980s and early 1990s with the introduction of new economic policy. Available evidences indicate a sharp increase in regional inequality in India during the 1990s. This is likely to have affected the process of internal migration in the country. There are two contrasting propositions with regard to population mobility in the post-reform period. The first one represented by two groups of scholars visualizes declining mobility in the coming years. One group argues that with liberalized economic policy a free movement of capital to ‘labour abundant’ areas will further reduce population mobility in the country. The second one says that growing regional assertions and increasing cost of life in large urban centers that have traditionally provided shelter to migrants from backward areas will act as deterrent to migration. It may be noted that population mobility in the country has already been on decline for quite some time and there are several social and economic explanations for this slowing down of migration. The other proposition which visualizes growing regional inequality because of increasing concentration of development activities in already developed areas argues for increased migration under a situation of distress from less developed areas.