



A Qualitative Study on Discontinued Education Among Migrant Children: Causes, Impacts, And Strategies for Continuity During Migration.

## INTRODUCTION

India has a vast population of migrant workers, with over 41 million interstate migrants reported in the 2011 Census and a 28.9% migration rate as per the 2020-21 Migration Report. Among these, 10.8% migrate primarily for employment, particularly in sectors like construction, which employs 57.5 million people and contributes 8% to the GDP. The construction sector is the largest employer of short-term migrants and a key survival strategy for millions of households.

International Organization for Migration (IOM) defines internal migration as “the movement of individuals within a state involving the establishment of a temporary or permanent residence. Pune, Maharashtra, being an economic hub, has over 389 mega construction sites where Sanjeevan works directly and indirectly for supporting social security schemes to workers with an estimated 330,650 migrant construction workers. Additionally, industries such as automobiles, auto-ancillaries, and MSMEs employ over 2.2 million migrant workers in the city. Despite their crucial role in economic growth, migrant workers face poor working conditions, long hours, lack of basic amenities like water, sanitation, and safety equipment and even forced labor. Migrant children, particularly those living in construction areas, face

significant barriers in accessing quality education and healthcare. Their families frequently relocate in search of work, disrupting their education and leading to inconsistent school attendance. The absence of stable living conditions and basic infrastructure in labor camps further limits their ability to attend school regularly. Additionally, migrant families often reside in temporary or

informal housing, which does not provide an environment conducive to learning. Many children are excluded from formal education due to documentation issues, financial constraints, or language barriers.

Schools near construction sites often lack resources, qualified teachers, and support systems needed to accommodate the unique challenges of migrant children. As a result, these children experience high dropout rates, poor academic progress, and social exclusion, preventing them from realizing their full potential.

A major consequence of migration is the educational disruption of children. Migrant workers often relocate with their families and reside in labor colonies, where access to education is severely limited. As a result, children drop out of school, particularly from their source location schools. Missing out on foundational education affects their entire academic and career trajectory, leading to increased child labor and a lack of future employment opportunities.

Addressing these challenges requires urgent interventions to ensure access to education for migrant children, improved working conditions, and better social security measures for migrant workers and their families. The lack of inclusive educational policies and mobile schooling solutions significantly affects these children's right to education. Without intervention, they remain trapped in the cycle of poverty and labor exploitation, limiting their opportunities for a better future. Addressing these barriers requires policy-level reforms, flexible schooling options, and community-based interventions to ensure that migrant workers' children have consistent access to quality education and reduced dropout rates.

## STUDY DESIGN

### Rationale of the study

India's growing migrant workforce, especially in sectors like construction, often relocates with families, disrupting children's education. In cities like Pune, thousands of migrant children live in temporary settlements with limited access to schools, basic amenities, and learning support. Frequent moves, lack of documents, language barriers, and financial hardship result in school dropouts and poor academic progress. These children are at risk of child labor and lifelong poverty. Despite their numbers, migrant children remain underserved in current educational policies. This study highlights the urgent need for inclusive, flexible, and mobile education models to ensure continuous learning for migrant children.

### Objectives

1. To understand the socio-demographic profile of migrant workers.
2. To identify the challenges faced by the children of migrant workers in accessing education.
3. To examine the support mechanisms available for migrant children's education.
4. To study the key factors contributing to school dropouts among migrant children, including financial constraints, lack of proper documentation, limited school accessibility, and other socio-economic barriers.
5. To analyze parents' perceptions of education and their willingness to support their children's schooling.

### Methodology

A descriptive research design will be used to understand the factors affecting school dropouts and learning disruptions among migrant children. The study will employ both qualitative and quantitative methods for comprehensive analysis.

#### • Secondary Data Collection

The study involves reviewing government and NGO reports, including Census 2011, Migration Reports (2020–21), and education policies concerning migrant children. Additionally, academic literature and previous studies on migrant education issues are analyzed to understand existing challenges and frameworks.

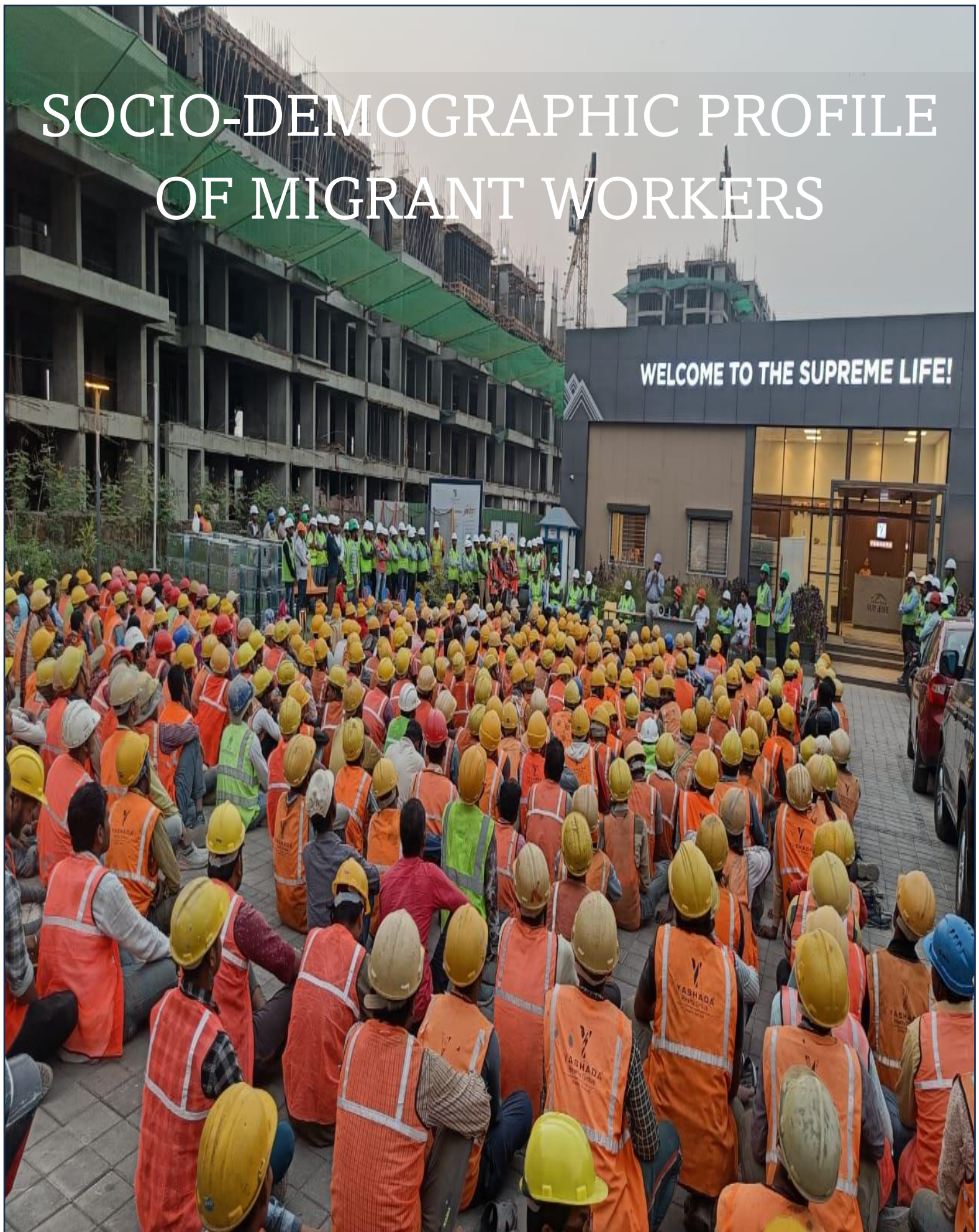
#### • Primary Research

Data will be collected through surveys, interviews, focus group discussions, and field observations. Structured questionnaires will gather insights from migrant parents, children, teachers, and administrators on education-related challenges. Interviews and FGDs with stakeholders will explore deeper issues, while site visits to labor colonies and schools will help assess real condition

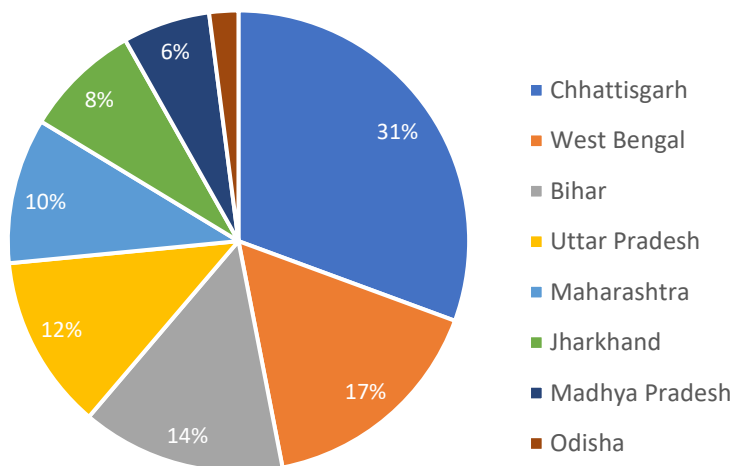
### Sample Size:



# SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF MIGRANT WORKERS

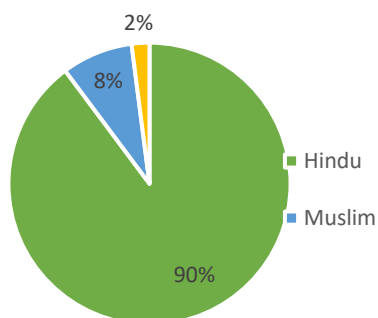


**Figure No.1 State-wise Distribution of Migrant Population**



This pie chart shows the **proportion of migrant populations by state of origin**. The data suggests clear migration patterns, especially from specific regions: **Major Source State** — Nearly 1 in 3 migrants comes from Chhattisgarh. This is significant and points to chronic out-migration, likely due to economic push factors like lack of local employment, agriculture distress, or underdevelopment. Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, and Madhya Pradesh together make up **88%** of the total migrant population in this sample. This reinforces the well-known **out-migration belt** — where livelihoods push people toward cities and other states for work.

**Figure No 2 Religion-wise Distribution of Migrant Population**

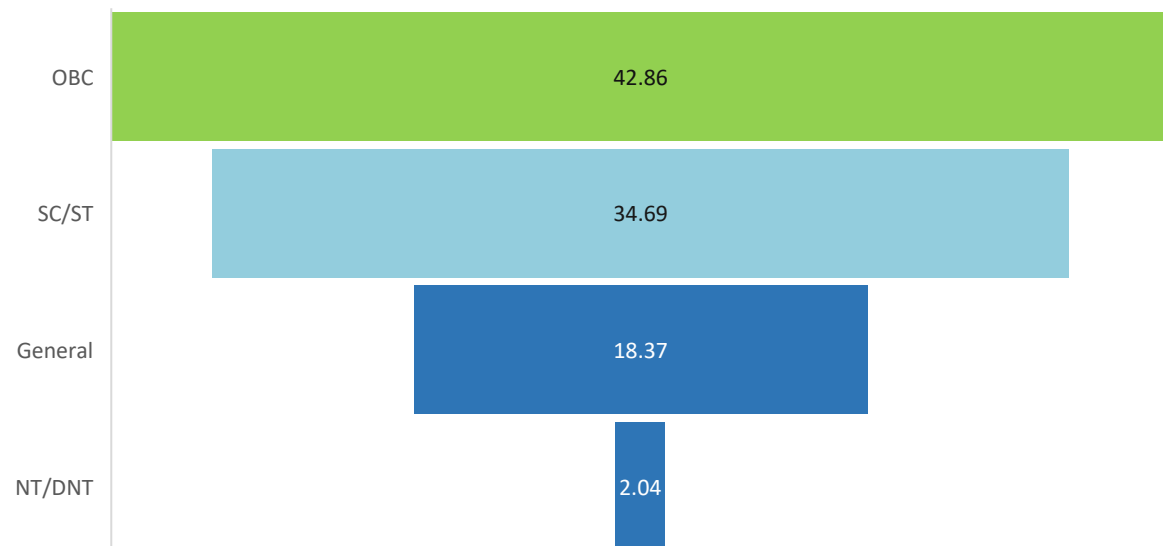


The data shows a clear religious composition among the surveyed migrant population. Hindu households form the majority at 90%, reflecting the demographics of major source states like Chhattisgarh, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh, where Hindus are predominant. Muslim households account for 8%, highlighting migration among rural minority communities, especially from West

Bengal, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh. Buddhist households make up 2%, consistent with Dalit Buddhist communities in Maharashtra and parts of Chhattisgarh.

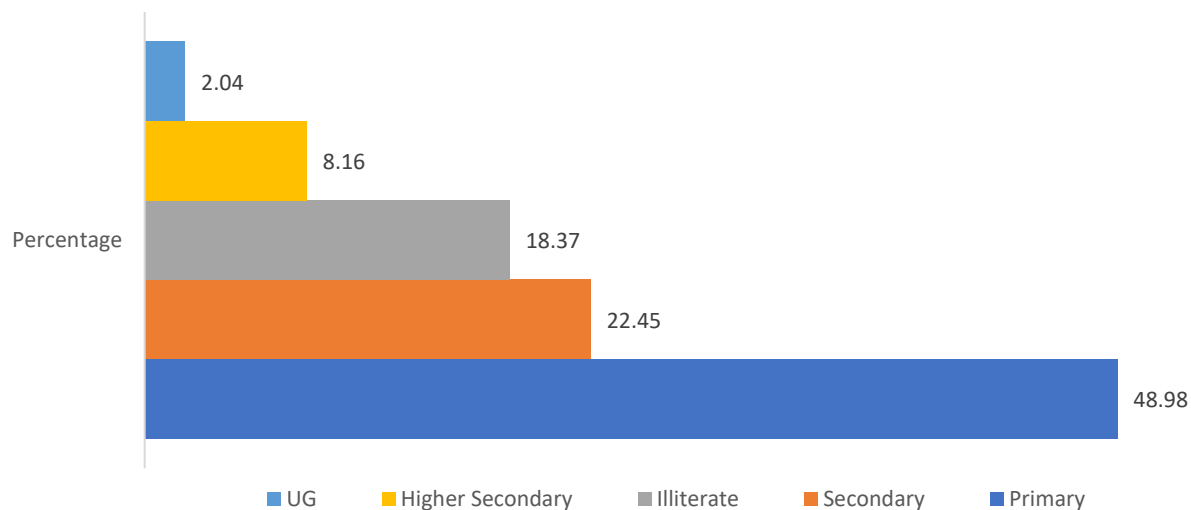


**Figure No. 3 Caste-wise Distribution of Migrant Population**



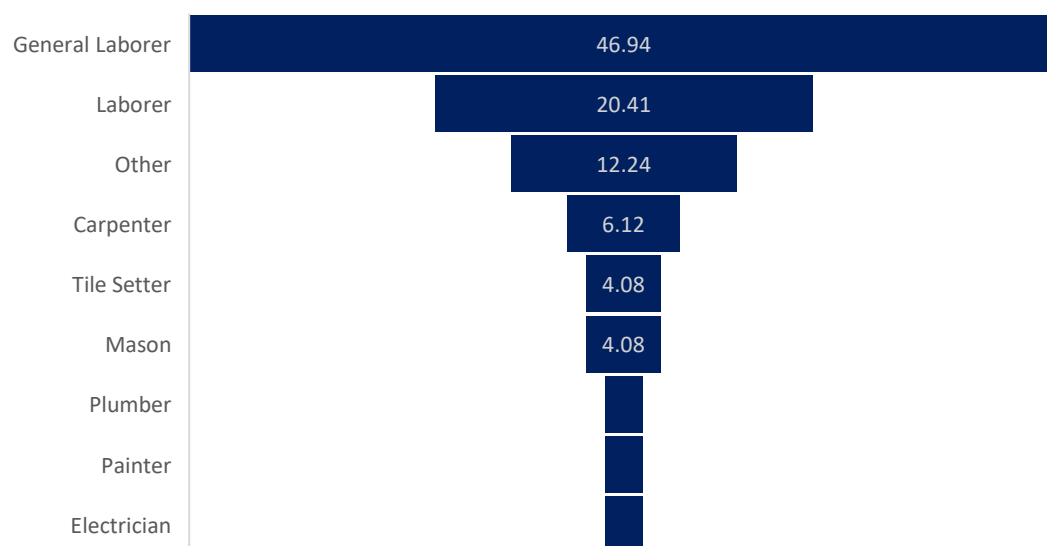
The caste-wise breakdown shows that migration is closely tied to social marginalization. OBC households form the largest group at 42.86%, followed by SC/ST households at 34.69%. This indicates that socially and economically disadvantaged groups are most affected, migrating in search of better livelihood opportunities due to exclusion and vulnerability.

**Figure No. 4 Educational Background of Migrant Parents**



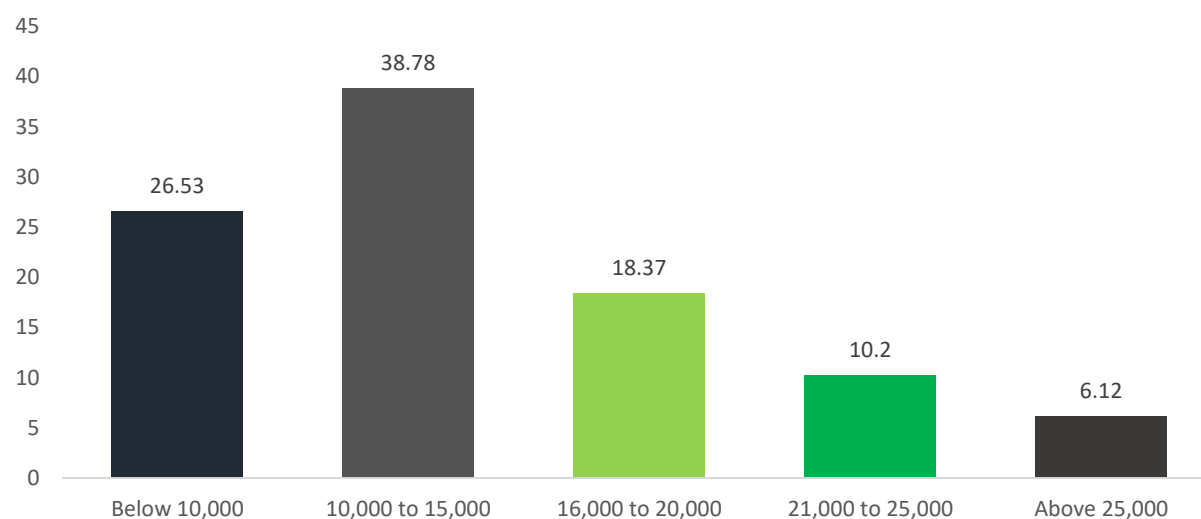
The educational profile of migrant parents shows deep-rooted disadvantages. Nearly half (48.98%) completed only primary education, 22.45% reached secondary level, and 18.37% are illiterate. Just 8.16% achieved higher secondary education, while only 2.04% pursued undergraduate studies, highlighting how limited education drives migration and affects children's educational continuity and mobility.

**Figure No. 5 Occupational Background of Migrant Parents**



The occupation data shows most migrants work in low-skill manual jobs, with 46.94% as General Laborers and 20.41% as Laborers. Smaller segments include Carpenters (6.12%) and Tile Setters (4.08%). Migration is driven by economic needs, highlighting the importance of skills training and support for better livelihood opportunities.

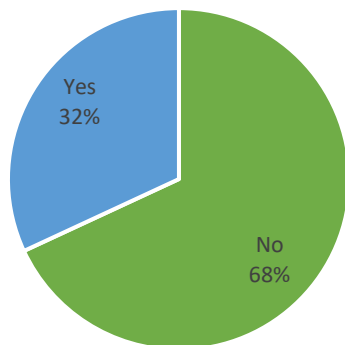
**Figure No. 6 Monthly Income of Migrant Workers**



The income profile of migrant workers' husbands shows high economic vulnerability. About 38.78% earn 10,000–15,000 INR, and 26.53% earn below 10,000 INR. Only 6.12% earn above 25,000 INR. This low-wage dependence highlights the financial struggles of migrant families and the urgent need for better wages and social protection policies.

**Figure No. 7 Child Enrollment Status:**

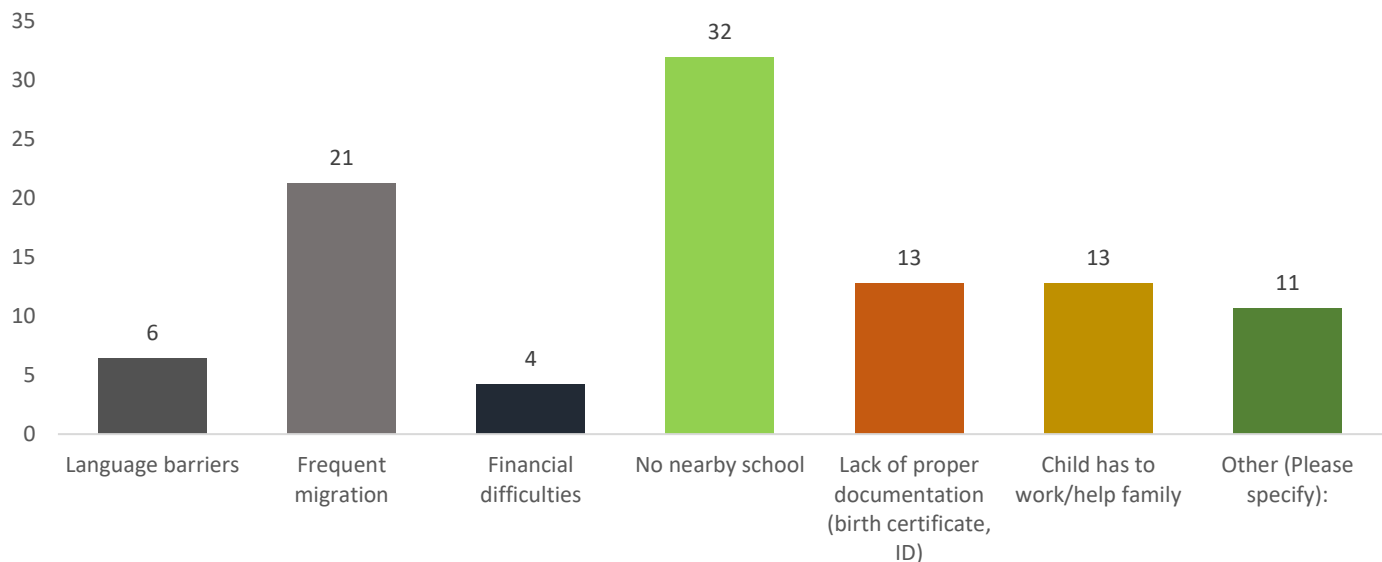
Child Enrolled School



In destination areas, the data reveals a troubling trend, with **65.31%** of migrant children not enrolled in school, compared to only **30.61%** enrolled. This highlights significant barriers to education, likely due to **lack of accessible schools, economic constraints**, and the **temporary nature of migration**. While many migrant families prioritize education, the high non-enrollment rate suggests that destination areas often lack the infrastructure and resources to support the educational needs of migrant children.

Addressing this issue requires policies focused on **improving school accessibility, financial support**, and **ensuring education continuity** for migrant children.

**Figure No. 8 If not enrolled, what are the reasons**



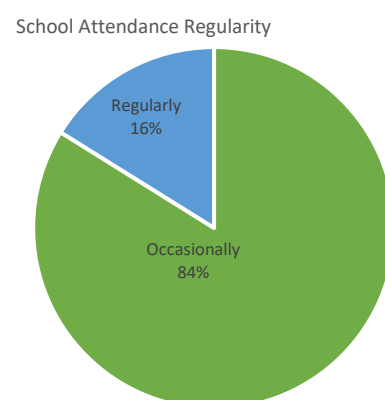
The **bar chart shows reasons why children are not enrolled in school**, The analysis of reasons for children’s non-enrollment in school highlights critical structural and socio-economic barriers. The most common reason is the **absence of a nearby school (32%)**, emphasizing poor educational



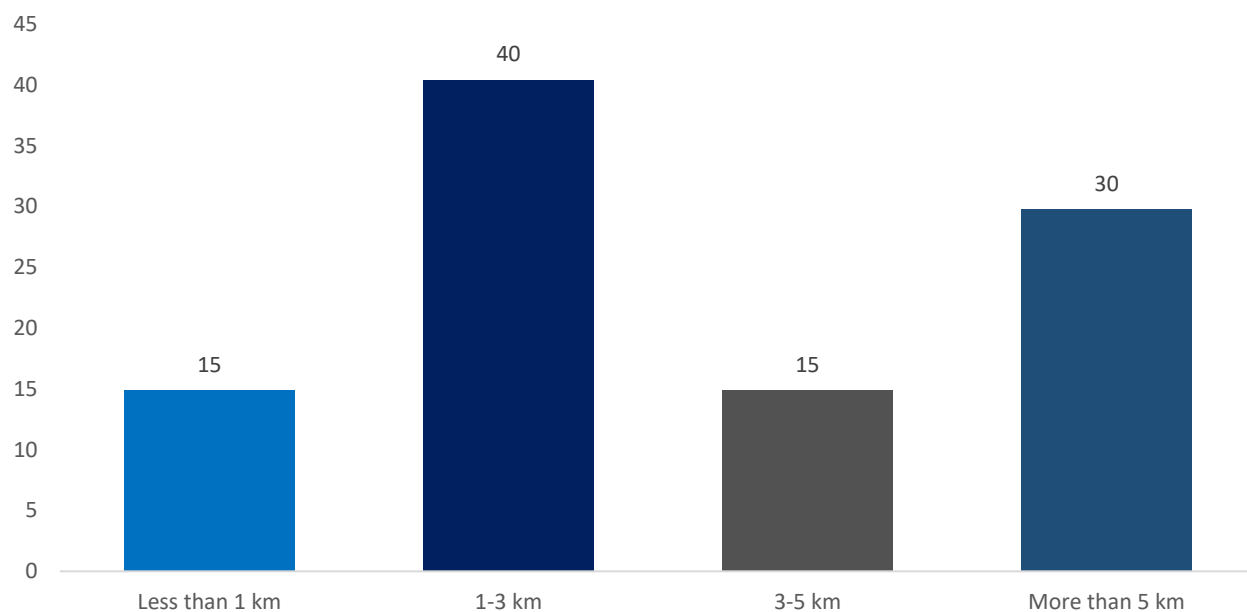
infrastructure in migrant settlement areas. **Frequent migration (21%)** is another major factor, disrupting children's educational continuity. Issues like **lack of documentation** and **child labor** each account for **13%**, reflecting administrative hurdles and financial pressures. Less frequently reported are **language barriers (6%)** and **financial difficulties (4%)**. These findings suggest a need for targeted interventions, including expanding school access, flexible enrollment systems for migrant children, and stronger social protection measures.

#### Figure No.9 If enrolled, how regularly does your child attend school

The data shows that the majority of enrolled children — **16%**, attend school **regularly**, which indicates a strong level of commitment from both families and children toward education despite the challenges commonly faced by migrant households. However, **84%** of children attend school only **occasionally**, highlighting inconsistency likely caused by factors such as **frequent migration, family responsibilities, health issues, or transportation difficulties**.



**Figure No. 10 Government school Distant from your residence**



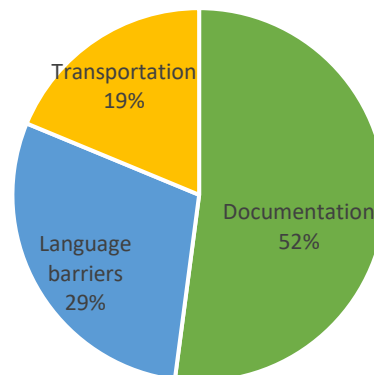
The Chat data on the distance of government schools from migrant families' residences shows that most children (**40 % families**) live **1-3 km** away from school, which offers moderate accessibility. However, a significant portion (**30 % families**) face serious challenges, as schools are located **more than 5 km** away. Only a small number (**15 % families each**) live within **less than 1 km** or **3-5 km**. This highlights that for many migrant children, long distances may discourage regular attendance or enrollment, underlining the need for **better transport support and more schools** near migrant settlements.



**Figure No. 11. Challenges in enrolling your children in school?**

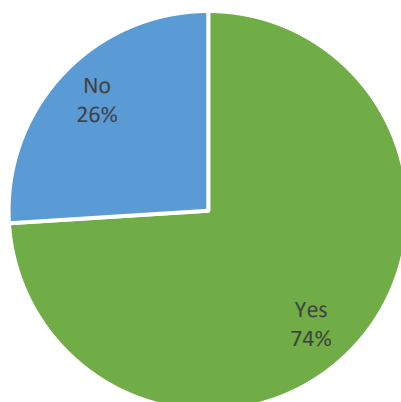
The data highlights the key challenges migrant families face when enrolling their children in school. The most reported issue is **documentation** cited by **51 families**, reflecting how the lack of essential papers like birth certificates or ID proof creates significant obstacles to school admission. **Language barriers** were identified by **29 families**, showing the struggle children face in adapting to the local medium of instruction. Additionally, **18 families** pointed to **transportation issues** as a barrier, suggesting that distance and lack of safe travel options also hinder school enrollment. These findings underline the need for flexible admission policies and better local support systems.

Challenges in enrolling your children in school?



**Figure No. 12 Dropped out of school after Migration?**

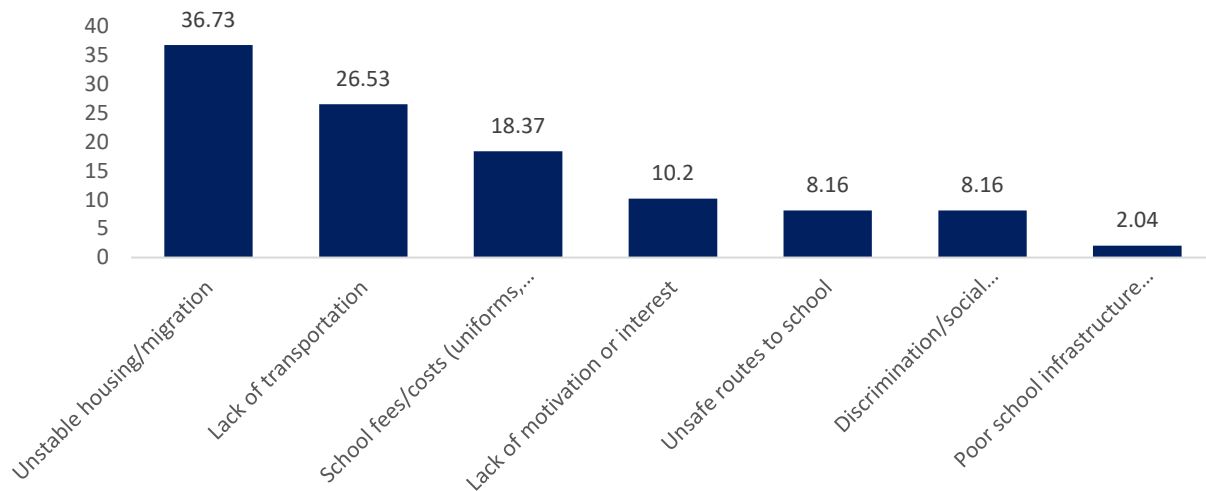
Dropped out of school after Migration?



The data shows a concerning trend, with **74%** of children having **dropped out of school after migration**, while only **26%** have managed to stay enrolled. This highlights the significant disruption migration causes in children's education, pointing to challenges such as **frequent relocation, lack of nearby schools, documentation issues, and financial instability**. The high dropout rate emphasizes the urgent need for targeted interventions, including **flexible school enrollment systems, mobile education programs, and support services** to ensure migrant children can continue their education without interruption, even when families move for work.

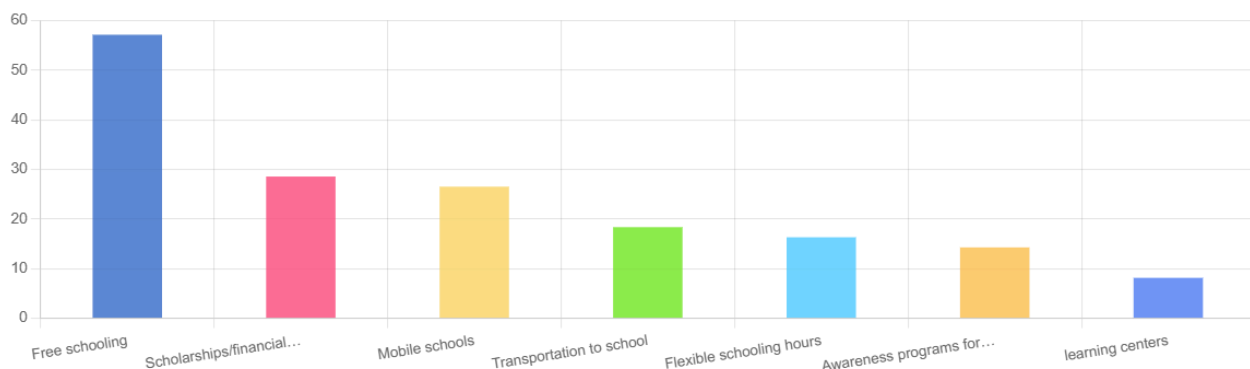


**Figure No. 13 What difficulties does your child face in attending school?**



The data highlights multiple challenges that hinder school attendance for children in migrant families. The most common issue is **unstable housing and frequent migration (36.73%)**, which often disrupts children's continuity in education. **Lack of transportation (26.53%)** is another major barrier, especially for families living far from schools. Financial constraints, such as **school fees and costs for uniforms and books (18.37%)**, further limited access. Other reported difficulties include **lack of motivation (10.2%)**, **unsafe routes (8.16%)**, and **discrimination or social exclusion (8.16%)**, while **poor school infrastructure (2.04%)** was cited less frequently. These findings stress the need for both educational and social support to improve school retention.

**Figure No. 13 What support would help ensure your child can continue education?**



Parents suggest several supports to ensure migrant children's education, with 57.14% favoring free schooling, 28.57% supporting scholarships, and 26.53% advocating for mobile schools. Other suggested supports include transportation (18.37%), flexible hours (16.33%), awareness programs (14.29%), and learning centers (8.16%), highlighting the need for accessible educational options.

# FINDINGS & DISCUSSION



## Findings of the research

The research highlights socio-economic vulnerabilities faced by migrant families, particularly in underdeveloped states like Chhattisgarh, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh. Marginalized groups, including Hindu OBCs, SCs, and STs, dominate the migrant population. Limited education, low wages, and disrupted schooling for children contribute to ongoing cycles of poverty and exclusion.

1. **State-wise Distribution of Migrant Population:** Migration predominantly originates from economically underdeveloped states like Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal, forming 88% of the migrant population. Economic push factors, such as lack of local employment and agricultural distress, drive these migration patterns.
2. **Religion-wise Distribution of Migrant Population:** The majority of migrants are Hindu (90%), with Muslim households representing 8%, and Buddhist households 2%. This mirrors the demographics of the major source states, especially Chhattisgarh, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh.
3. **Caste-wise Distribution of Migrant Population:** Social marginalization plays a key role in migration, with OBCs (42.86%) and SC/STs (34.69%) forming the largest groups among migrants. These communities often migrate to escape poverty, exclusion, and economic instability.
4. **Educational Background of Migrant Parents:** A large proportion of migrant parents have low educational attainment, with nearly 49% completing only primary education. Limited education restricts their access to skilled employment, further contributing to economic vulnerability.
5. **Occupational Background of Migrant Parents:** Most migrants work in low-skill manual labor, with 46.94% as general laborers and 20.41% as laborers. Skilled trades such as carpentry and tile setting make up a smaller share, indicating economic pressures driving migration.
6. **Monthly Income of Migrant Workers:** Economic vulnerability is evident, with 38.78% earning ₹10,000–₹15,000 and 26.53% earning below ₹10,000. Only 6.12% earn more than ₹25,000, highlighting the financial struggles of migrant families.
7. **Child Enrollment Status:** A troubling 65.31% of migrant children are not enrolled in school at destination sites, primarily due to economic constraints, lack of accessible schools, and migration's temporary nature, underscoring the need for improved infrastructure and support.



8. **Challenges in Enrolling Children in School:** The top reasons for non-enrollment include the lack of nearby schools (32%), frequent migration (21%), and issues like lack of documentation and child labor (13% each). These barriers demand targeted policy interventions for migrant children.
9. **Difficulties in Attending School:** Frequent migration (36.73%), lack of transportation (26.53%), and financial constraints (18.37%) are the primary difficulties migrant children face in attending school, emphasizing the need for social and educational support.
10. **Support Needed for Education:** Parents favor free schooling (57.14%), scholarships (28.57%), and mobile schools (26.53%) to ensure their children's education, indicating a strong demand for accessible, flexible educational opportunities for migrant families.

These findings highlight the multi-faceted challenges migrant families face, particularly around economic vulnerability, limited education, and disruption in children's schooling, calling for comprehensive policy responses.





# Conclusion & Societal Implications



## Introduction

### Societal Implications of the Discontinued Education of Migrant Children Due to Migration

The discontinuation of education among migrant children due to migration has profound societal implications. Education is a critical tool for breaking the cycle of poverty, fostering social mobility, and ensuring long-term economic stability. When children are unable to continue their education because of migration, they are deprived of opportunities that can lead to better employment and improved living conditions.

#### **1. Run the Special school: *School for Migrant Children at Labour Camps-Migrant Children Education Continuity Program***

Run the Special school like us Bachpan Ki Bunyad is a community-based early childhood education initiative that ensures access to quality early childhood education for migrant children aged 3 to 8. 1. Migrant Children Education Continuity Program that serve as safe and inclusive spaces for children's holistic development. This initiative ensures foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) while promoting holistic development through child-centric, inclusive, and activity-based learning

2. **Ensure Food Security** – Provide nutritious meals and essential supplies to prevent hunger and malnutrition.
3. **Improve Healthcare Access** – Facilitate medical support, hygiene awareness, and healthcare services for migrant workers and their families.
4. **Enhance Livelihood Opportunities** – Promote skill development, vocational training, and sustainable employment options.
5. **Bridge the Gap in Government Welfare** – Advocate for better access to government schemes and ensure workers receive the benefits they are entitled to.
6. **Address Documentation Challenges** – Assist migrants in obtaining essential identification documents such as Aadhaar, Ration, and Job Cards.



7. **Promote Legal and Social Rights** – Strengthen awareness and advocacy for fair wages, safe working conditions, and labor rights.
8. **Establish mobile schools** (vans or buses converted into classrooms) that travel to areas with high migrant populations.
  - These mobile units will operate in coordination with local governments and NGOs to ensure coverage.
  - Curriculum will be tailored to the local education standards and adjusted to the child's grade level. Teachers trained to deal with multi-grade classes, trauma, and educational gaps.

#### **9. Teacher Training Programs**

- Offering teacher training on dealing with the specific needs of migrant children, including trauma, interrupted learning, and multilingual environments.
- Develop a curriculum that is flexible and adaptable to different levels of prior education.
- Provide psychological support training for teachers to understand the socio-economic issues that migrant children face.

### **Conclusion**

The *Migrant Children Education Continuity Program (MCECP)* is designed to address the multifaceted challenges that migrant children face in accessing education. Through flexible education options, financial support, and community-based interventions, this program aims to break the cycle of poverty, reduce educational exclusion, and ensure that migrant children have the opportunity to build a better future.



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