



Research Paper

## Migration, urbanization, and work participation along Indo-Bangladesh border districts of West Bengal

Zarjij Alam<sup>1</sup> and Dr. Nirmalya Das<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Senior Research Fellow, Department of Geography, Panskura Banamali College (Autonomous), West Bengal.

<sup>2</sup>Associate Professor, Department of Geography, Panskura Banamali College (Autonomous), West Bengal.

**Abstract:** The spatial pattern of Indo-Bangladesh border districts of West Bengal is differed in respect to physio-environmental characteristics. The region may be divided into different zones on the basis of physiography. The study area covers ten border districts of West Bengal which consists mainly three physio-environmental zones i.e., i. Northern sub-Himalayan region, ii. Lower Gangetic plain region and iii. Deltaic Sundarban region. Migration, population change and economic activities are a dynamic process which largely governed by the physio-environmental condition of an area. The international migration phenomenon and population dynamics is a major concern in the Indo-Bangladesh border region. However, this phenomenon is not homogenous in nature due to diversity in physio-environmental features. This paper tries to depicts the migration pattern and its impact on population change of these three zones of West Bengal. The study also analyses the environmental zone wise influence of migration on changing work participation. The analysis is based on secondary data of different sources i.e., Census of India, remote sensing data and published articles. The statistical data have been analysed through MS Excel and GIS techniques for cartographic presentation of the study.

**Keyword:** Migration, population change, urbanization, work participation.

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### I. INTRODUCTION

In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, one of the most significant social phenomena has been the migration of people. Migration is defined differently in different countries depending on where the immigrant was born. Basically, the term migration is used to describe people who move from one place to another in search of better job opportunities, to establish their settlements, or for others reasons. The migration phenomenon influences the socio-economic characteristics between the place of origin and the place of destination. Regional economic development accelerates the migration phenomenon. It is critical to increasing the growth rate faster in a specific Indian state (Singh, 1998). Economic development, political conditions, socio-cultural aspects, and environmental characteristics all contribute to cross-border migration. In general, migration from poor to comparatively developed countries has been observed in search of a higher standard of living (Sarkar R., 2017).

India has experienced large numbers of migration inflows in different periods: about 15 million refugees from Pakistan came to India after 1947 (Samaddar, 1999); almost 10 million migrants from Bangladesh came to India after the Liberation War of Bangladesh in 1971 (Sarkar J. P., 2010). The internal movement of people has a long history in India. Following the country's partition in 1947, over 14 million people from India and Pakistan were forcibly displaced, with seven million coming from each side of the border (Bhagat & Keshri, 2020). The difference between immigration and emigration, or "net migration," provides an idea of the total internal migration of a state. Positive net migration happens when immigration exceeds emigration in a form and vice versa. It demonstrates that more people are moving into the area than out. Over time, internal migration has increased in several states (Chakraborty, 2023). Due to the abundance of employment and other possibilities, the western states of Gujarat and Maharashtra serve as significant migrant-pulling states, whereas Uttar Pradesh has a high proportion of migrants (Bhagat & Keshri, 2020).

Migration patterns have changed over different periods in India and especially in West Bengal (Bhardwaj, 2014). Since India's independence, the inflow of migrants has increased in West Bengal. West Bengal has a long history of immigration. The majority of the immigrants came from Bangladesh. Two significant waves of illegal immigration from Bangladesh have affected West Bengal. First, trouble started following the division of India and Pakistan and second, during the Bangladesh Liberation Movement, it experienced a significant illegal

immigration problem (Debnath & Ray, 2017). Illegal migration from Bangladesh has adversely affected the border districts of West Bengal. This migration flow changed the demographic status of this area. The problem of migration is increasingly moving up the global agenda (Bove & Elia, 2017). Besides, sociocultural characteristics, working patterns, and political image have been changed by illegal migration (Thapliyal, 2000). Political support from the government of West Bengal helps migration flow (Datta P., 2004). Samaddar (1999) discussed the trans-border migration from Bangladesh to West Bengal in his book "The Marginal Nation." He briefly elaborated on illegal migration and its impact on national security. Hazarika (2000), in his book "Rites of Passage," elaborated on environmental adversity and population pressure as push factors in Bangladesh. In contrast, better economic opportunity and a higher standard of living were pulling factors in India for the influx of migration.

According to the 2001 Census of India, more than 3 million people from West Bengal were born in Bangladesh (Census of India, 2001). However, migration patterns differ across West Bengal's districts. It depends on the physiography and other socio-economic development of any area. Also, the family network and easy accessibility of the border help people migrate to suitable parts of West Bengal. People avoid the backward regions and prefer to settle in the developed regions for a better standard of living and work opportunities. Pramanik (2006) mentioned that in the early decades, a higher percentage of Hindus were coming to West Bengal for religious persecution and political pressure (Das, 2008). In contrast, a large proportion of Muslims have moved to West Bengal in recent decades for a variety of reasons.

A significant worldwide issue is frequently presented as population growth. Fertility, mortality, and migration are an area's main components of population change. The high disparity in the world is an indication of the current rapid population growth. Human rights concerns are seriously raised when birth rates are lowered through legislation or other restrictions. Global pressures for economic migration are caused by the same extreme disparities between wealthy and impoverished nations, which are upheld by barriers of excessive national sovereignty and an exploitative international economic system (Claros, Dahl, & Groff, 2020). A flow connecting rural and urban areas is referred to as migration. In western countries, rural-to-urban migration has been the important reason for urbanization; however, India has also seen rapid urban population growth (Bhagat, 2017). Population growth rates for different periods in border districts of West Bengal have been obtained from the Census of India. After the independence of India, all border districts of West Bengal have had a high growth rate compared to the national average. This trend has been seen in later decades as well. The migration flow from Bangladesh directly influenced the excessive growth rate of this area. The migration rate has decreased in recent decades as a result of fencing along Bangladesh's border. Controlling the birth rate and improving healthcare facilities also help to slow population growth.

Migration is generally correlated to the desire to access and manage better social, educational, and professional opportunities. Additionally important are urbanization and migration. Rapid urbanization, which is occurring in many regions of the world, is closely related to migration. Thus, the majority of this movement is linked to the rising urbanization of society as people migrate from rural areas to cities where they perceive better opportunities for employment and higher education (Trask, 2022). Migration, which is directly correlated with the increasing globalization processes, is pointing to the growing economic inequalities between societies as well as those between countries. Economic development and urbanization are associated with the migration phenomenon. In terms of economic diversity, planning for development is essential. Regional diversity promotes the "identification, absorption, and realization" of fresh opportunities and benefits creative entrepreneurial endeavours (Chakraborty, 2023). Lee (1966) mentioned that each place has some positive and negative factors. Positive factors attract people from other places, and negative factors push them out. These factors indicate the economic status of any area. Positive economic benefits will encourage new migrants who will also contribute their own experiences (Bove & Elia, 2017).

Migration flow changes according to the urbanization and industrialization of any area (Clarke, 1978). Urbanized areas attract people from less developed areas (Zelinsky, 1971). Also, a strong correlation has been observed between migration flow, population density and urbanization (Taralekar, Waingankar, & Tathkar, 2012). Kolkata, the capital city of West Bengal, attracts a large number of migrants from different parts of India as well as other countries. This area is very urbanized and well-developed in terms of industrial and infrastructural facilities. Also, small towns in West Bengal have grown faster in recent decades (Bhagat R, 2004). Almost 780 new census towns have emerged in West Bengal since the 2011 census. West Bengal is an agrarian state. However, due to agrarian distress, crop failure, and farmer suicide, a large number of people migrate to urban areas (NITI Aayog, 2015). Recent studies observed that agricultural-related workers searched for new work opportunities in urban centres within a short distance, which accelerated the growth of census towns (Datta, Rodgers, Rodgers, & Singh, 2014); (Pradhan, 2017).

## **II. OBJECTIVES**

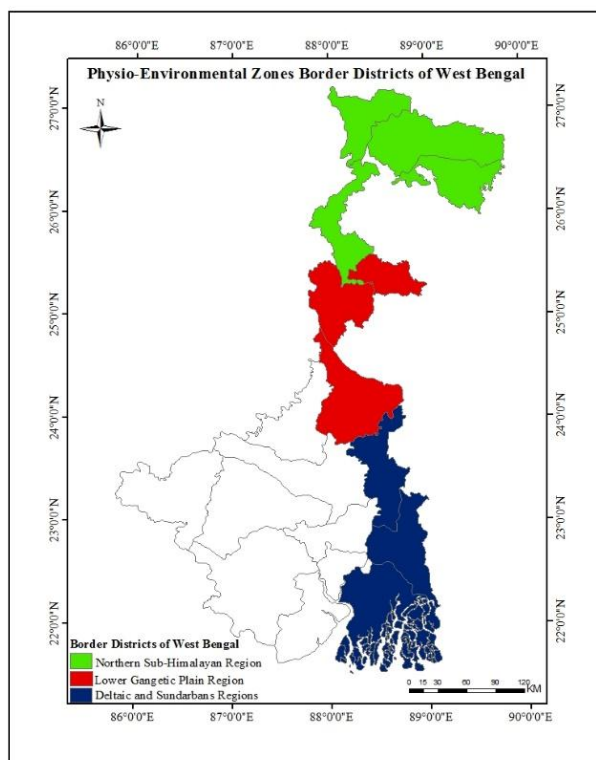
The following objectives have been taken into consideration:

1. To study the migration and changing growth rate of the population in the border districts of West Bengal.

2. To analyse the growth of urban centres and the work participation patterns of the study area.

### III. STUDY AREA

West Bengal is the only state of India that extends from the Himalayas in the north to the Bay of Bengal in the south. The total area of the state is 88,752 square kilometres, which is about 2.7 percent of the total geographical area of the country. West Bengal has a total population of 4,765,415 people, distributed across ten border districts, according to the 2011 Census of India. These Indo-Bangladesh border districts of West Bengal have been taken into consideration to examine the study. These districts share a border with Bangladesh of about 2216 kilometres (Datta A, 2018). The total area of these border districts is 4457.95 hectares. It can be divided into three zones based on their physiographic characteristics.



**Figure 1: Location Map (Physio-environmental zones: border districts of West Bengal).**

Northern sub-Himalayan region consists of Koch Bihar, Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, and Uttar Dinajpur districts. Lower Gangetic Plain region consists of Malda, Dakshin Dinajpur, and Murshidabad districts. Deltaic Sundarban region consists of Nadia, North Twenty-Four Parganas, and South Twenty-Four Parganas districts.

### IV. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Different secondary data have been analysed to fulfil the objectives of the article. Data from the District Statistical Handbook and the West Bengal Directorate of Agriculture were primarily obtained. To show the population growth rate of ten border districts of West Bengal, census data from 1951 to 2011 has been taken. Census reports from 1951 to 2011 have been used to show migration from Bangladesh to West Bengal. The study mainly focused on immigration from Bangladesh to West Bengal. So, only migration data from Bangladesh to West Bengal has been used to get precise results. The work participation rate of the 1961 and 2011 Census years has been obtained to compare the change in working patterns in different periods.

Methods used in this study are the growth rate of the population, the proportion of migration to the total population based on place of birth, and the work participation rate to show the changing pattern of population dynamics in border districts of West Bengal. Apart from these, different percentage distributions and cartographic techniques have been used. Karl Pearson's correlation coefficient method has been used to show the relationship between migration and urbanization patterns in border districts of West Bengal. Migration from Bangladesh has been considered an independent variable, and urbanization has been selected as a dependent variable. The estimated labour participation of Bangladeshi migrants was calculated as follows:

1. Percentage of Bangladeshi migrants to the total population.
2. Division of the total number of workers by the percentage of Bangladeshi migrants to obtain the expected number of workers type of moderate height.

## V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**5.1. Changing population patterns:** According to the Census of India, a population growth rate higher than the national average has been seen in border districts of West Bengal. Following India's independence in 1947 and the partition of India and Bangladesh, a large number of people migrated from Bangladesh. This migration phenomenon influenced the high growth rate along border districts in West Bengal, which was observed from 1951 to the 1991 Census year (Ghosh, 2014). Table 1 displays the detailed information.

District	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Darjeeling	17.58	35.9	25.2	31	26.9	23.8	14.8
Jalpaiguri	8.18	48.3	28.8	26.6	26.4	21.4	13.9
Koch Bihar	4.74	52.4	38.7	25.3	22.5	14.2	13.7
Uttar Dinajpur	17.03	35.51	40.5	29.31	30.05	28.7	23.2
Dakshin Dinajpur						22.2	11.5
Malda	11.05	30.3	32	26	29.8	24.8	21.2
Murshidabad	4.59	33.5	28.6	25.5	28.2	23.8	21.1
Nadia	36.25	49.8	29.9	33.3	30	19.5	12.2
North Twenty-Four Parganas	23.5	40.84	34.53	27.1	31.7	22.7	12
South Twenty-Four Parganas					30.2	20.9	18.2

**Table 1: District wise population growth rate (1951-2011)**

In the 1961 Census year, the highest growth rates were observed in Jalpaiguri (48.3 percent), Koch Bihar (52.4 percent), Nadia (49.8 percent), and Twenty-Four Parganas (40.8 percent). The migration flow has been occurring since India's 1947 independence, which directly influenced the growth rate of these border districts (Elahi & Sultana, 1985). The communal factor has been worked on since the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947. This phenomenon forced the Hindu communities to enter India, which suddenly increased the number of Hindu migrants in border regions of West Bengal (Ghosh, 2014); (Kamal, 2009). Whereas, Murshidabad, Jalpaiguri, and Nadia districts observed growth in the Muslim population (Census of India, 1961).

Due to the partition of India and Bangladesh in 1971, the population growth rate of border districts increased slightly in the census years 1981 and 1991. Migrants without valid proof are called "illegal migrants." They entered India after 1971, which changed the demographic structure of this area (Samaddar, 1999). The population growth rate has been decreasing since the 2001 and 2011 Census years (Wirsing, Samir, & Das, 2016). The number of immigrants from Bangladesh has been decreasing since 1991 (Sarkar J. P., 2010). In the last three decades, the highest population growth has continued in Uttar Dinajpur, Malda, and Murshidabad districts.

Since the colonial period, the Nadia district has been a popular destination for migrants. Krishnanagar, Nawadwip, and other police stations received a large number of immigrants from other districts of West Bengal and Bangladesh. This migration phenomenon led to a high growth rate for the district (Banerjee, 2012). Population dynamics are different on the eastern and western sides of the North Twenty-four Parganas district. The north-western portion of the district is situated on the river bank of Ganga, which is very urbanized and developed. The population growth rate and density are also high in this area. On the other hand, the district's Bongaon and Basirhat sub-divisions are part of the Sundarbans Biosphere Reserve. So, this area is comparatively less developed, and population density is also low. South Twenty-Four Parganas district is situated on the Ganga delta. A large portion of the district is occupied by mangrove forests in the Sundarbans. Population distribution is very low in this region due to unsuitable living conditions. In contrast, Kolkata's surrounding areas are constantly developing. So, the growth rate of these areas is very high.

**5.2. Migration pattern:** After India gained independence in 1947, migration from Bangladesh to West Bengal increased. In contrast, the migration pattern increased at the greatest rate following Bangladesh's independence in 1971. This phenomenon forced a large number of people to migrate to West Bengal (Wirsing, Samir, & Das, 2016). In West Bengal, migration was driven by push factors at the point of origin and pull factors at the point of destination (Nanda, 2005). Environmental degradation, frequent flooding in river basins, and economic backwardness forced the residents of Bangladesh to migrate to West Bengal. Table 2 shows that the percentage

of migration was highest in 1991. Lieutenant General S. K. Sinha published a report in 1998, which stated that about 5.4 million migrants from Bangladesh settled in West Bengal (Sinha, 1998).

**Table 2: Percentage of migration from Bangladesh to West Bengal (1951-2011)**

Districts	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Darjeeling	3.49	6.11	5.61	5.12	4.25	3.61	3.14
Jalpaiguri	10.59	16.06	13.60	12.61	8.91	6.78	4.62
Koch Bihar	14.56	24.78	20.17	16.75	10.48	7.92	4.40
Uttar Dinajpur	15.67	13.01	10.61	10.65	7.88	4.61	2.91
Dakshin Dinajpur						10.48	6.15
Malda	6.40	5.28	4.29	5.09	3.88	2.83	1.51
Murshidabad	3.40	2.83	2.56	2.10	1.42	0.87	0.50
Nadia	37.09	29.34	23.98	17.61	14.70	12.52	7.74
North Twenty-Four Parganas	11.31	12.52	10.77	10.00	12.34	10.15	7.04
South Twenty-Four Parganas					1.81	1.45	1.02

Following that, the pattern has been declining in selected border districts of West Bengal in the 2001 and 2011 census years (Census of India 2011). Different periods have revealed district-specific variations in migration flow. According to Census 1991, Koch Bihar (10.48%), Nadia (14.70%), and North Twenty-Four Parganas (12.34%) districts have received the highest number of Bangladeshi migrants. Whereas, Maldah (3.88%), Murshidabad (1.42%), and South Twenty-Four Parganas (1.81%) districts received comparatively few migrants from Bangladesh. Murshidabad district is situated in a flood-prone area. Frequent floods and river bank erosion could not attract migrants from Bangladesh to the district (Mollah, 2013). The flow of migration changed in later periods. In Census 2001 and 2011, Dakshin Dinajpur, Nadia, and the North Twenty-Four Parganas districts had the highest percentage of migrants from Bangladesh. Bangladeshi migrants seek work opportunities and a higher standard of living in the fertile land and urban centres of the Nadia district.

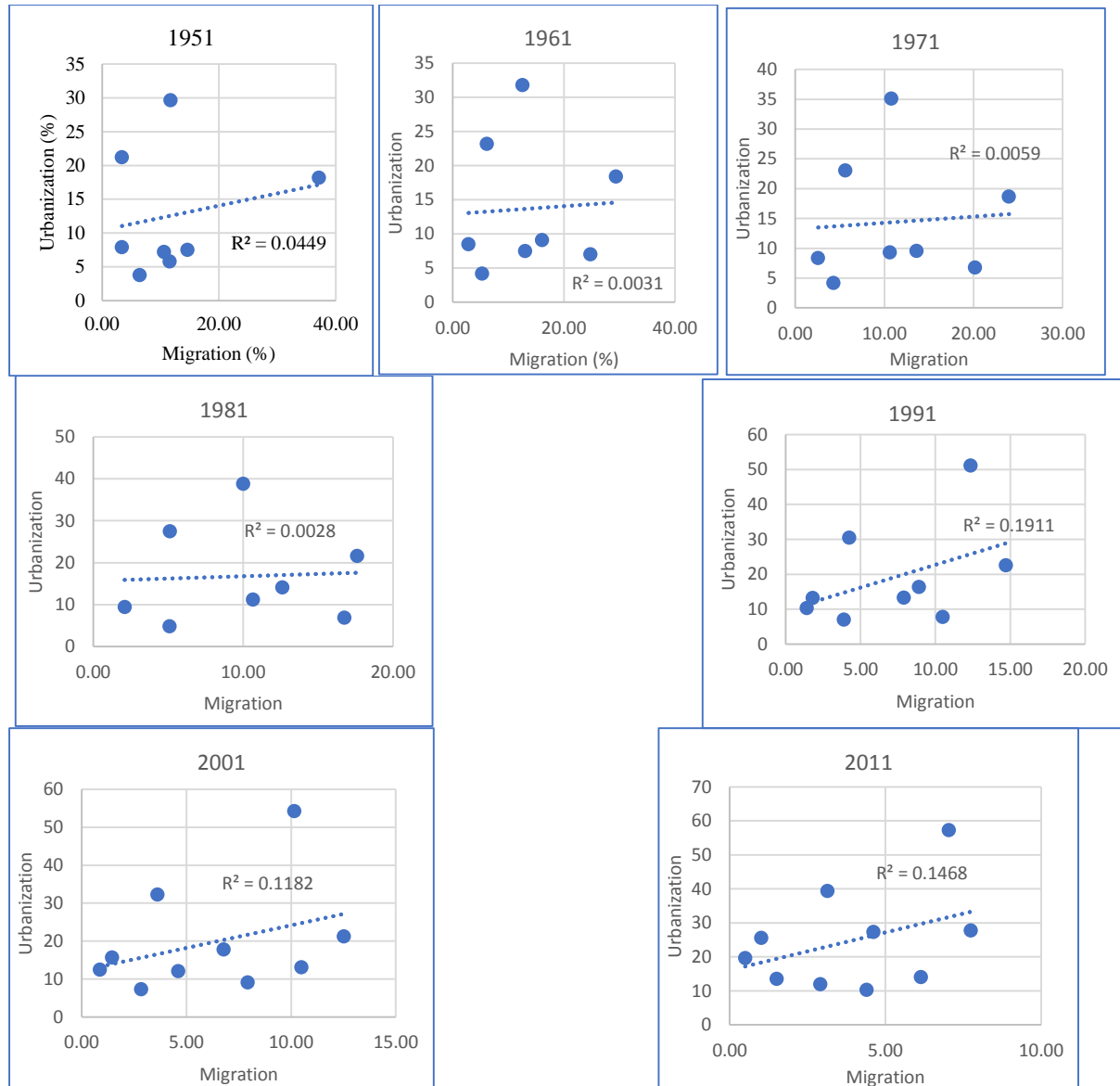
**5.3. Growth of urbanization and migration:** Urbanization patterns are directly influenced by the migration flow in border districts of West Bengal. The district wise disparity in the growth of urbanization has been observed in different census decades. Table no. 3 shows the district-wise percentage changes in urbanization in West Bengal. In 2011, North Twenty-Four Parganas (57.3 percent) district was the most urbanized border district, followed by Darjeeling (39.4 percent), Nadia (27.80 percent), Jalpaiguri (27.4 percent), and South Twenty-Four Parganas (25.60 percent) districts. Socio-economic development, employment opportunities, transport and communication facilities, and better educational infrastructure all accelerate the growth of urbanization in these areas. Whereas, Koch Bihar (10.3 percent), Uttar Dinajpur (12 percent), Maldah (13.6 percent), and Dakshin Dinajpur (14.1 percent) districts have a low level of urbanization.

**Table 3: District wise degree of urbanization (in percentage) of West Bengal**

Districts	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Darjeeling	21.2	23.2	23.1	27.5	30.5	32.3	39.4
Jalpaiguri	7.2	9.1	9.6	14.1	16.4	17.8	27.4
Koch Bihar	7.5	7	6.8	6.9	7.8	9.1	10.3
Uttar Dinajpur	5.82	7.48	9.34	11.17	13.34	12.1	12
Dakshin Dinajpur						13	14.1
Malda	3.8	4.2	4.2	4.8	7.1	7.3	13.6
Murshidabad	7.9	8.5	8.4	9.4	10.4	12.5	19.7
Nadia	18.2	18.4	18.7	21.6	22.6	21.3	27.8
North Twenty-Four Parganas	29.63	31.81	35.15	38.82	51.2	54.3	57.3
South Twenty-Four Parganas					13.3	15.7	25.6

Lack of industrial development, a low level of literacy, employment opportunities, etc. push them towards a less urbanized region. After the independence of India, the growth of urban centers has been observed in border districts of West Bengal. whereas large and metropolitan cities attract a higher proportion of migrants

due to better employment opportunities in 1981–1991 (Kundu, 2014). In recent periods, the migrants prefer to settle in the sub-urban areas of Nadia, North Twenty-Four Parganas, South Twenty-Four Parganas, Darjeeling, and Jalpaiguri districts. So, the growth of urbanization has increased in these districts (Chatterjee, 2013). Whereas, Uttar Dinajpur, Dakshin Dinajpur, and Maldah districts are highly flood and drought-prone, which leads to frequent crop failure. So, the people of this district migrate to another urban center for their livelihood.



**Figure 2: Pearson's correlation coefficient**

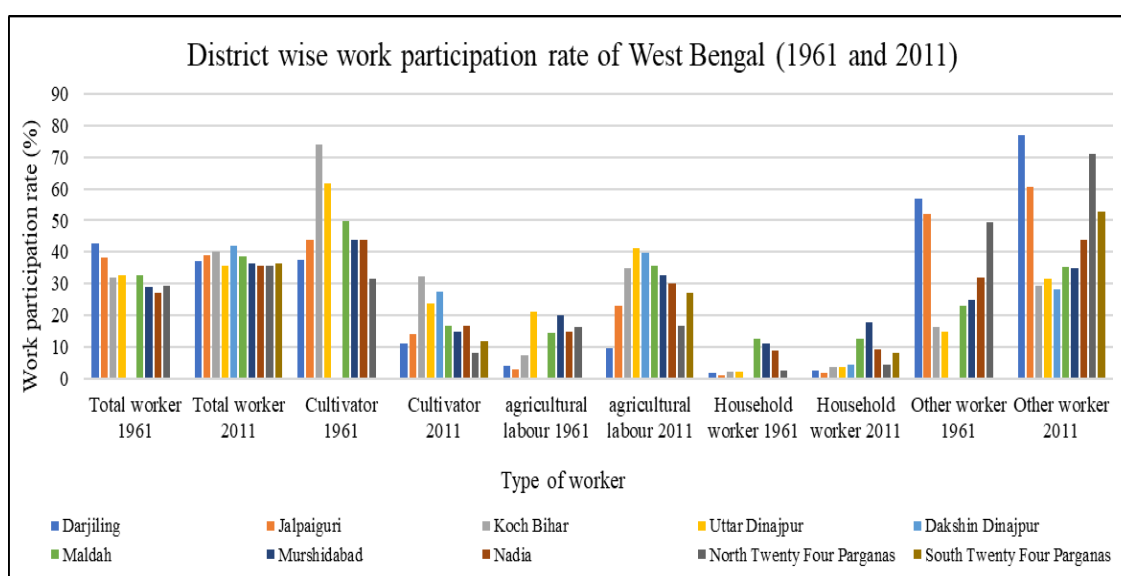
Figure 2 shows that Pearson's correlation coefficient shows a positive relationship between migration and urbanization in West Bengal border districts ( $r^2 = 0.04$  in 1951, 0.003 in 1961, 0.005 in 1971, 0.002 in 1981, 0.19 in 1991, 0.11 in 2001, and 0.14 in the 2011 census). The growth trend of urbanization shows that migration flow is directly influenced by the growth of urban centers in these districts (Purkait & Halder, 2017). whereas census towns have a higher growth rate compared to large cities (Bagchi & Chatterjee, 2015). There are 22 towns near the Bangladesh border where very high population growth has been observed, such as Siliguri, Balurghat, Hilli, English Bazar, Raiganj, Dhulian, Jangipur, Barasat, etc. (Census of India 2011). According to the Census of India, the Muslim community is growing faster than other religions in urban and border districts. Higher proportions of urban growth among the Muslim community have been observed in Maldah (62.04 percent), Murshidabad (15 percent), Jalpaiguri (14.71 percent), Nadia (11.10 percent), and South Twenty-Four Parganas (13.69 percent) districts (Karmakar, 2018).

**5.4. Work participation:** The occupational structure has been diversified based on physiography, climate, soil, the presence of rivers, and cultivable land among border districts of West Bengal. Crop cultivation is difficult in the Darjeeling district due to a lack of plain land. As a result, the percentage of cultivators falls from 37.5 percent in 1961 to 11.14 percent in 2011. Furthermore, large-scale and heavy industries have yet to establish themselves in the district. The hilly area of the district is used for plantations of tea, cinchona, rubber, and a variety of fruits and vegetables. Workers engaged in the tea plantation industry are categorized as "other workers." They increased from 56.8 percent in 1961 to 76.77 percent in 2011 in the Darjeeling district. The lack of large-scale manufacturing industries pushes the people towards tea plantations and agriculturally related activities in Jalpaiguri and Koch Bihar districts (Majumder, 2021). But the number of cultivators is decreasing and the number of agricultural labourers is increasing with time. Since the 1990s, West Bengal has seen the agricultural sector become increasingly unprofitable, resulting in a shift into non-agricultural occupations such as wage employment in STG farms, construction, and the transportation sector. In contrast, a lack of opportunities for high-profile jobs compelled male employees to migrate to other states to seek work (Bose & Roy, 2019). Alongside being a tourist destination, unemployment among other workers is highest in the Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri districts (Census of India, 2011). The soil of Uttar Dinajpur and Dakshin Dinajpur districts is mostly new and old alluvium, which is suitable for cultivation. Crop cultivation and inland fisheries were also developed in this area. So, this area has a high proportion of cultivators and agricultural laborers. Although the percentage of cultivators decreased from 61.8 percent in 1961 to almost half in 2011, In 2011, the proportion of agricultural laborers and other workers increased.

**Table 4: Work participation rate in border districts of West Bengal (1961 and 2011)**

Physiographic zones	District	Total worker		Cultivator		agricultural labor		Household worker		Others worker		Non-worker	
		1961	2011	1961	2011	1961	2011	1961	2011	1961	2011	1961	2011
Northern sub-Himalayan region	Darjeeling	42.6	37.02	37.5	11.14	4	9.66	1.7	2.42	56.8	76.77	57.4	62.98
	Jalpaiguri	38.4	39.06	44	14.21	3	23.11	1.1	1.99	51.9	60.69	61.6	60.94
	Koch Bihar	31.8	40.01	74	32.34	7.4	34.74	2.4	3.60	16.2	29.32	68.2	59.99
	Uttar Dinajpur	32.72	35.77	61.8	23.93	21.1	41.12	2.3	3.53	14.8	31.42	67.28	64.23
Dakshin Dinajpur	41.94		27.49		39.82		4.59		28.09		58.06		
Lower Gangetic plain region	Maldah	32.79	38.55	49.8	16.59	14.4	35.49	12.8	12.79	23	35.13	67.2	61.45
	Murshidabad	29	36.46	44	14.71	20	32.52	11	17.99	25	34.77	71	63.54
Deltaic Sundarban region	Nadia	27.2	35.66	44	16.76	15	30.18	9	9.18	32	43.88	72.8	64.34
	North Twenty-Four Parganas	29.4	35.68	31.5	8.07	16.5	16.77	2.7	4.36	49.3	70.80	70.6	64.32
	South Twenty-Four Parganas		36.32		11.99		27.21		8.13		52.68		63.68

Source: Census of India 1961 and 2011.



**Figure 3: District-wise work participation rate in West Bengal (1961 and 2011)**



According to Census 2011, the rural population in Malda and Murshidabad districts exceeds 80% and is primarily engaged in agricultural activities. These districts have the highest proportion of household workers. They mainly engaged in the bidi industry (Mollah, 2013). Concerning percentage, male workers constitute 5.92 percent and female workers comprise 57.68 percent of the total household workforce in Murshidabad district (Census of India, 2011).

The Nadia district is made up of alluvial fertile soil ideal for agricultural production. The economy of the district is mainly dependent on agriculture. No major industries were found in the district. So, the proportion of agriculture-related workers is high in the Nadia district. North Twenty-Four Parganas district has an abundance of fertile soil, which helps to improve agricultural production. Besides, the district is suitable for industrialization. Large-scale industries such as jute manufacturing, engineering, textiles, paper, chemicals, etc. have been established in the district. Most major industries and residential area development have occurred along the Hooghly River. So, other workers constitute a large portion (70.80 percent in 2011) of the district. South Twenty-Four Parganas district is divided into northern and southern parts. The northern part of the district is developed with urbanization, which leads to an increase in the proportion of other workers. However, the southern portion of the district falls under mangrove forests, which create a large number of agricultural laborers. The details in table 4 and figure 3 show the work participation rate of the border districts of West Bengal.

**5.5. Work Participation of Bangladeshi Migrants:** Migrants came from Bangladesh and changed their occupations during different periods. Migrants who came in the 1950s and 1960s were largely engaged in agricultural activities and settled in rural areas near the Bangladesh border (Ghosh, 2014). After that, they settled in urban areas in the early eighties and nineties (Nanda, 2005). As a result, the proportion of cultivators and agricultural laborers among migrants has decreased since the 1981 Census (Sarkar J. P., 2010). Following their migration, they changed careers. They worked in urban areas as servicemen, rickshaw pullers, shop owners, businessmen, carpenters, etc. So, it is clear that the proportion of migrants from Bangladesh is low in agricultural activities concerning the total workforce of West Bengal. Estimated number of migrant workers (Table 5) based on migration patterns and work participation rates in West Bengal border districts Census report.

The data reveals that district-wise dissimilarities have been observed in the working activities of migrants. A large proportion of migrants are engaged in agriculturally related activities in Koch Bihar, Uttar Dinajpur, Dakshin Dinajpur, Maldah, Murshidabad, and Nadia districts. Whereas, Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, the North Twenty-Four Parganas, and the South Twenty-Four Parganas districts have a higher percentage of other workers.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

Cross-border migration is a common phenomenon in India. A migration flow from all neighbouring countries has occurred in India. A large number of immigrants from Bangladesh have arrived in India, particularly in the border state of northeast India. Since India's independence, a continuous migration flow has occurred in bordering areas of West Bengal. West Bengal is facing a population problem as a result of these huge migrations. The demographic and economic structure of West Bengal is being impacted by these immigrants, which could lead to conflict in several regions of the state (Debnath & Ray, 2017). This phenomenon led to a high growth rate in the border districts of West Bengal. Different factors, such as the family network, the sympathy of the state government, religion, etc., force the immigrants to come to West Bengal. However, the population dynamics have changed over time due to some policies taken by the government of India to reduce the migration flow. Border fencing and strong vigilance have reduced illegal migration and trading in recent years. The working pattern has changed in different periods. In the early decades, they mainly engaged in agricultural-related activities. But the growth of urban centers and better work opportunities attract people to migrate to urban areas. Rising urbanization and occupational diversification which expands quickly are directly tied to economic development (Shaban & Khan, 2022).

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