

Feminization of Immigration in India

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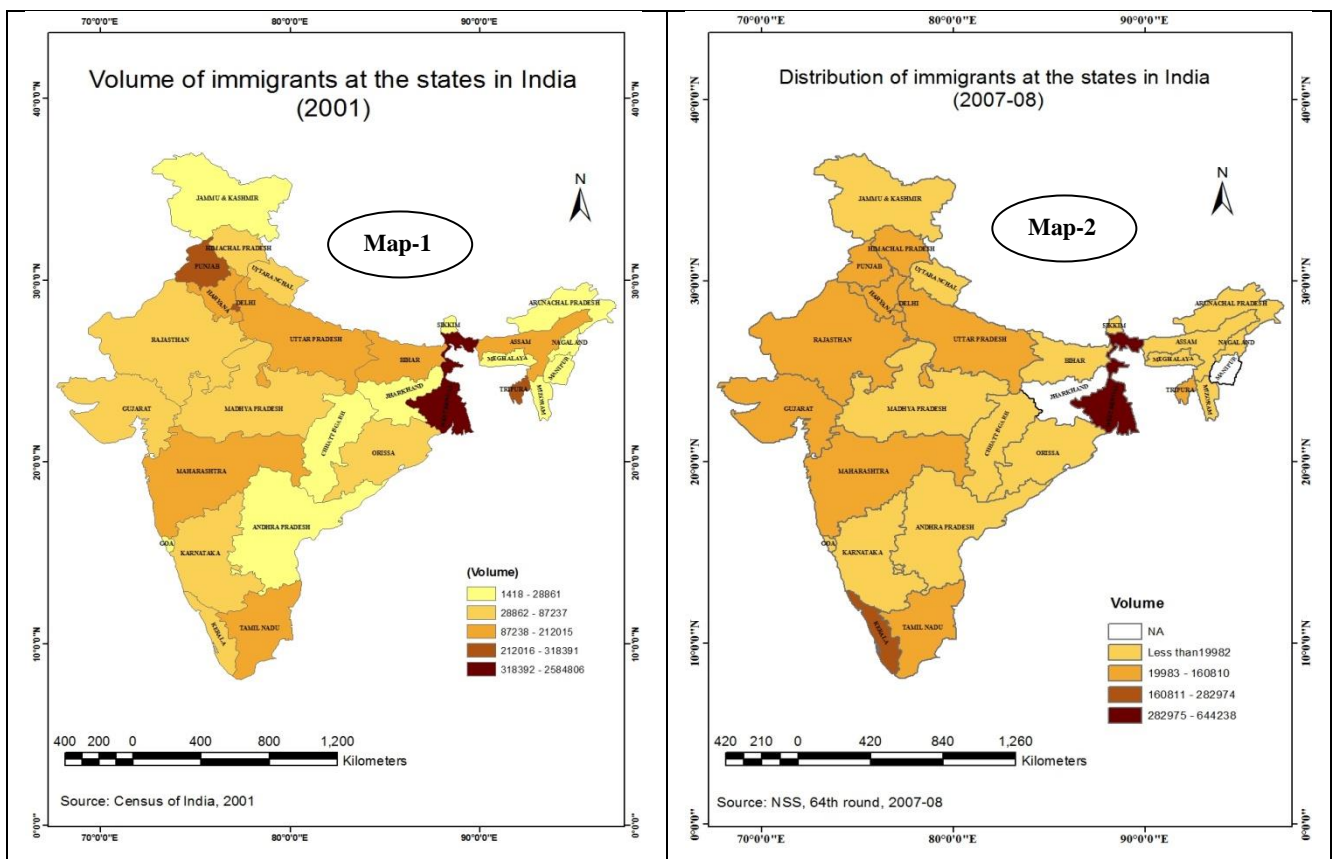
In the contemporary world where world became a globalised village or city, female migration is becoming a dominant stream but most of the cases it is ignored or has not been discussed and emphasized so far with due concern. Many literature had come with the view point that migration is the outcome of the better survival strategy (Stark et al., 1986; Stark and Taylor, 1989). On the other hand migration from the rural area to urban area is the outcome of the rural- urban income differential (Todaro, 1969). In many existing literature by treating females as the associational migrants, migration research undermines the significance of various factors related to female migration whether it is internal or international, specifically for economic reasons, which determine migration behaviour. The process of globalization has changed the pattern of female movement. In most of the developed countries where care giving jobs or domestic maid work are easily available for the women promoted female mobility from the developing countries. In countries like Latin American and Caribbean nations and in North America and Europe, the demand for international domestic workers has also boomed (Aymer, 1997; Ortega, 2001; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2001).

In the late 1960s and early 1970s the migration theories often held that migration is dominated by men and women were merely wives and dependents who followed their husbands or daughter with their parents. Moreover in the past decades the scenario has undergone tremendous change and women autonomously migrating as the main economic security provider or breadwinners for their families. Females currently represent over half of international migrants in the more developed areas, and slightly less than half in the less developed and least developed areas of the world. The share of international migrants in the world's population has remained remarkably stable at around 3 percent over the past 50 years, despite factors that could have been expected to increase flows. However, in some regions the percentage is higher for example, in Europe it is 8.8%, and in North America 13.5% (Human Development Report 2009). At the global level India ranked 9th in term of stock of international migrants while USA ranked topped with migrated population 38.4 million to their total population (UN Population Division, 2005). In 2001 census, there were 6.1 million international migrants which accounts for 0.60% of the total population of India, whose birth place was outside India.

The data on international migration provided by census of India, 2001 and NSS 64th round, 2007-08 are used in the present study to see the pattern of female immigration at different states in India. On the other hand the study also tries to infer the possible reasons for female immigration. Finally the study also tries to see how the states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh had emerged as the favourable destination to the female immigrants.

Pattern of Immigration in India

It is the bordering states of India which have higher proportion of international migrants because of their proximity to the foreign countries. As in case of states of West Bengal (50.14%), Assam (2.54%) and Tripura (5.04%) which have common border with Bangladesh and in many cases porous border leads to the large scale influx of Bangladeshi migrants in these state (census of India, 2001). That is why the percentage or volume of international migrants is very high in these states. The finding of National Sample Survey has also Similarities with the finding of Census of India, 2001.



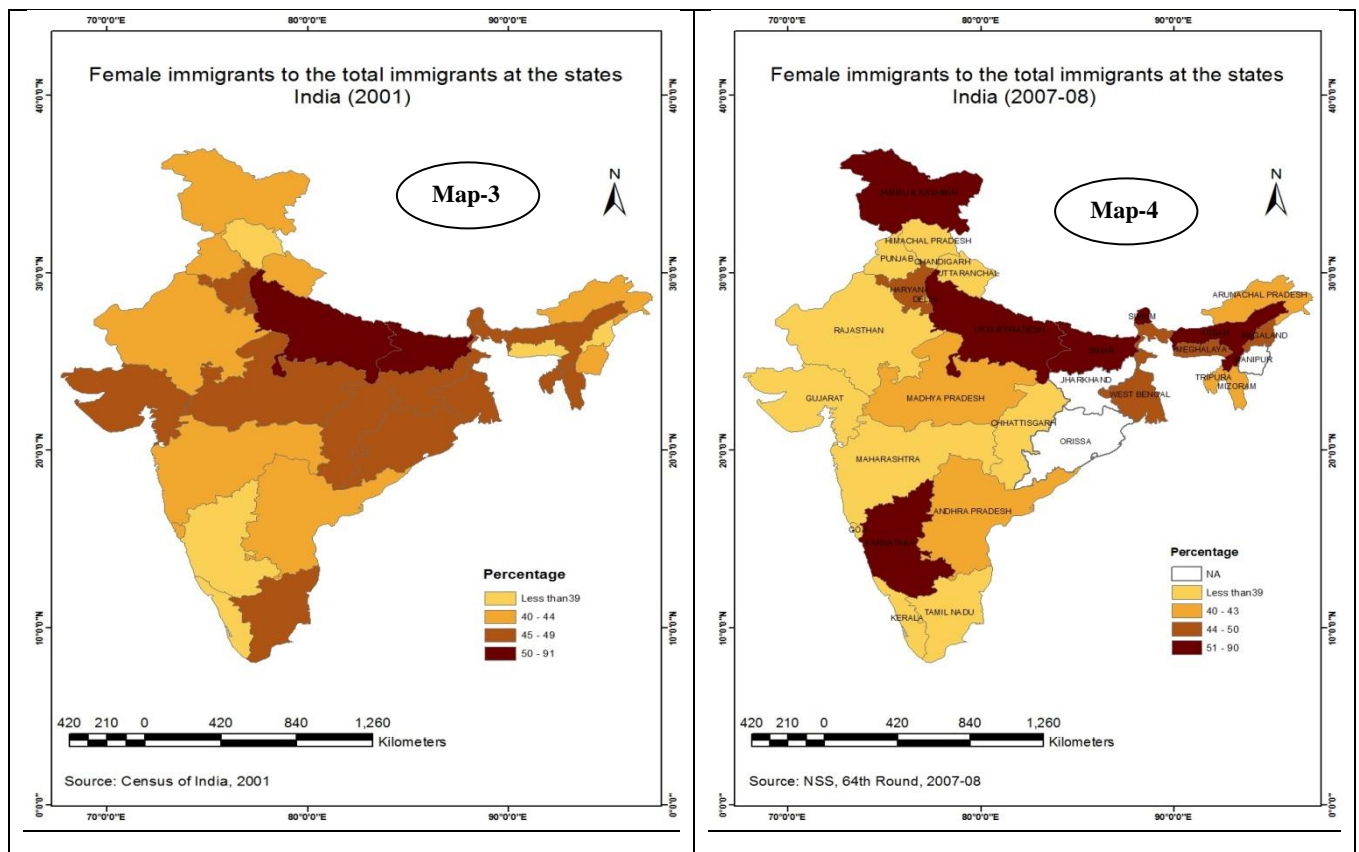
It was found from NSS data that the border state like West Bengal (35.49%), Kerala (15.59%), Uttar Pradesh (8.86), Maharashtra (7.38%) and Tamil Nadu (5.29%) have higher percentage of immigrants (NSS, 2007-08). It should be mentioned here that majority of the

immigrants in India came from the Asian countries accounting for 97.55 percent. Among the south Asian countries, it is Bangladesh and Pakistan which was previously part of Indian subcontinents accounts for 59.84% and 19.34% respectively. On the other hand Nepali immigrants accounts for 11.57 percent (census of India, 2001). This indicates the historical movement of population since the independence of India in 1947 with the formation of new countries of Pakistan and Bangladesh nations (1971) and friendly relationship with Nepal. Similarly immigrants from Sri Lanka accounted for 2.29 percent. The Conflicts in Sri Lanka and elsewhere in South Asia and transnational migration between Nepal and India also caused huge population shifts to India, though the share of such internationally migrated population to the total population may not be very high in India. Migration from Nepal was initiated with the introduction of plantation crops in the hilly tracks, establishment of the summer capitals in the hill stations by the Britishers. On the other hand in the states like Uttaranchal, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Delhi, the percentage of International migration to the total international migration in India in 2001 census is quite high. It is because of the contribution of Nepali migrants who may come to these states and settle there. As Nepal share common border along Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Bihar, and well developed communication network leads to flow of Nepali people in these Indian states.

Pattern of Female Immigration in India

Various micro level studies (Shanti, 1991; Ghosh, 2002; Sundari and Rukmani, 1998; Sardamoni, 1995) highlighted that females also migrate individually for economic reasons irrespective of distance. It may be within the same political boundary or across the countries. Studies show that the higher the percentage of women working in local manufacturing, the greater the chance that any one woman will emigrate abroad due to economic reason (Massey and others, 1998). On the other hand the countries like china, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan many where a low sex ratio, the shortage of marriageable women is resulting in the importing women. While the Chinese are resorting to abduction, kidnapping and even a return to the old practice of rearing a young girl child for subsequent marriage into the family, Koreans are importing ethnic Koreans from northern China and reaching out to the Philippines for wives (Dasgupta and Li Shuzhuo, 1999). Similar situation was noticed in case of India where in most of the northern states showed continuously alarming trend of declining sex ratio/ skewed sex ratio. That ultimately leads to the shortage of marriageable age women. This resulted in the supply of trafficked women from the poor neighbouring countries like,

Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan. A study conducted by Blanchet (2003) in Bangladesh showed that 112 Bangladeshi girls and women who were purchased to serve as wives to men of Uttar Pradesh or other parts of North India. There had been markets in Gonda, Bahrni, Basti, Gonda and Sidharthnagar and other cities along the railway line running just south of Nepal where prospective husbands purchased Bengali girls. The maps (3&4) also portrayed the same pictures as it was found in many studies earlier. It was found from 2001 census data that it is the state Bihar and Uttar Pradesh which received maximum number of female immigrants to it's total immigrants which is much higher than the national average.



Even the percentage of total immigrants received in these states is very low as compare to the West Bengal, Assam, Tripura, Punjab, Haryana and Delhi. But the percentages of female immigrants in these states are 91.15 percent (Bihar) Uttar Pradesh (65.71%) which may be the cause of concern for the demographers and sociologists. The continuous declining sex ratio and missing girl child in these states acts as the pull factors to buy wives or women of marriageable age from the neighboured counties where chronic poverty force parents to sell their girl child. Similar pattern of female immigration was also found from the NSS, 64th round 2007-08 data as it was seen in census, 2001 data. The above map-4 showed how the northern states have emerged as the favourable destination to the female immigrants. Along

with the Bihar and Uttar Pradesh the states like Assam, Jammu Kashmir, Sikkim and Andhra Pradesh have emerged in the NSS, 2007-08 data. It was found that out of total immigrants in Assam 90 percent is female. On the other hand Bihar and Uttar Pradesh have 78.87% and 73 percent female to the total immigrants in these states respectively. The emerging state like Sikkim which have common border with Nepal has 60.19% female immigrants to its total immigrants. Similarly in the J&K states where the demand of female labourers in the gardening industries pulled immigrants from Nepal where female accounted for 51.68 percent. It should be mentioned here that if the male and female proportion is equal or female are less this means females are immigrated as the associational but when female are suppressing male means they are immigrating or were immigrated independently which may be the great concern for the receiving countries like India. Thus it is most of the border states which have such type of immigration phenomena.

Sex ratio of Immigrants

The sex ratio among the migrants indicates whether it is male or female dominated migration stream. It was found from the many studies and reports that short distance migration is dominated by the female migration. On the other hand long distance is dominated by male. The dominant reason behind short distance migration by female is marriage related migration. On the other hand male migration is basically for economic purposes. Females are basically migrated either with their husband or parents. But now the pattern had changed in the present day globalised world. The study of Mahapatro (2010) which showed how the trends and pattern of female migration to the Indian mega cities had changed over the time period is a master piece. But the very thing is that how the long distance migration (immigration) in India is feminised needs attention.

The data on immigration provided by census of India, 2001 by gender at the states showed that most of the states had received higher number of male immigrants and the females are basically asocial immigrants. The sex ratio of immigrants in all the states is very low than the national average (921/1000 male) which indicates the male dominated nature of immigration (long distance). But the states like Bihar and Uttar Pradesh emerged as the exceptional states where sex ratio among the immigrants is very high than the national average. In Bihar it is 10,296 and in Uttar Pradesh it 1,917 which is much higher than the national average (921). Thus it indicated that how women are coming in India Independently along with associational

immigrants. We can also say that like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar had higher proportion of female immigrants than rest of the states.

volume of immigrants at the states in India						
States/country	Census of India, 2001			NSS, 2007-08		
	Male	Female	Sex ratio	Male	Female	Sex ratio
Jammu & Kashmir	13,014	9,730	748	287	307	1070
Himachal Pradesh	30,856	15,960	517	24345	13518	555
Punjab	1,82,886	1,35,505	741	89612	25542	285
Chandigarh	6,752	4,010	594	3915	1857	474
Uttaranchal	51,617	35,620	690	9052	4572	505
Haryana	1,10,674	93,419	844	13554	13401	989
Delhi	1,52,702	1,26,152	826	26009	19190	738
Rajasthan	48,824	37,482	768	53548	15264	285
Uttar Pradesh	51,315	98,352	1,917	43388	117422	2706
Bihar	18,769	1,93,246	10,296	2434	9084	3732
Sikkim	9,826	8,410	856	3611	5460	1512
Arunachal Pradesh	10,057	7,517	747	6	4	667
Nagaland	4,243	2,550	601	210	210	1000
Manipur	7,887	7,600	964	NA	NA	NA
Tripura	1,34,992	1,26,639	938	25975	17857	687
Meghalaya	5,868	3,754	640	10	10	1000
Assam	70,254	60,712	864	0	4868	
West Bengal	13,90,023	11,94,783	860	324820	319418	983
Jharkhand	7,955	7,175	902	NA	NA	NA
Orissa	25,279	21,331	844	2294	0	0
Chhattisgarh	15,552	13,309	856	11995	3132	261
Madhya Pradesh	30,899	26,441	856	6058	4120	680
Gujarat	32,325	26,419	817	28085	7409	264
Maharashtra	99,086	78,392	791	87427	46501	532
Andhra Pradesh	13,624	9,691	711	11344	8638	761
Karnataka	26,365	15,336	582	4800	4982	1038
Goa	5,562	4,197	755	4165	205	49
Kerala	31,989	19,951	624	237661	45313	191
Tamilnadu	87,142	83,245	955	69104	26982	390
Pondicherry	1,684	1,374	816	2106	760	361
INDIA	26,83,914	24,71,509	921	1093715	721777	660

Source: census of India, 2001 and NSS 64th round, 2007-08.

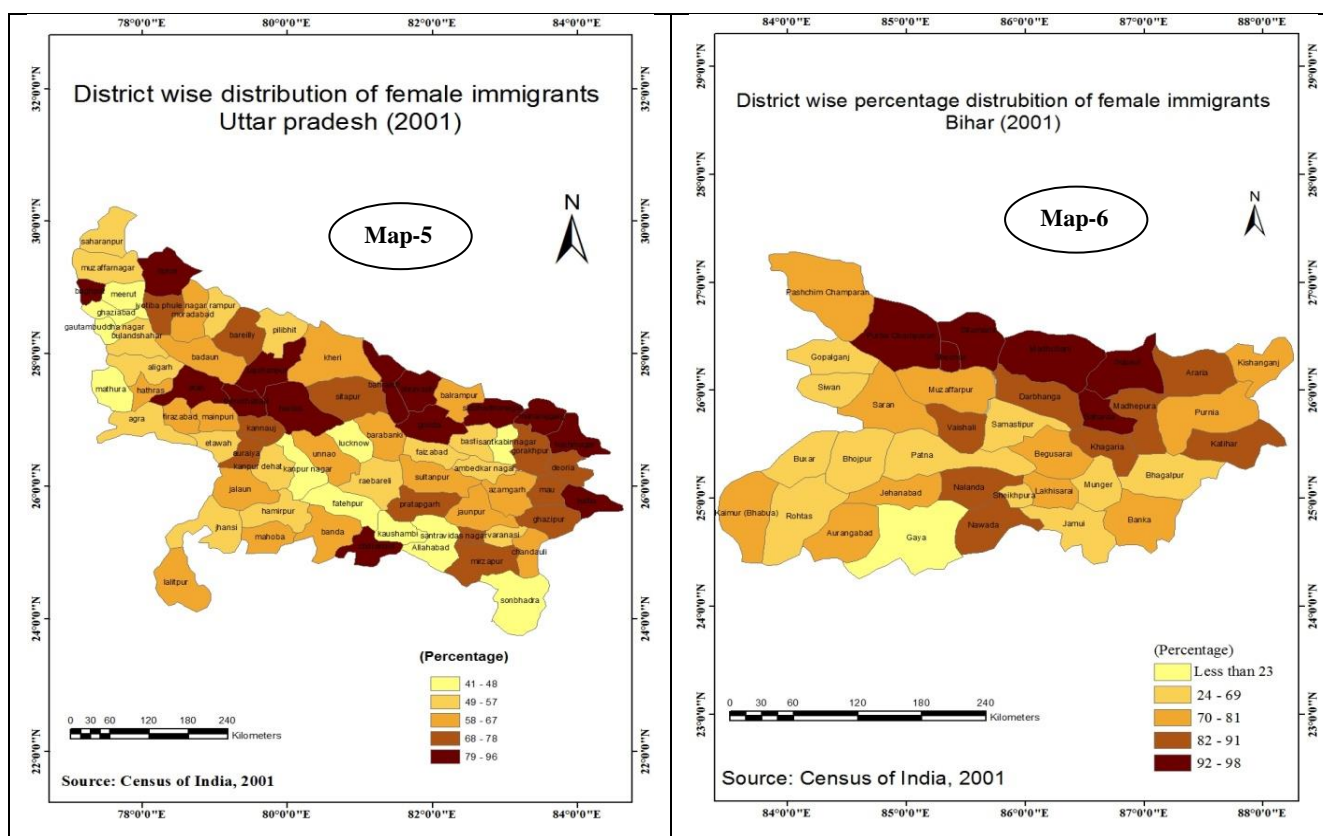
According to the 2001 census even the volume of immigrants in the Uttar Pradesh state is very low (1.5 lakhs) in term of percentage at the all India level. The interesting thing is female are outnumbered the male migrants that out of 1.5 lakhs ninety eight thousands is female. Thus in term of the male female proportion is male (44 percent) are suppressed by the

female (66 percent) immigrants. Similar pattern was observed in the state of Bihar where the volume of immigrants (212,015) is higher than Uttar Pradesh. But the interesting thing is that in Bihar immigration is more feminised. It was found from the census data that out of 2,12,015 immigrants 1,93,246 are female. Thus in term of male female proportion it the female (91 percent) who outnumbered the male (percent) the state Bihar. The Census of India 2001 report on migration (D-Series) shows that about 6,051,965 persons who live in India were born in the other Asian countries, out of which more than 56 per cent (3,742,883) were from Bangladesh, followed by Pakistan (1,305,707), Nepal (640,862) and Sri Lanka (183,183). It was also found in UP and Bihar majority of the female immigrants are from Nepal and Bangladesh.

Female immigration in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar

At the macro level it is very difficult to find out the destination of the female immigrants in different states and the probable reasons for selecting this particular destination. In both these states female were coming from either Nepal and Bangladesh is settling down in the border districts where they can easily mixed up with the local people and culture. On the other hand the shortage of girls of marriageable age and demand for female labour force in agriculture and cultivation acts as the pull factor. According to the 2001 census in Bihar the districts like Purba Champaran, Sitamari, Madhubani Araria and Darbhanga have higher proportion of female immigrants than male. On the other hand the contribution of Nepali female immigrants is much higher than the Bangladeshi immigrants in this state and these districts.

The districts like Araria, Paschim champaran, Kishanganj and Purnia have higher proportion of Bangladeshi female immigrants. The result of immigration data of NNS (2007-08) also showed that it is the northern region which has higher proportion of immigrants than rest of the region. Similarly in the state Uttar Pradesh the district like Maharajganj, Siddharthnagar, Balrampur, Bahraich, Shrawasti and Gorakhpur have higher proportion of female immigrants.



Reasons for immigration

The finding of the reasons for female immigration along with over all reasons for immigration in India at the state level showed that majority of the female immigrants in India came due to marriage purposes (36.33%), followed by migration of parent/earning member of the family (35.62%) and social and political reasons (20.94 %). Female immigrated only for economic reasons accounted for 1.43 percent while they account for 14.2 percent of overall immigrants in India. Another interesting revelation is that ‘other reasons’ accounts for 17.61 percent of overall immigration while it is only 5.46 percent in case of female immigration. However, it has been observed that after marriage when women come to the in-laws place to stay most of them also start working as agricultural labourer as an extended help to enhance family income (Banerjee, 2009).

Reasons for Immigration in India, 2007-08		
Reasons	Total	Female
Economic reasons	14.02	1.43
Studies	0.79	0.21
social / political problems	27.42	20.94
marriage	14.49	36.33

migration of parent/earning member of the family	25.67	35.62
Other reasons	17.61	5.46
Total	100.00	100.00

Source: NSS, 64th round, 2007-08

It can be inferred from the available information of economic activities performed by the immigrants' gender wise at district level in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh states that majority of the female immigrants in UP worked as either agricultural labourer (77.26) or cultivators (63.34 percent) (census of India, 2001). On the other hand more or less similar proportion was also observed in case of Bihar.

Concluding Remarks

Feminisation of immigration carries different connotations in the Indian contest with the continuous lowering of child sex ratio and over all sex ratio. The unbalanced sex ratio resulted in the buying of wife or chosen from strange villages from different socio- cultural regions. Paradoxically, poor families who cannot attract wives and dowries for their sons are forced to "buy" their wives from families too poor to provide dowries for their daughters. On the other hand the finding of the study indicated that lower sex ratio and the demand for extended labour force in agriculture leads to the female immigration. It was also emerged from the study the border districts of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh has higher percentage of female immigrants. At the same time these districts have higher percentage of female work participation in cultivation and agriculture. In both the states female came basically from Nepal which have common border with Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and well develop communication network.

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