

# **STUDENTS ON THE MOVE: THE CASE OF INDIA**

**KETAKI SARDESHPANDE**

## **ABSTRACT**

With India expected to hit demographic dividend soon, human capital formation assumes an important role in determining whether India will stand to gain from this dividend. This brings into the fore the importance of education and an educated populace. Over the past few decades, India has witnessed increased enrolment rates in schools and colleges, and improved literacy rates across the country. At the same time, there has also been greater flux in movement across the country, in search for employment, marriage, business and education. This has also been a result of regional imbalances in terms of access and availability of opportunities for quality education, better jobs and better standard for living. In this background, this study sheds light on a highly under-researched aspect of internal migration in India, migration for education, using data from Census 2011, which is the latest data on migration. Migration for education to other countries has long been researched, with a gaping hole in literature when it comes to internal migration. While migration for education accounts for about 2% of total migrants, it is an important stream of migration, given the need for a skilled and educated populace. Most of the migration for education happens in the age group 15-29 years, implying that migration happens mostly for higher studies. However, this study focusses on college bound migration (20-29 years). There is no surprise that most migrants, and most higher education institutes are found in urban areas. The study further posits this migration in various socio-economic realities such as patterns in educational attainment, employment and migration flows. The study finds a stark divide between migrant sending and receiving states in terms of migration flows and presence of higher education institutes (HEIs). However, most migration for education continues to be within the state, opening up various questions on effect of state educational policies and ability to migrate across socio-economic levels. The study aims to start a body of literature to try and understand why students migrate and how educational policies can be made to provide more equitable access to quality education.