

# Economic profile of in-migrant workers in Kashmir Valley

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## Abstract

**Background/Objectives:** The Valley of Kashmir is a conflicted zone. It has a rugged topography and least level of industrialisation. It is also entirely rural in character. Despite of all these drawbacks the Kashmir Valley is abode of many in-migrants from other states of India. These in-migrants are found working in carpet, handloom, manufacturing, construction, mining & quarrying, hotel, banking, mushroom, sericulture, khadi, wood carving, poultry and several other small industrial units. The study will mainly focus on the work opportunities available for in-migrants in Kashmir Valley, as a migration pull. It will also look at the industrial and occupational absorption of in-migrants in the Valley.

**Methods/Findings:** Kashmir Valley attracts many in-migrant labourers from other parts of India mainly from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and West Bengal. Present study will use census data of the year 2001 to measure the number of in-migrants and to cover their economic activities and will cover in-migrant workers in the Valley whocome each year from other states and union territories of India but excluding localintra-district and inter-district migrants within the state. The period of the study willbe year 2001, as no other state representative data on in-migration in Kashmir Valleyis available. The study has covered in-migrants which have spread their access in almost all industries and occupations. They have made the state economy dependent. Mostly they work in agriculture and allied industries as they come from rural areas without having much skill.

**Application:** Migrants mostly workin the informal sector of the economy. It is very important to study why migrants arecoming to the Valley and where are they employed? Why these in-migrants prefer to migrateto a rural area having very scant small-scale industries, harsh climatic andgeographical conditions and bad social and political situations. The study will also beimportant for the reason of small amount of available literature. The attempt in thestudy will be to through light on all these aspects of in-migration in the Valley ofKashmir.

**Keywords:** In-Migrants, Census of India, Kashmir Valley, Industrial Category, Occupational Division.

## 1. Introduction

The in-migrant workers in Jammu And Kashmir State including Kashmir Valley are employed in number of industries. The main kinds of works performed by them include sowing and harvesting of crops, work in brick kilns, construction work and packing and picking of fruits. Studies also reveal that in-migrant workers have been seen working in the informal sector of Kashmir Valley. They usually carry out works in agriculture, petty trade and sales, construction, street hawkers, brick kilns and other agricultural allied activities. They earn plenty of money, saving more and having high wages usually 300 to 400 per day [4]. Many in-migrant labourers work in Srinagar city. They usually assemble in the mornings at certain places such as Hawal Chowk, Hyderpora, etc. with their working equipment to find work. The number of in-migrants is so high at Hawal Chowk that locals started calling it Bihari Chowk, because most of the in-migrants were from Bihar. About 17 % of the in-migrants were engaged in masonry work, 11 % in carpentry, 8 % in painting and 3.5 % were found in hair-dressing employment [5]. The migrants are a vital source of skilled and unskilled labour for almost all industries in the country and across globe. Migrant workers are also considered to bring with themselves diverse skills which may be unavailable in the local market. The worst thing about them is that they are given opportunities in the low skill, low paid and high-risk positions. Migrant workers are more often vulnerable to security and safety risks in most of the industries [1-3]. The Table 1 given provides a brief account of number of small-scale industrial units in the Valley and their employment capacity.

Table 1. Number of SSI units registered with the Directorate of Industries &amp; Commerce, Jammu and Kashmir

	2000-01		2012-13	
	Units	Employment	Units	Employment
Anantnag	3312	15050	4560	19871
Pulwama	2017	9305	2997	14344
Srinagar	7701	37119	10313	49961
Budgam	2941	18395	4297	29076
Baramulla	3391	14105	4369	18015
Kupwara	1321	4610	1917	6744

Source: Directorate of Industries & Commerce, Jammu and Kashmir

Srinagar is the only big city in the Valley with highest number of industries and working opportunities for both in-migrants and local labourers. It usually receives in-migrants who hail from urban areas in large numbers, representing an urban to urban stream of migration.

## 2. Research questions and Methodology

The study will look at the following aspects of migration:

1. What are the work opportunities available for in-migrants in Kashmir Valley?
2. What are the primary activities and industries in which the in-migrant workers are engaged in Kashmir Valley?

The Valley of Kashmir is a hilly area having a sparsely distributed population. The Valley has also harsh winters and during this period no work is available. The in-migrants are thus, seasonal and are available mainly from April to November. The labour demand during this period remains high. This attracts many labourers from other states of India especially from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and West Bengal [6]. Present study will use census data of the year 2001 and will cover in-migrant workers in the Valley whocome each year from other states and union territories of India but excluding localintra-district and inter-district migrants within the state. The period of the study willbe year 2001, as no other state representative data on in-migration in Kashmir Valleyis available.The present study will be quantitative in nature and will be based on secondary data [7-9]. We will use Census unit data to answer the research questions of the study. The results provided by census 2001 shows a lot of variation in the in-migration flow in different industries across the Valley.

### 1. In-migration pattern in Kashmir Valley

Migration has touched almost every sphere of life in India and the Valley of Kashmir is not an exception. It has not only resulted in impacts on income but has also affected people, society and economy. Kashmir Valley is experiencing in-migration of labourers from other states of the country such as, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, and Punjab in huge numbers.Unfortunately, no statistics are available. State statistics had also not been able to cover these in-migrants in the Valley [10-11]. Therefore, there is almost no work on any aspect of migrants or migration in Kashmir Valley.But the in-migrant labour market in the Valley of Kashmir is rooted and still growing. Recently [12] in an analysis of migrant workers in Kashmir Valley reported that out of 14 workers in the milk industry 9 are from outside the state. It also estimated that the number of migrants in Kashmir range between 200,000 and 500,000 during summers.The Census data of the year 2001 reported 86768 in-migrants in the state from other states while as 2938 from other countries and as per 2011 census, there were 2830930 in Kashmir based on POLR (Place ofLastResidence).

The entire region is the subject of a territorial conflict among China, India and Pakistan.The political relations among these countries more often remain tense. Throughout the year there remain several security challenges and issues faced by many people particularly in the Kashmir Valley. The Valley is almost rural in character lagging urban cities. The state in general and Kashmir is hilly in character and having harsh climates in winter. It is like a blank paper when we speak of business and industrial establishments. The State has the lowest level of industrialisation. The local labourers are out-migrating due to existence of army in the Valley pushes lots of concerns of intrusion, insecurity for women and create obstacles in doing any work.

Despite of all these drawbacks the Kashmir Valley is abode of many in-migrants from other states. In this case it is very important to understand the process of in-migration in Kashmir Valley. What makes people to come to Kashmir Valley particularly for work? What kind of job market opportunity exists in Kashmir Valley? In this light it is further important to understand the causes of in-migration to Kashmir, labour absorption and wage rate of in-migrants. The results provided by census 2001 shows a lot of variation in the pattern of in-migration and in-migrant workers in different districts of the Valley.

*Table 2. In-migrant workers classified by locality, sex and all durations of residence in place of enumeration*

Area Name	Total In-Migrants (%)				
	Total	Rural	Urban	Male	Female
Kashmir Valley	709004	493278	215726	302773	406231
Kupwara	67275	58582	8693	28569	38706
Baramula	97842	65764	32078	48327	49515
Srinagar	153534	29390	124144	86439	67095
Badgam	83088	73847	9241	31497	51591
Pulwama	122325	109382	12943	36321	86004
Anantnag	184940	156313	28627	71620	113320

*Source: Computed by author based on Census 2001, Table: D-2*

A district level picture of in-migration in the Valley shows that there is a lot of variation across districts about residence and gender of in-migrants. The Table 2 clearly shows that major in-migration has taken place in district Anantnag accounting for about 26 % while as Kupwara district shows the least number of in-migrants (9.49 %). Srinagar is the only city in the Valley but ranks at second in terms of in-migrant workers followed by Pulwama, Baramula and Badgam respectively. Majority of the rural in-migrants were found in district Pulwama comprising mostly of female workers (70.30 %). Most of the urban in-migrants especially males have dominance in the Srinagar city due to its urbanised character while as in all other districts rural in-migrants dominate with most female in-migrants. The difference between Srinagar city and other rural districts can easily be understood. Urban male in-migrants prefer to migrate toward cities or urban areas while as rural in-migrants especially women in-migrant workers are migrating toward rural areas. It is clearly rural to rural and urban to urban stream of migration. The rural to rural stream of migration is accounting for about 79 %.

## 2. Classification of in-migrants

The census of India 2001 classified in-migrants in Kashmir Valley based on industrial category and based on occupational division. The occupational division of in-migrants excludes those in agriculture and cultivation. There is a lot of variation in classification of workers in different industries in census 2001 and previous censuses. Census 1981 and 1991 classified workers into nine industries namely- A- cultivators, B- agricultural labourers C- livestock, forestry, fishing, hunting, plantation, orchards and allied activities, D- mining and quarrying, E- manufacturing and repairs- (a) household industries (b) other than household industries, F- construction, G- trade and commerce, H- transport, storage and communication, I- services. The census 2001 on the other hand classified them into four broad categories namely- A- cultivators, B- agricultural labourers, C- household industries and D- other workers. The entire classification is done based on agricultural and non-agricultural activities. The first two are included into agricultural activities while as the rest are included into non-agricultural activities [13].

## 3. Industrial categories of in-migrants

The census of the year 2001 classified in-migrants in Kashmir Valley into 13 industries namely- A- Cultivators, B- Agricultural labourers, C- Plantation; Livestock; Forestry; Fishing; Hunting and Allied Activities, D- Mining and Quarrying, E- Household Industry, F- Other than Household Industry, G- Electricity, Gas and Water Supply, H- Construction, I- Wholesale and Retail Trade, J- Hotels and Restaurants, K- Transport, Storage and Communications, L- Financial Intermediation; Real Estate, Renting and Business Activities, M- Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security; Education; Health and Social Work; Other Community, Social and Personal Service Activities; Private Households with Employed Persons; Extra-Territorial Organisations and Bodies.

These industries can broadly be classified into three categories namely primary, secondary and tertiary. Primary industries include those occupations which are mainly connected with land and nature and play an important role for survival. Primary sector mainly covers agriculture, forestry and logging, fishing, animal husbandry, poultry farming, mining and quarrying industries. Secondary sector is mostly based on the primary sector and includes industries such as construction industry, electricity, gas and water supply, manufacturing industries and various small and large-scale industries. Very small portion of labour force is absorbed in secondary sector industries. The tertiary sector industries also known as service industries generally include banking, hotel and restaurant, real-estate, ownership and business services, transport, communication, trade and insurance industries, public administration and other services [14-15]. All the three sectors are playing a vital role in the growth of the state economy. The primary sector contributed to about 31 % to GSDP (Gross State Domestic Product) in 2002 and declined to about 27 % in 2008 financial year. At the same time there was an increase in the shares of secondary and tertiary sectors from 22.94 % and 45.66 % in 2002 to 27.20 % and 45.88 % in 2008 respectively. The main industrial city in the Valley is district Srinagar and the important industries are agriculture, tourism, handicrafts, food processing, sericulture, handloom and horticulture. The state has fourth position in terms of industrial investments in the country. Table 3 gives a brief overview of percentage distribution of in-migrants in different industries in the Valley and in the districts of the Valley.

Table 3. Percentage distribution and comparison of in-migrant workers in different districts of the valley by industrial category

Area name	Industrial Category (Percent)													
	Total	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
Kashmir Valley	293655	29.03	8.28	5.86	0.09	12.20	4.09	0.14	2.05	5.88	0.31	1.49	6.26	24.32
Kupwara	26395	43.87	17.68	1.09	0.76	5.87	1.62	0.18	0.89	3.72	0.24	0.51	5.01	19.31
Baramula	39671	22.07	9.48	7.81	0.10	11.77	3.76	0.31	3.10	7.36	0.35	1.30	11.78	20.81
Srinagar	68305	4.95	4.17	3.84	0.18	12.68	7.39	0.22	3.88	10.46	0.53	3.08	5.97	42.65
Badgam	34932	34.74	5.53	3.72	0.03	21.97	4.10	0.11	1.72	3.18	0.16	0.84	2.95	16.96
Pulwama	43134	44.84	8.18	1.14	0.05	14.22	2.56	0.03	0.81	3.87	0.15	0.79	6.27	17.09
Anantnag	81218	35.29	9.35	11.60	0.08	8.79	3.09	0.07	1.16	4.25	0.27	1.20	5.61	19.24

Note: A- Cultivators, B- Agricultural labourers, C- Plantation; Livestock; Forestry; Fishing; Hunting and Allied Activities, D- Mining and Quarrying, E- Household Industry, F- Other than Household Industry, G- Electricity, Gas and Water Supply, H- Construction, I- Wholesale and Retail Trade, J- Hotels and Restaurants, K- Transport, Storage and Communications, L- Financial Intermediation; Real Estate, Renting and Business Activities, M- Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security; Education; Health and Social Work; Other Community, Social and Personal Service Activities; Private Households with Employed Persons; Extra-Territorial Organisations and Bodies. Source: Computed by author based on census 2001.

The table given above giving an industrial percentage distribution of in-migrants in different districts of the Valley shows that highest number of in-migrants works as cultivators in all the districts of the Valley except district Srinagar. This is because Srinagar city has the least total net sown area than other districts and most of the land is put to non-agricultural uses. It reflects industrial backwardness and agricultural over-dependence in the economy. In Srinagar city the highest number of in-migrants has been found working in industries indicated by M-class, accounting for about 42 % of the in-migrants. The second and third important industries in Srinagar city in terms of in-migrant inflows were household industry (12.68 %) and wholesale and retail trade industry (10.46 %) respectively. Industries indicated by M-class occupy second important place in districts Kupwara, Baramula, Pulwama and Anantnag in terms of in-migrant inflows while as in district Badgam this place has been occupied by household industry. The least number of in-migrant workers were found working in mining and quarrying industry in districts Baramula, Srinagar and Badgam and in electricity, gas and water supply industry in districts Kupwara, Pulwama and Anantnag.

#### 4. Occupational division of in-migrants

On the basis of occupational division census 2001 classified in-migrants in the Valley into 11 occupations (including the un-specified category) namely- 01= Professional, technical and related workers; 02= Administrative, executive and managerial workers; 03= Clerical and related workers; 04= Sales workers; 05= Service workers; 06= Farmers, fishermen, hunters, loggers and related workers; 07, 08, 09= Production and related workers, transport equipment operators and labourers; 10= Workers not classified by occupation; 11=Un-Specified.

The occupational pattern of the state and the Valley has changed from agriculture to non-agriculture, indicating a path of development. Occupational division provides an opportunity to choose jobs by in-migrants based on skill and income. High skill jobs are usually more fruitful than low skill jobs. The high skilled in-migrants are generally admitted in the technical, executive, administrative, managerial, service and sales occupations. However, immigrants and in-migrants have been found working in all kinds of employments. There has been a growth in the employments in these occupations from 1990 onwards. A study on foreign workers in Chinese Taipei reveals that production related workers, plant and machine operators and labourers is the main occupation employing the largest number of workers. Service, shop and market sales are the second largest worker absorbing occupation. Public administration absorbs the least number of workers. Similarly, alien workers are also employed in occupations like technicians, professionals, clerks, business services, agricultural, animal husbandry, forestry and fishing workers [16]. People in Kashmir Valley are locally engaged in several occupations. The most important and primary occupation of people is agriculture. Along with agriculture people are also engaged in wood carving, carpet making, shawl weaving, silk making, paper mashie, cottage crafting, furniture making, handloom fabrics, woollen garments and other local occupations. These were the primitive occupations in the Valley and still exist in the Valley with the emergence of advanced occupations. People in the Valley also have passions for different art forms like paintings, music, dancing and toy making and earn their livelihood through these occupations [17]. Table 4 gives a brief overview of percentage distribution of in-migrants in different occupations in the Valley and in the districts of the Valley.

Table 4. Percentage distribution and comparison of in-migrant workers in different districts of the valley by occupational division (Other than Cultivators and Agricultural Labourers)

Area Name	Occupational Division (%)									
	Total	Div. 01	Div. 02	Div. 03	Div. 04	Div. 05	Div. 06	Div. 07, 08, 09	Div. 10	Un-specified
Kashmir Valley	184082	1.11	3.41	4.94	5.33	21.71	6.77	34.77	6.21	15.75
Kupwara	10149	0.86	4.23	5.28	4.32	34.06	2.72	22.08	3.55	22.90
Baramula	27155	0.88	3.10	3.80	3.58	16.22	8.32	37.46	5.80	20.84
Srinagar	62078	1.58	4.28	5.57	8.16	32.87	2.78	29.87	5.65	9.24
Badgam	19468	1.01	2.89	4.22	3.72	12.13	5.94	54.00	7.05	9.04
Pulwama	20267	0.75	3.18	5.66	5.71	12.12	1.70	41.07	4.47	25.34
Anantnag	44965	0.86	2.53	4.66	3.21	15.31	14.90	31.63	8.26	18.64

Note: 01= Professional, technical and related workers; 02= Administrative, executive and managerial workers; 03= Clerical and related workers; 04= Sales workers; 05= Service workers; 06= Farmers, fishermen, hunters, loggers and related workers; 07, 08, 09= Production and related workers, transport equipment operators and labourers; 10= Workers not classified by occupation, 11= Un-Specified. Source: Computed by author based on census 2001

The above given table shows that there is a lot of variation across different districts of the Valley in terms of occupational classification of in-migrants. Leaving aside the un-specified category the table reflects that the least number of in-migrant workers were found engaged in professional, technical and related works in each of the districts of the Valley. It is also important to note that in this category Srinagar city stands at top with a percentage of 1.58 % while as Pulwama district stands at lowest point with only 0.75 %. The largest number of in-migrants in Srinagar city was engaged as service workers accounting for about 33 % of the total in-migrants in the city. Since Srinagar is highly urbanised than any other district of Kashmir Valley, it generates demand for professional and technical works. Moreover, it being highly urbanised, development of travel and tourism requires lots of service providers which in turn attracts majority of the labourer to this industry and mostly to this district of Kashmir Valley. The service employment has been followed by production and related works, transport equipment operators and labourers covering 29.87 % of the in-migrants in the city.

The same results were also applicable to district Kupwara with a little variation in percentages- 34.06 % in service employment and 22.08 % in production and related works, transport equipment operators and labourers. In terms of largest and second largest in-migrant flows in different employments, districts Baramula, Badgam, Pulwama and Anantnag share same results. A highest proportion of in-migrant workers in these districts were employed in production and related works, transport equipment operators and labour works, with district Badgam having a high percentage of 54 % followed by Pulwama (41.07 %), Baramula (37.46 %) and Anantnag (31.63 %). The second largest inflow of migrants has happened in service employment in these districts. This also shows the growth of tourism sector in Kashmir Valley.

### 3. Conclusion

The state of Jammu and Kashmir is not much developed in terms of industries and only a limited number of industrial occupations exist. Majority of the population is still engaged in primitive occupations and local home industries. Census 2001 has made a classification of industries and occupations in the state and in the Valley and in-migrants have been found working in these occupations and industries in large numbers. In terms of industrial development, it has been found that Srinagar city has most of the industrial units in the Valley. An industrial classification of the in-migrants in the Valley shows that most of the in-migrants, about 29 % were working as cultivators while as the least number of in-migrants were working in mining and quarrying industry (0.09 %). District level analysis shows that highest inflow of in-migrants has occurred in cultivation industry in all the districts except district Srinagar. In most of the industries in the Valley male in-migrants were more than female in-migrants. The occupational structure in the Valley shows that in-migrant workers were working in 11 occupations including the un-specified category. Among these occupations production and related works, transport equipment operators and labour works has received most of the in-migrants, about 34.77 %, followed by service employment alone (21.71 %). Male in-migrant workers dominate all the occupational divisions except the un-specified division. It is also important to note that only two categories of occupation viz., service occupation and production and related workers, transport equipment operators and labourers absorb more than 50 % of the in-migrants in the Valley which also comes from the fact that Kashmir economy is largely based on tourism and travel industry and Srinagar district contribute the most to this sector.

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**The Publication fee is defrayed by Indian Society for Education and Environment ([www.iseeadyar.org](http://www.iseeadyar.org))**

**Cite this article as:**

Aijaz Ahmad Turrey. Economic profile of in-migrant workers in Kashmir Valley. Indian Journal of Economics and Development. November 2019, Vol 7 (11), 1-7.

Received on: 21/10/2019

Accepted on: 12/11/2019