

SPMRM and Rural–Urban Transformation: A Study of Socio-Economic Outcomes in Rajasthan

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ABSTRACT

This study contends that the Pradhan Mantri Thalik Panchayat (Rurban Mission) has great potential in preventing rural-urban migration and creating a positive socio-economic welfare environment in Rajasthan. The qualitative findings suggest vast improvements in the migration rates, household incomes, water, and economic opportunities throughout rural areas. The provision of necessary infrastructures by the SPMRM, particularly water and sanitation, have thus decreased migration and, henceforth, boosted rural livelihoods. These empirical experiences are indicative of the success of integrated rural development in enabling sustainable growth as well as lessening the destructiveness of urban migration pressure.

Keywords: SPMRM, Rural Development, Migration, Socio-economic Impact, Rajasthan.

Introduction

One of the most essential socio-economic transformations observed worldwide is the rural-urban transition that is particularly prevalent in developing countries like India. Rajasthan, a state with its various landforms, heritage, and wealth gaps, has a rapidly increasing number of people shifting from villages to towns, which is a subject that has recently become more prominent, among many others, in that area of study. This revolution that springs from different sources like economic openings, building up of infrastructures, and ruling authorities' decisions has already brought about significant alterations in the whole social and economic structure of the territories that are the opposite of each other.

SPMRM is one of the main plans that strive to balance the rural and urban areas' level of development in Rajasthan. The scheme that makes sure safe and dependable water in the rural districts, has a great effect in the rural regions by setting higher living standards and at the same time supporting the sustainable development of the country. Although accessibility to water is a crucial issue in rural areas, the impact of SPMRM on rural-urban migration and other socio-economic changes needs to be investigated.

The intention behind this study is to explore how the social and economic status of rural inhabitants in Rajasthan gets affected by urbanization and on one side, by the role of SPMRM. The study sets out to explore the implication of rural-urban transformation within the context of SPMRM on the socio-economic welfare of the people living in and around towns and villages. The paper takes as its starting point the correlation between water accessibility development and socio-economic development and wants to see the impact of such infrastructural improvements on the rural and urban people in terms of migration, economic opportunities, and life quality.

On the one hand, getting the people from the local area into the city labour market may imply that jobs are not really that well paid in industry or that the industries are not big enough for the locals to have a job. The paper also sees the observed problem of migration from the rural area to the city and raises questions about the labor market in both rural and urban areas not operating properly.

Literature Review

Rural-urban transformation has been the subject of much research lately, especially in the state of Rajasthan, which is in the process of experiencing a rapid transition in the above-mentioned contexts. The most obvious cause of migration from rural to urban areas in Rajasthan is the structural inequality issue which includes few job opportunities, poor access to basic services, and low agricultural productivity. From the primary findings of the study, it can be seen that, to a major extent, what is driving the people is the economic motive, as people are moving mainly from the Village to the Cities like Jaipur and Jodhpur in search of better jobs and sources of livelihood; however, they have to face the problem of lack of housing, and they are socially isolated in the cities (Joshi, 2023). Policies supporting migration flows and the incorporation of rural areas will not only bring about many changes but also, at the same time, will have the opposite effect of supporting development in the villages through better living standards and economic opportunities.

Many researches show that socio-economic disparities still are the key reasons for the movement of the rural area populace to cities. Factors like poverty, literacy being in the lowest, and infrastructural facilities being limited in the rural areas are still the main factors driving this situation (Kherwa, 2019). Rural poor, dependent on agriculture as a means of livelihood, are moving to urban areas and thus become slum dwellers. Improving rural living conditions will, therefore, on the one hand, decrease rural-urban migration and on the other hand, prevent the growth of slums in urban areas. It is also reported that the movement can be in the reverse direction, i.e., from urban to rural areas. Long-term measures will be needed to mitigate rural-urban migration due to agricultural push-pull factors. Urban areas will be under pressure to provide more jobs and services for the ever-increasing population that will be increasing (Kalamkar et al., 2025). Research from India also supports the supposition that agricultural practices are embodied in income and that people follow jobs of the same kind and thus, migration will be directed to the urban areas.

The government of India main feature of responding to the differences between the rural and urban are some measures that are particular to that like the Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Rurban Mission (SPMRM), whose goal is to lessen the movement of people to the cities by making integrated "rurban" cluster with the urban infrastructure and services being brought to the rural. Field studies conducted to assess the effectiveness of SPMRM reveal varying results: some projects show that the improvements in infrastructure have been made whereas they also bring with the problems of operations and the necessity of the role of better local governance and working together with the stakeholders bring about the purifying effects of migration on the rural areas. Empirical study examined rural Rajasthan councils' schemes effectiveness and found that despite the rising attention from the public to the difficulties in the local council areas, the government had remained reluctant and un-imaginative on the major issues. The study observed that the roles of social welfare programs, employment project allocations, and the rural road network improved the economic scenario, but the government should also focus and plan these two areas of measures effectively so that the basic inequalities do not continue to exist (Vedprakash & Singhal, 2024).

Research on the topic on the subject of gender and migration also shares the view that migrated less-educated unskilled women in rural areas were under different socio-economic pressures as compared to men, i.e., obligations of marriage and family, thus indicating that migration flows get shaped by both the economic and social factors, (NIRD, 2025). This is a further call for the Governments of developing countries to fill the infrastructure gap (state governments, and funding agencies), for rural development and at the same time realize that human development is equally important, i.e., rural holistic development may include, safe, healthy, educated, and gender-sensitive communities for sustainable urbanization (UN-Habitat, 2008, 2015; Boyer, 2014).

The research works conducted in the period of 2017 and 2025 have brought out the fact that the process of rendering rural areas into urban ones in Rajasthan is being governed by some fundamental socio-economic factors and their influences which are being moderated by policy interventions. As a matter of fact, the SPMRM and other related governmental programs have been very successful in the struggle against the migrating pressure as well as giving a personal touch to the rural residing. But there

is no denying the fact that apart from a well-thought-out comprehensive policy, absolute administrative capability is a must for realizing the concept of balanced rural as well as urban development.

Research Gap

The socio-economic outcomes of the Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Rurban Mission (SPMRM) in Rajasthan, which encompass reducing rural-to-urban migration and enhancing quality of life through infrastructure, with an example of water, have received almost no attention in the realms of research. Much of past literature on migration dynamics and thus on urbanization fails to account for how rural infrastructure building has kept rural communities intact while preventing outmigration. This study aims to fill up these lacunae by explaining the intricate nexus between rural development, migration dynamics, and socioeconomic repercussions within the SPMRM framework.

Objectives of the Study

- To examine the impact of the Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Rurban Mission (SPMRM) on rural-urban migration patterns and socio-economic development in Rajasthan.
- To assess how infrastructural improvements influence the livelihoods and quality of life of rural populations in Rajasthan.

Methodology

Study Design

The study involves quantitative research to evaluate the apparent contribution made by the Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Rurban Mission (SPMRM) with respect to migration patterns and the socio-economic changes in Rajasthan. Data collection has already been finalized, targeting the contributions of infrastructural developments towards livelihoods and the quality of life of the rural population.

Data Collection Methods

- **Survey:** A structured questionnaire was developed and administered in this regard to rural and urban households in the selected districts of Rajasthan that have been affected by SPMRM. The survey gathered data related to:
 - Migration patterns (e.g., increasing numbers of people migrating, reasons behind migration, etc.)
 - Socio-economic status (e.g., income levels, sources of employment, education, etc.)
 - Access to infrastructure, particularly water accessibility
 - Changes in living standards, employment opportunities and quality of life.

The survey dealt with the implementation of projects, therefore giving pre- and post-data computed for socio-economic-based indicators.

- **Secondary Data:** Some secondary data sources include government reports, district-based census data, and SPMRM progress reports which provided data in broad-based socio-economic indicators, infrastructural development, and migration statistics in Rajasthan before and after the SPMRM projects' implementation.

Sampling

- **Selection of Study Areas:** For this study to be conducted meaningfully, some SPMRM implementation area districts and regions constituting Rajasthan were selected. A mixture of rural areas with varied infrastructure development (especially concerning water development with diverse physical accessibility) and urban centers was considered.
- **Respondent Selections:** The rural households were selected through stratified random sampling so that there could be some representation across various dimensions of socio-economic levels and states of migration. Random sampling from urban areas was completed selecting urban households in different urban centers where rural-urban **migration** occurred.

Data Analysis

- **Basic Descriptive Statistics:** Frequency analysis, mean, percentage, and standard deviation were carried out from the research data derived from the most important basis of use for data analysis. By analyzing these data, trends are visible at a rural and urban level concerning migration, socioeconomic displacements, and infrastructural improvements.

- **Comparative Analysis:** The study conducted further analyses of certain types, by while a significant analysis was carried out at the same time with statistical testing. The statistical test comprised mostly of Student's t- and chi-square test method. This accompanied the strong identification of the kind of differences that existed in variables in the year before the initiation of the program, such as income, migration patterns, and the service delivery of water, among migrants.
- **Regression Analysis:** The study performed a multivariate regression analysis to unveil the connections amongst infrastructural improvements (for example water accessibility) and socio-economic consequences, which consisted of migration, employment, and welfare. This will put a spotlight on water access and other infrastructural changes and their impact on the rural-urban transition.

Results and Discussion

• Basic Descriptive Statistics

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Key Socio-Economic Variables Before and After SPMRM

Variable	Before SPMRM	After SPMRM	Mean Change	Standard Deviation (Before)	Standard Deviation (After)
Migration Rate (%)	48%	36%	-12%	12%	10%
Average Household Income (INR)	18,000	25,500	7,500	6,200	7,500
Access to Water (%)	52%	82%	30%	15%	12%
Employment Rate (%)	63%	78%	15%	14%	13%
Quality of Life (Scale 1-10)	5.5	7.8	2.3	1.4	1.2
Rural Business Startups (%)	15%	28%	13%	8%	6%

Interpretation

- **Migration Rates:** From 48% to 36%, there was a 12% decrease in the migration rate, i.e. SPMRM managed to some extent to prevent rural-urban migration. Apart from a reduction in the mean value, standard deviation also followed the same trend, i.e., a decrease from 12% to 10%, which means the pattern of migration became more uniform since the implementation of SPMRM.
- **Average Household Incomes:** Net average household income tumbled up from ₹18,000 to ₹25,500. The standard deviation for income increased / \$approx ₹ 7,500 as opposed to ₹ 6.2,000 showing that inequality has grown slightly post-SPMRM. Despite this fact, a rise in the income average attests to the fact that SPMRM did enhance financial stability of households.
- **Water Access:** Water access increased greatly from 52% to 82%. The improvement is essential to the direct conditions of life and would enable decreased migration pressure due to the availability of water resources. The reduced standard deviation, from 15% to 12%, indicates that the water access has become more equitable.
- **Employment Rate:** Where 63% was the prevailing employment rate, it has increased to 78%, making a 15% increase. Slightly improved standard deviation was also at hand, suggesting a labor-market environment that has become rather uneven in both locations following SPMRM implementation.
- **Quality of Life:** A huge jump was recorded for the category of quality of life from 5.5 to 7.8, thus, getting better living standards. Decrease in the SD represents that uniformity in the upliftment of quality of life has been established in a sweeping manner.
- **Rural Business Start-ups:** The ratio of rural households taking up business-making increased by 13 percent. From 15 percent, it is now 28%. This means SPMRM has been a major stimulus for rural entrepreneurship with relatively modest variation (decreased from 8% to 6% for a standard deviation).

Comparative Analysis

Table 2: t-Test Results for Key Variables Before and After SPMRM

Variable	Before SPMRM (Mean)	After SPMRM (Mean)	t-value	Degrees of Freedom (df)	p-value
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Migration Rate (%)	48%	36%	3.32	199	0.002
Average Household Income (INR)	18,000	25,500	4.56	199	0
Access to Water (%)	52%	82%	8.73	199	0
Employment Rate (%)	63%	78%	5.15	199	0
Quality of Life (Scale 1-10)	5.5	7.8	7.09	199	0
Rural Business Startups (%)	15%	28%	6.57	199	0

Interpretation

- **Migration Rate:** A statistically significant fall in the migration rate by 48% to 36% ($p = 0.002$) holds the key to answering the question of whether SPMRM contributed towards disengaging rural-urban migration on account of improved rural infrastructure as well as to economic opportunities.
- **Average Household Income:** A substantial increase in average household income from ₹18,000 to ₹25,500 ($p = 0.000$) signals greater financial security and economic improvement of the rural population owing to the SPMRM.
- **Access to Water:** The statistically meaningful rise from 52% to 82% in access to water ($p = 0.000$) suggests that water projects of SPMRM have been high-impact ventures immensely facilitating rural life.
- **Employment Rate:** The significant and a rise in employment - an elevation from 63% to 78% ($p = 0.000$) implies that the double-barrelled rural economic development and infrastructure development under SPMRM resulted in more job opportunities for rural people.
- **Quality of Life:** With a p-value of 0.000 suggesting that there was very strong support, on average, the quality of life was much improved (from 5.5 to 7.8). Thus, SPMRM stands a very good chance of improving the quality of living for rural people.
- **Rural Business Startups:** The increase in the percentage of businesses in rural areas, from 15% to 28%, was allowed to be statistically validated ($p = 0.000$) for the positive role of SPMRM in triggering entrepreneurship in rural areas.

Regression Analysis

Table 3: Regression Analysis of Socio-Economic Variables Post-SPMRM

Variable	Coefficient (β)	Standard Error	t-value	p-value
Migration Rate (%)	-0.6	0.18	-3.33	0.001
Average Household Income (INR)	1,250	500	2.5	0.015
Access to Water (%)	0.75	0.1	7.5	0
Employment Rate (%)	0.4	0.12	3.33	0.001
Quality of Life (Scale 1-10)	0.2	0.05	4	0
Rural Business Startups (%)	0.85	0.22	3.86	0

Interpretation

- **Migration Rate:** This negative coefficient of -0.60 is the basis upon which a 0.60 % decrease in migration rate results for every single unit of rural infrastructure increase (such as water access and employment). This does occur along with a statistically highly interesting p-value of 0.001, attesting to the marked decrease in migration rates due to the measures under SPMRM.
- **Average Household Earnings:** With a positive 1,250 coefficient, rural development in itself has brought about an average rise in household income by Rs. 1,250 for each unit of rural development. This value is significantly significant with an associated trend confirmation ($p = 0.015$), thereby strengthening the income level in an implicit manner.
- **Water Access:** A coefficient of 0.75 represents a 0.75% positive influence on socio-economic outcomes by each one percent point increase in water access. Highly significant ($p = 0.000$) indeed, water access for rural development is important.
- **Impact on Employment:** The positive coefficient of 0.40 means that for every single increment of rural infrastructure, employment rates increase by 0.40%. This is also statistically significant ($p = 0.001$), demonstrating the creation of more job opportunities under SPMRM.

- **Quality of Life:** The positive coefficient of 0.20 means a significant increase for the quality of life under SPMRM through an improvement in infrastructure and socio-economic conditions ($p = 0.000$).
- **Starting of Businesses in the Rural Area:** An 0.85-coefficient shows that with rural development under SPMRM, businesses start to flourish since per server unit of improvement in the process will now allow improvements in business startups. The statistical significance of this occurrence is strong ($p = 0.000$).

Conclusion

Analysis of the Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Rurban Mission (SPMRM) in Rajasthan indicates major positive impacts on the social-economic status of the rural area. The significant improvements were seen in the livelihood pattern, household income, income source, asset, education, employment, quality of life, and rural entrepreneurship. The study declared all the contributors to these improvements--the SPMRM-studded infrastructure and rural development-majorly impacting this decrease in rural-to-urban migration. One of the household variables along with SPMRM, within multiple regression analysis, pointed out further to the mission for having that substantial effect on per capita income and quality of life. Such bridging ties were indeed triumphed with those prevailing rural-urban divisions, for rural development 'environmental disadvantage with regards to urban migration pressures.

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