

Tata Institute of Social Sciences

Presents

Interim Report

on

Illegal Immigrants to Mumbai:
Analysing Socio-economic and
Political Consequences





Illegal Immigrants to Mumbai: Analysing Socio-economic and Political Consequences

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EXECUTIVE FINDINGS

Rising immigration feeds a perception of insecurity, undermining public trust and heightening social tensions across the city. Mumbai is facing a serious challenge due to the overcrowding caused by illegal immigrants, which has put immense pressure on the city's already stretched infrastructure and increased the risk of systemic failure. Public services such as healthcare, education, and sanitation are overwhelmed, reducing access for local residents and impacting public welfare. Over the years, there has been a demographic shift, with the Hindu population decreasing from 88% in 1961 to 66% in 2011, while the Muslim population has risen from 8% to 21%. By 2051, it is projected that the Hindu population will drop below 54%, and the Muslim population will rise to approximately 30%. Surveys indicate that 40% of supporters for continued migration of illegal immigrants are family members, and more than 50% of the women interviewed are involved in prostitution. Additionally, 40% of immigrants send remittances ranging from ₹10,000 to ₹1,00,000 per month to their home countries.

The influx of immigrants raises concerns about national security, with potential links to extremist groups leading to increased monitoring by security agencies. Allegations of "vote-bank politics" emerge, as forged documents allow illegal participation in elections, undermining democratic processes. Illegal immigration is also seen as a cultural threat, with claims of erosion of the Marathi identity in Mumbai. The city's infrastructure is strained further as immigrants occupy slums, leading to unauthorized construction and worsening conditions for the poor. By accepting lower wages, immigrants displace locals in the job market, driving down wages and creating resentment. Jobs in sectors like domestic work and construction, once held by locals, are increasingly taken over by immigrants, causing social divisions.

The demand for affordable housing by immigrants has driven up rental prices, making housing unaffordable for low-income families. Overcrowded schools, inadequate electricity, and water supplies in slums such as Govandi and Mankhurd highlight the strain on resources. Without proper documentation, immigrants are excluded from formal economic channels, resulting in a

cycle of poverty that places additional pressure on the city. Social tensions and clashes are rising, fueled by economic disparities, while health risks are escalating due to poor living conditions in immigrant-dense areas. Law enforcement struggles to maintain order in congested immigrant neighborhoods, and government resources are diverted to these areas, draining funds from essential services for local taxpayers.

High unemployment among immigrants contributes to social instability and illegal activities. Immigrant enclaves, often isolated from the rest of the city, reinforce social segregation and create "no-entry" zones. Informal settlements disrupt urban planning and competition for limited resources fosters divisions within communities. Immigrants in the informal labour market lower labour standards, while those without formal financial options face economic exploitation. Public transportation is overwhelmed by the influx, and cultural differences create mistrust and social divides. The lack of official data on immigrants complicates resource management, while their presence distorts census data and affects government funding allocations.

Frequent relocations by immigrant families destabilize communities, and social disparities widen as competition for resources intensifies. Immigrants using public health insurance strain the healthcare system, and inadequate waste management in overcrowded areas leads to pollution and health risks. Limited job opportunities push immigrants into unregulated and unsafe labour conditions. Nationalist sentiment is growing as policy debates on immigration polarize, with accusations of political manipulation for immigrant votes. Public infrastructure projects are delayed as planners struggle to address the pressures of unchecked immigration. Effective measures such as border control, deportation processes, and diplomatic engagement are essential to safeguard national sovereignty and citizen rights. Public trust is eroded, and social tensions rise as immigration issues remain unresolved.

"Immigration that lacks structure risks transforming cities from places of opportunity to zones of overcrowding and conflict." – James H. Johnson

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

"Unregulated immigration can be a burden on cities, leaving resources stretched and residents at odds."

1.1 Background

The population structure of a country is predisposed by several components of which fertility rate, mortality rate, and migration patterns play a vital role. To understand the evolution and development of a society, it is crucial to understand the patterns of growth, decline and movement within human populations. By scrutinising these patterns, one can gain insights into challenges and opportunities that affect social, economic and political development of any society.

Although birth and death rates influence natural population growth, migration, whether internal or international, can significantly impact the demographic, social, and economic makeup of regions (Lee, 2003; Weeks, 2020). In the coming decades, migration will become an increasingly important driver of population change. The impact of migration on population growth or decline varies significantly across different regions and periods. (<https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/populationfacts/docs/MigrationPopFacts20178.pdf>).

Migration often serves as an indicator of socio-economic inequality, highlighting differences in resources, opportunities, and governance between regions (Upadhya, 2019). Migration is classified into internal migration, which occurs within a country, and international migration, which involves movement across national borders. Internal migration is often referred to as in-migration and out-migration, while international migration involves immigration and emigration,

respectively (United Nations, 2018). International migration includes asylum seekers, refugees, and illegal immigrants, each with distinct characteristics. Asylum seekers are individuals fleeing persecution and seeking protection in another country, while refugees are those granted legal protection due to a well-founded fear of harm in their home country. Both groups typically migrate due to safety concerns. In contrast, illegal immigrants enter or remain in a country without legal authorisation, often for economic opportunities or family reunification, and lack the legal protections of refugees or asylum seekers.

According to Article 19 of the Constitution of India, migration within the country is a fundamental right, allowing Indian citizens the freedom to move across states without restrictions.

In India, migration has been a significant driver of urbanization, particularly in cities like Mumbai, which have experienced rapid population growth due to internal migration. According to the 2011 Census, nearly 38% of India's population (450 million people) is engaged in internal migration, with marriage being the predominant reason, particularly among women (69% of migrants). International migration has also contributed to India's demographic diversity, with over 5 million immigrants, primarily from Bangladesh, Nepal, and Pakistan, adding to the country's cultural mosaic. However, international migration is strictly regulated in India, and the government enforces policies and laws to protect native citizens from illegal immigration (Srivastava, 2012). While legal immigration can foster economic growth and cultural enrichment, undocumented immigration often leads to challenges, including involvement in illegal activities like smuggling and drug trafficking, which can hinder national development (Weinstein, 2008 & Thachuk, 2007). Additionally, illegal immigration has raised political concerns, including the issue of shadow voting, which threatens the integrity of India's democratic processes (Nath, 2009).

India has a cruel history of migration due to Islamic Invasion throughout the decades by different clans. Turkic and Mongol Invasions: Invaders such as Mahmud of Ghazni and later the Mongols brought devastation, plunder, and the forced movement of local populations. During the Delhi Sultanate and Mughal Empire, forced migration took the form of slavery. Conquered peoples, particularly women and children, were taken as slaves and forcibly relocated. One of the most traumatic migrations in modern history occurred during the partition of British India into India

and Pakistan. Around 15 million people were displaced, and approximately 2 million people were killed in the ensuing violence. Families were uprooted overnight, facing communal riots, massacres, and loss of property. Women suffered atrocities, including abduction and sexual violence. This migration was marked by trains arriving at their destinations full of corpses, communal slaughter, and one of the largest instances of ethnic cleansing in history. During British colonial rule, large numbers of Indians were sent as indentured laborers to colonies such as Mauritius, Fiji, Trinidad, and Guyana. While this was outward migration, the process involved deceitful contracts, harsh working conditions, and the breakdown of families. It stemmed from India's colonial exploitation, creating a legacy of suffering. The Liberation War of Bangladesh led to the migration of nearly 10 million refugees into India. This period was marked by atrocities, including the killing and displacement of Bengali Hindus and Muslims by the Pakistani Army. After China annexed Tibet, over 80,000 Tibetans, including the Dalai Lama, fled to India. The journey through the Himalayas was perilous, with many perishing from cold and starvation.

After India gained independence in 1947, migration patterns changed considerably, driven largely by political and economic factors. One of the most significant and continuing sources of international migration has been from neighbouring countries, especially Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, and Afghanistan (Khadria, 2008). Migration from Pakistan and Afghanistan has declined in recent decades due to tighter border controls and enhanced surveillance. However, migration from Bangladesh and Myanmar remains a persistent concern driven by porous borders and ongoing historical and cultural connections that continue to facilitate movement between these countries (Nath, 2009).

In particular, migration from Bangladesh to India has followed a Route shaped by both push and pull factors. Push factors, such as economic hardship, environmental challenges, and political instability, mainly drove early migration from Bangladesh to India. Following Bangladesh's independence in 1971, the country endured significant financial struggles, with more than 80% of the population living in extreme poverty. This was compounded by frequent natural disasters like floods and cyclones, which displaced communities and devastated livelihoods (UNDP, 2019). These conditions led to a large exodus of people seeking better opportunities in

neighbouring India. The migration was primarily driven by survival, as individuals sought refuge and employment in India to escape the harsh realities in their home country (Sarma, 2015).

Over time, migration from Bangladesh to India has evolved from being largely driven by push factors to a more complex mix of both push and pull factors. While economic hardship and environmental disasters continue to be the significant push factors, the pull factors from India have become more influential. Economic growth, better job opportunities, improved living standards, and access to better healthcare and education in India have drawn more Bangladeshis, especially to urban centres and Border States like West Bengal and Assam (Sharma, 2015 & Das, 2018). The porous India-Bangladesh border, coupled with shared cultural ties, facilitated the movement of migrants, often without significant barriers. The flow of people across this border is typically less restricted, sometimes even occurring openly during the day, allowing immigrants to settle without being detected (Das, 2016).

From the 1990s onward, the pull factors became more influential. Indian urban centres, especially cities like Mumbai, Delhi, and western part of India and some growing cities offered better economic opportunities and a higher standard of living, drawing increasing numbers of migrants from Bangladesh. These immigrants found work in India's growing informal sectors, such as construction, domestic labour, and low-wage manufacturing, providing a vital source of income for those with few options in Bangladesh. As these migrants became part of India's informal economy, their presence began to shape the socio-economic fabric of major urban areas. Meanwhile, while the Indian government stepped up efforts to regulate immigration, especially along the Bangladesh border, the combination of porous borders and weak enforcement allowed the flow of undocumented migrants to persist (Srivastava, 2012).

Today, migration from Bangladesh to India is not just about escaping economic hardship but also about seeking a better quality of life. As Bangladesh's economy has improved in recent years, with the rise of the growing middle class, migration trends have evolved. Migrants now come not only in search of employment but also for better educational and healthcare opportunities. These pull factors, along with the political stability and enhanced infrastructure in Indian cities, continue to attract people across the border (Sikder, 2020).

Despite the evolving nature of the migration, the socio-political impacts remain substantial. The influx of undocumented migrants has caused demographic changes, especially in border states

like West Bengal and Assam. These changes have put a strain on resources, increased job competition, political representation, demographic imbalance and fuelled tensions between local populations and migrants. In Assam, for example, the presence of a significant number of illegal immigrants has been associated with political instability and socio-economic issues, such as National security concerns have grown more pressing, with the Ministry of Home Affairs highlighting the risks associated with illegal immigration. The Ministry estimates that over 20 million undocumented immigrants live in India, many settling in urban areas such as Mumbai, Delhi, and Kolkata, where they flee political instability, environmental decline, and poverty in their home countries (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2020). However, their lack of legal status excludes them from formal socio-economic systems, creating a shadow population that is largely absent from official demographic records (Chakraborty & Deb, 2019). This situation presents significant challenges for governance and resource distribution, particularly in overcrowded urban centres.

The absence of a unified system of citizenship documentation heightens the challenge of identifying illegal immigrants in India. Unlike countries that issue a single "citizenship card," India uses a range of documents, such as passports, voter IDs, Aadhaar cards, and birth certificates—to verify citizenship. This fragmented system makes it easier for undocumented immigrants to integrate into society (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2020). As a result, it creates a substantial governance challenge, security challenge, social tension, intensifying crime, social instability allowing illegal immigrants to evade detection with ease.

1.2 Literature Review

Migration largely shaped the demographic, social and economic landscape of Mumbai. Deshpande (2019) notes that the city witnessed a significant increase in the number of migrants between 2001 and 2011, with more than half of its residents' becoming immigrants in 2011. These migrants play a crucial role in the city's workforce, according to Kumar (2017), especially in low-wage sectors such as construction and domestic work. However, their arrival also brings social, security, demographic imbalance and economic challenges. Bhatia (2019) argues that while these immigrants contribute to cheap labour, they also intensify job competition, often resulting in lower wages and higher unemployment for local workers.

Sinha (2020) observes that immigrant communities have enriched the city's cultural fabric; they have also contributed to the segregation of neighbourhoods, which in turn heightens society. According to Patil (2017), this division is linked to rising incidents of community violence. Political participation also influences these dynamics. Ghosh (2016) argues that political parties often rely on illegal immigrants for electoral gains, using them as vote banks, undermining law enforcement efforts and complicating immigration management.

Datta (2019) examines the connection between illegal migration and criminal activities, such as human trafficking and drug trafficking. However, Raj (2020) criticises existing research for not clearly distinguishing between different types of immigrants and their involvement in these criminal networks. This lack of clarity creates a gap in understanding the full scope of the crimes linked to illegal immigration.

While the presence of illegal Bangladeshi Rohingya immigrants in Mumbai is acknowledged, existing literature lacks detailed information on their geographical distribution and socio-economic impact, including the mapping of settlement patterns and identifying hotspots where these colonies are concentrated and the religious induced political and religious support system from the illegal migration. Additionally, there are significant gaps in understanding the religious, social and political motivations behind migration from Myanmar and Bangladesh. Most study the reasons for migration in broad terms without exploring the religious and political complexities of these areas. Whereas it is widely understood that porous borders and informal networks facilitate this migration, there is little empirical research exploring the mechanisms and process behind these complex migration processes. While existing literature addresses the economic consequences of migration, there is a lack of research on how illegal migration impacts core urban population's composition. In particular, local communities such as the Kolis, who have historically been marginalised due to the influx of immigrants, have not been sufficiently documented.

While some studies address the stress on public services, jobs and housing through illegal migration, they fail to systematically examine how this affects the city's long-term development goals, potential security threat, demographic imbalance and political and social instability. Few studies have been done on how illegal immigration contributes to urban expansion, waste and environmental degradation, which are all important issues for urban planning and governance.

Although the literature acknowledges the burden of illegal migration on health care services, there is limited insight into how illegal immigrants access health care and their public health risks. Factors such as the prevalence of infectious diseases, malnutrition, and lack of housing among migrants have not yet been adequately studied. Additionally, there is a lack of comprehensive research evaluating the effectiveness of current legal and administrative policies aimed at addressing illegal immigration in Mumbai.

1.3 Need of the study

Mumbai is also referred to as the country's financial capital. The city is located on the west coast of India and is the capital of the state of Maharashtra. It is also an important port city, handles much of India's international trade, and is home to the headquarters of several large Indian corporations and many multinational companies. As Mumbai continues to attract migrants seeking improved livelihoods, demographic shifts that strain resources and intensify social tensions.

Over time, the city has attracted a large influx of unskilled and semiskilled migrants from across the country and beyond its borders. As a result, the Koli Samaj, the original inhabitants of Mumbai, have become a minority and have faced increasing clashes among the caste and religious groups in recent decades. This has been reshaping the region's demography. The influx of immigrants has created increased competition for lower-wage jobs. As a result, they often compete with migrants for employment, which can lead to lower wages and higher unemployment rates for the local population.

Figure 1.3.1 Position of Mumbai in Map of India



<https://maps-mumbai.com/img/1200/mumbai-location-map.jpg>

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Bangladeshi national held in Mumbai for illegally staying in India since 1994

Ahmed Ali / Oct 10, 2024, 22:18 IST

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Mumbai: The city crime branch has arrested a Bangladeshi national who was illegally staying in India since 1994 and obtained key documents such as a ration card, Aadhaar card, driving licence, and voter I-D, using fictitious documents. During the probe, police procured his call details and found he was in touch with his family, including his wife and grown-up kids, on

Link: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mumbai/bangladeshi-national-arrested-in-mumbai-illegal-stay-since-1994-uncovered/articleshow/114127763.cms>

Additionally, illegal migrants pose a risk to the labour market and social integration in Mumbai. Therefore, a comprehensive study of illegal migrants and their economic contribution is essential. Understanding these economic and social issues helps in the development of effective policies. In addition, it has been observed that, over time, immigrants have taken the employment opportunities for residents. Earlier, most of the low-skilled jobs, like coolie, vendors, and industrial workers, were mainly occupied by native Maharashtrians, but after the Covid pandemic, there has been reverse migration of Maharashtrians from labour work to agrarian work and because of regional development and urbanisation local level. These immigrants from Bangladesh and Rohingya have captured the gap created in the low-skilled jobs. These immigrants in Mumbai are frequently associated with various criminal activities, such as smuggling, prostitution and drug trafficking. The city's organised crime networks create an environment where illegal migrants can easily become entangled in drug trafficking and prostitution operations. Historical ties between migrant communities and local gangs facilitate this involvement (Kumar, 2003). These migrants are also causing a threat to social security. Over time, migrants often bring additional relatives and household members to settle, thereby

establishing a dominant presence in these neighbourhoods. This migration also leads to diverse social impacts, for instance, they establish colonies in the bottleneck regions of the cities.

The global concerns around radicalisation and integration issues among Muslim populations, especially migrants, have manifested distinctly across various Western countries. In Germany, there have been rising public anxieties regarding crime and security connected to recent Muslim migrants, which has fuelled political discourse and reactionary policies. In particular, far-right factions like the Alternative for Germany (AfD) have leveraged these concerns, emphasising a "core culture" narrative that views Muslim immigration as a challenge to German identity and integration policies.

(<https://blogs.fasos.maastrichtuniversity.nl/EUS2516/refugeeimmigrationtoeurope/2021/12/03/increase-in-criminality/>).

Mumbai has an influx of immigrants from Bangladesh and Myanmar. Therefore, if such mindsets of radicalisation exist then that could be a threat to democracy (<https://www.inss.org.il/publication/france-islamic-radicalization/>). Additionally, groups like the Popular Front of India (PFI) are scrutinised for alleged ties with terrorism amid concerns over illegal migration and societal discrimination and societal discrimination. These dynamics highlight a complex threat landscape that necessitates a nuanced understanding to promote social cohesion and migrate extremism (<https://www.inss.org.il/publication/france-islamic-radicalization/>)

1.4 Research Questions

- I. What is the impact of illegal immigrants on the demographic landscape of Mumbai?
- II. Where are the concentrations of illegal Bangladeshi and Rohingya immigrants in Mumbai?
- III. What are the important push and pull factors of migration in Mumbai and illegal migration to Mumbai in specific?
- IV. What are the channels and pathways through which illegal immigrants from Bangladesh and Myanmar come to Mumbai?
- V. What are the economic and social challenges to local residents of Mumbai due to

illegal immigrants?

VI. What are the political consequences of illegal Bangladesh and Rohingya immigrants?

1.5 Research Objectives

Our broad objective is to understand the process, distribution, concentration and economic activities of illegal Bangladeshi and Rohingya immigrants to Mumbai and its socio-economic consequences. The specific objectives are as follows;

- I. To examine the demographic trends and pattern of migration to Mumbai.
- II. To examine the economic activities of illegal Bangladeshi and Rohingya immigrants in Mumbai.
- III. To examine the spatial concentration of illegal Bangladeshi and Rohingya immigrants in Mumbai and its effect on urban amenities
- IV. To explore the channels and pathways through which illegal immigrants from Bangladesh and Myanmar comes to Mumbai.
- V. To understand the support system in the host country to illegal.
- VI. To understand the illegal activity by illegal immigration.

1.6 Description of Chapters

The present report incorporates nine chapters that explore the complex dynamics of illegal migration in Mumbai, specifying how socio-economic and political factors make the metropolis a prime destination for illegal migrants from countries like Bangladesh and Myanmar through the bordering states of India.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduces the topic of illegal migration in Mumbai and its socio-political impacts. It begins with a top-level view of Mumbai as a migration centre, which addresses how migrant influx traces urban infrastructure, housing, and public offerings, creating political and social unrest. A literature review summarises previous studies on the economic, social, and political impacts of illegal migration and highlights the existing gaps. The chapter also explains the need for the study, emphasising the significance of understanding the pressures of illegal migration and its socio-political background. The study also addresses some research questions and objectives,

focusing on the spatial distribution, socio-economic impacts, and religious and political drivers of illegal Bangladeshi and Rohingya migration to Mumbai.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Describes the review of literatures on socio-economic and political influences of illegal Bangladeshi and Rohingya migration. While migrants contribute to the informal economy, their presence strains the city's infrastructure and intensifies competition. The chapter explores how political narratives, particularly from various parties, shape these dynamics. It emphasises the need for the human rights of natives and points out research gaps regarding migrants' involvement in black market activities and crime.

Chapter 3: Data and Methodology

This chapter outlines the research methodology, combining both primary and secondary data. It uses surveys, interviews, and focus groups to study immigration patterns in Mumbai. Primary data includes 300 surveys and key informant interviews, while secondary data from the Census of India adds context. The study focuses on areas with high Bangladeshi migrant populations in Mumbai. Data analysis includes statistical methods, thematic analysis, and projections for future population trends.

Chapter 4: Change in Demographic Trends and Patterns in Mumbai

This chapter examines the demographic changes in Mumbai due to migration, with a focus on the impact of unlawful Bangladeshi and Rohingya immigrants. It provides a historical context for these migrations and analyses trends in population growth, gender distribution, and settlement patterns from 1951 to 2011.

Chapter 5: Process of Illegal Immigration to Mumbai

This chapter explores into livelihood and economic consequences of illegal migration in Mumbai. It examines the involvement of migrants in various illegal activities, with a higher prevalence of men in smuggling and brokerage roles, while women are largely engaged in commercial sex-work. It also explores occupational distribution, emphasising migrants' roles in labour-intensive sectors such as the marine industry and construction in an illegal way. Additionally, it offers insights into the economic dynamics of local life, including issues such as black marketing and the potential democratic threats driven by religious factors.

Chapter 6: Demographic and Socio-economic Profile of Illegal Bangladeshi and Rohingya Immigrants

Explores the dynamics of illegal immigration to Mumbai, focusing on migrants predominantly from Bangladesh and Myanmar and examining their concentration in specific neighbourhoods across the city. It delves into the role of pre-existing social networks that facilitate migration and aid in securing housing and employment and navigating bureaucratic processes. The chapter highlights the involvement of intermediaries, including brokers and political actors, who assist with documentation and extend limited resources in exchange for political loyalty. By analysing migration patterns, familial migration strategies, gendered migration trends, and community integration, the study uncovers both the immediate support systems to hide them from the Government Machinery.

Chapter 7: Economic Activities of Illegal Bangladeshi and Rohingya Immigrants in Mumbai.

This chapter investigates the economic roles of Bangladeshi and Rohingya migrants in Mumbai, focusing on their involvement in informal labour sectors, which limits opportunities for residents. It also highlights how these migrants create financial opportunities by submitting fraudulent and manipulated documents, thereby reducing the potential for financial investment in the local economy.

Chapter 8: Social Consequence of Illegal Migration in Mumbai

This chapter explores the social consequences of unlawful migration, focusing on the challenges illegal migrants face in terms of social safety. It addresses issues of identity, discrimination, and access to essential services while highlighting the social tensions that arise from competition for resources. Additionally, the chapter examines the resilience of migrants and the informal support network they establish.

Chapter 9: Understand the Political support system in the host country to illegal

This chapter examines the political implications of unlawful migration, focusing on its impact on local governance and public perception. Additionally, it discusses how migration shapes electoral debates and impacts political techniques whilst also addressing the pressures it locations on law enforcement and public management and how it leads to the demographic, economic and potential threat to the health of Indian Democracy.

Chapter 10: Summary, conclusion and implications

Summarises key findings and highlights the broader implications of unlawful migration in Mumbai and the policy advocacy to control it.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

"Immigration without limits leads to an erosion of community bonds and national identity." – Theodore Dalrymple

2.1 Introduction

Migration is a global phenomenon that has shaped urban landscapes, economies, and political discourse across the world. In India, migration plays a crucial role in its demographic and economic development, with cities like Mumbai serving as hubs for both internal and international migrants seeking better economic opportunities. However, while migration can contribute to urban growth and economic dynamism, undocumented migration, particularly from neighbouring Bangladesh, has raised significant socio-economic and political threats and social tension and demographic imbalance. Illegal Bangladeshi migration, driven largely by economic necessity, has been a particularly a debatable issue in India, especially in the regions of West Bengal, Assam, and Maharashtra.

Mumbai, India's financial capital, has experienced considerable demographic and socio-political transformations due to illegal migration. The city's population, infrastructure, and public services have struggled to keep pace with the influx of migrants, many of whom live in informal settlements and work in the city's sprawling informal and black economy. This migration has resulted to an increase in overcrowded slums, increased pressure on public resources, and heightened competition for jobs, particularly in low-wage sectors. Simultaneously, political tensions surrounding migration have intensified, with local political figures portraying illegal Bangladeshi migrants as threats to national security. The aftermath of the 7/11 Mumbai bombings marked a significant shift in the perception of migration, with migrants increasingly associated with terrorism and criminality in public discourse.

The issue of illegal Bangladeshi migration is not only a socio-economic challenge but also a deep political and security concern of India. These migrants are a destabilizing force in the city's socio-political fabric.

This report provides a comprehensive review of the socio-economic and political impacts of illegal Bangladeshi migration in Mumbai. By systematically analysing existing literature, it seeks to answer key questions about how illegal migration has shaped the city's urban instability, its political landscape, and its security environment. Furthermore, it highlights critical gaps in the research, particularly the lack of data on the positive contributions of migrants and the underexplored gendered impacts of migration. In doing so, this study calls for a more balanced policy approach that addresses both the legitimate security concerns posed by illegal migration and the human rights of natives who are often most poor trapped in poverty and hardship.

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 Search Strategy

A search was conducted across multiple databases including JSTOR, Scopus, PubMed, Library of Congress, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. The key terms used for the search were:

Search -1

{("Illegal migration" OR "Bangladeshi migration" OR "irregular migration" OR "undocumented migration" OR "illegal immigrants") AND ("socio-economic impacts" OR "labour market" OR "employment" OR "wages" OR "informal economy" OR "poverty" OR "housing" OR "slums" OR "living conditions" OR "public services" OR "access to healthcare" OR "education" OR "urban poverty" OR "overcrowding" OR "exclusion from services")}

Search -2

{("Illegal migration" OR "Bangladeshi migrants" OR "migration to Mumbai" OR "undocumented migrants" OR "immigration policy" OR "governance challenges") AND ("political impacts" OR "political discourse" OR "law enforcement" OR "immigration control" OR "policy response" OR "xenophobia" OR "political mobilization" OR "political rhetoric" OR "border security" OR "corruption" OR "deportation" OR "immigration laws")}

Search -3

{("Illegal migration" OR "Bangladeshi migrants in Mumbai" OR "irregular migration" OR "urban migration") AND ("urban development" OR "infrastructure challenges" OR "public services" OR "sanitation" OR "healthcare" OR "education" OR "housing shortages" OR "slums" OR "environmental degradation" OR "overcrowding" OR "urban planning" OR "unplanned settlements" OR "migration and infrastructure")}

Search -4

{("Illegal Bangladeshi migration" OR "illegal migration" OR "migrant communities" OR "ethnic enclaves" OR "Bangladeshi migrants") AND ("community cohesion" OR "social tensions" OR "identity politics" OR "cultural integration" OR "social exclusion" OR "ethnic tensions" OR "local vs. migrant conflicts" OR "cultural impacts" OR "xenophobia" OR "identity formation" OR "integration challenges" OR "social mobility")}

2.2.2 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

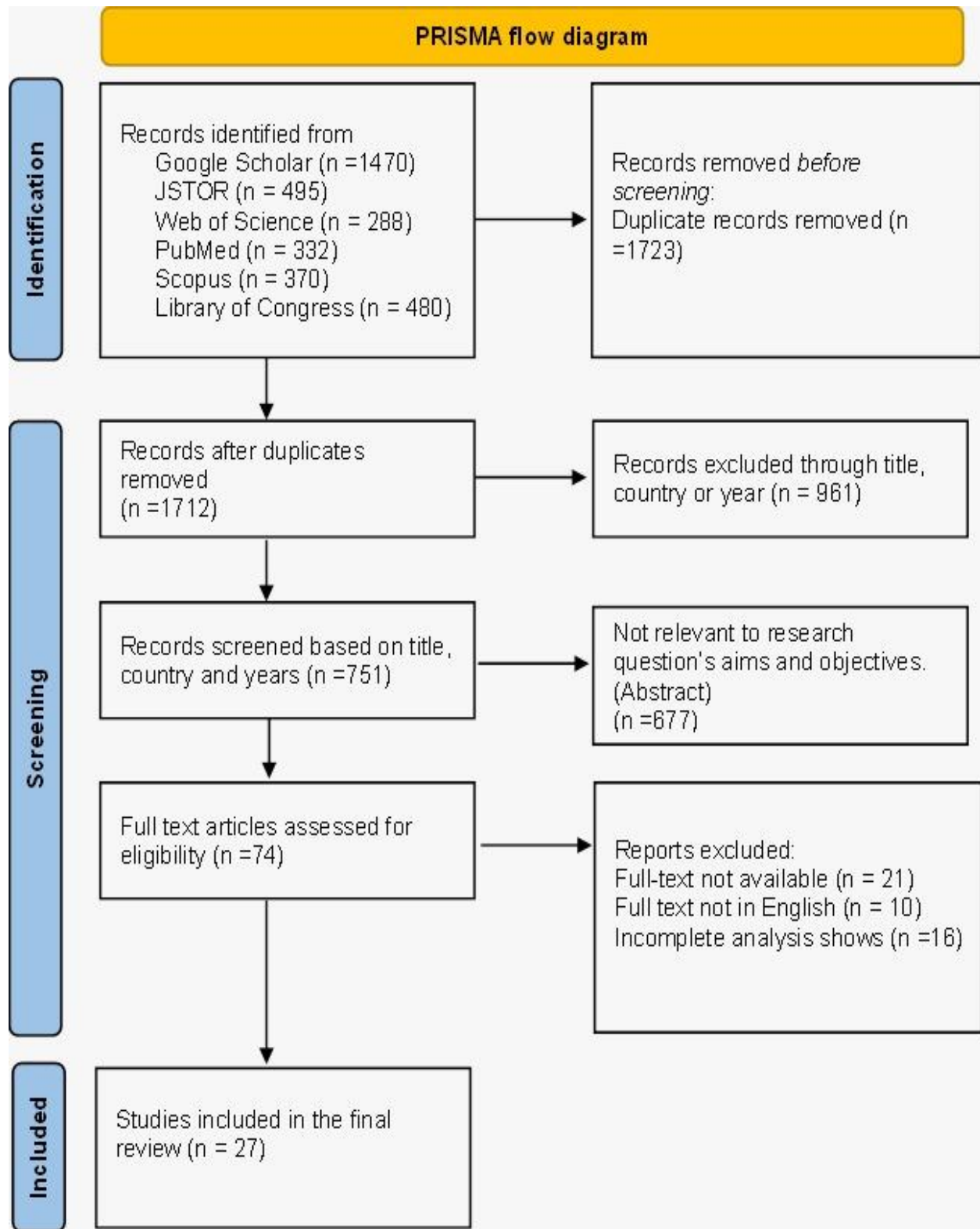
The inclusion criteria targeted peer-reviewed articles, conference proceedings, and reports published between 1985 and 2023. Studies that specifically addressed the socio-economic and political impact of illegal Bangladeshi migration on community dynamics and urban challenges in Mumbai were included. Only those articles that focused on the relevant geographic region (Mumbai), with analysis applicable to the urban context, were selected. The studies also needed to be published in English, with a full-text version available for review.

Papers that did not directly address Mumbai or focused on migration outside of urban settings were excluded from the review. Records were excluded based on title, country, or year (1985 to 2024) if they did not align with the research question's focus on illegal migration or were published outside the chosen timeframe. Studies were further excluded if their abstracts did not address illegal migration's impact on Mumbai or if the full-text articles were not available, were not in English, or provided incomplete or insufficient analysis.

2.2.3 Data Extraction and Grouping

Articles were grouped by the primary theme they addressed (community cohesion, identity formation, cultural integration), with papers analysed for methodologies, findings, and gaps. The process of selection and analysis is illustrated in **fig 2.2.1**

Figure 2.2.1 Prisma Framework of Search Criteria



The flow chart in Figure 2.2.1 shows the screening and selection process of eligible studies and the reasons for exclusion. The two stages of screening – i.e., title/abstract and full-text review – resulted in the selection of 27 studies for inclusion in this review. Papers published between 1985 and 2024 were considered. A data extraction form was completed for each eligible study to collect information on the name of the first author, publication year, sample characteristics, method of assessing self-reported skills, method of determining actual skills, and findings regarding illegal Bangladeshi migration and its consequences.

2.3 Literature Findings

Illegal Bangladeshi migration into India, especially into major urban centres like Mumbai, has been an ongoing and complex issue. This review examines the socio-economic and political challenges stemming from this migration, focusing on its impact on Mumbai’s urban landscape, its influence on political narratives, and growing security concerns. The literature reviewed covers various aspects, such as the demographic changes resulting from migration, the increasing pressure on urban infrastructure, the politicization of migration in public discourse, and the socio-political instability created by undocumented migrants.

Driven primarily by economic necessity, many Bangladeshis migrate to Mumbai in search of better livelihood opportunities or it is religious induced. However, the unregulated nature of this migration has fuelled significant socio-political tensions. Local political parties, along with the media, often frame illegal migration as a threat to Mumbai’s stability, blaming it for contributing to overcrowded slums, increased crime, and pressure on public resources.

In addition to the socio-economic impacts, this review explores how the migration issue has influenced national security concerns. The migration of undocumented individuals is increasingly linked to concerns about border control, law enforcement, and terrorism, leading to calls for stricter immigration policies and tighter security measures.

While economic factors are central to the migration, its consequences go far beyond employment opportunities. The arrival of large numbers of undocumented migrants has had lasting effects on urban planning, community relations, security, and governance, democracy forcing the city to contend with an ever-growing and marginalized population and potential centre of social tension and instability and human rights violation of the locals. This review seeks to provide a

comprehensive understanding of how illegal Bangladeshi migration has transformed not only the socio-economic dynamics of Mumbai but also its political and security landscape.

2.3.1 Socio-Economic and Demographic Challenges

One of the most significant impacts of illegal Bangladeshi migration is the demographic shift it has caused in Mumbai, particularly an increase in population. **Singh (2007)** discusses long-term trends in the city's migration patterns, highlighting the role of rural migrants in driving Mumbai's population growth. Overcrowding in urban slums, where many migrants settle, has deteriorated living conditions and exacerbated challenges related to urban planning and resource distribution.

Illegal migrants, often living in poverty, contribute to the expansion of slums, placing immense pressure on public services such as healthcare, sanitation, and transportation. This has worsened public health crises and deepened the city's infrastructure challenges.

Singh (2007) presents census data indicating that while the overall percentage of migrants has declined over time, rural migrants, particularly from Bangladesh, continue to dominate the influx. This imbalance has created significant challenges for urban planning, as Mumbai struggles to provide adequate resources for its growing population. The increasing presence of Bangladeshi migrants in low-wage jobs within the city's informal sector has also led to economic issues, such as heightened competition for employment.

Similarly, **Sarkar (2024)** highlights how illegal migration from Bangladesh to north-eastern India, particularly Assam, creates similar socio-economic problems, exerting pressure on land and resources and causing political and environmental challenges, paralleling the situation in Mumbai.

2.3.2 Political and Security Ramifications

The political consequences of illegal migration are complex and multifaceted. Following the 2006 Mumbai train bombings, public discourse shifted toward framing illegal Bangladeshi migrants as potential security threats. **Banjan (2009)** outlines how some political parties raise the concern on these fears, potentiality as a national security concern and advocating for stricter deportation policies.

National Level political parties in India, have raised the issue of illegal Bangladeshi migration. Migrants are often depicted as collaborators with foreign intelligence agencies, particularly Pakistan’s ISI, further heightening the perception that these migrants represent a security risk.

Hoelscher & Miklian (2013) note that South Asia’s vulnerability to migration is linked to security threats, particularly fears of extremist violence.

Meanwhile, **Shamshad (2017)** observes that the political climate in West Bengal, another hotspot for Bangladeshi migration, has been less aggressive compared to Assam. This is due to the cultural and ethnic bonds between Bangladeshis and Bengalis, which have led to a more nuanced political response.

2.4 Research Gap

2.4.1 Crime and Security Concerns

Literature Review reveals a significant gap in understanding the informal networks that facilitate illegal migration, including smuggling, trafficking, and border corruption. The lack of comprehensive studies on these networks hinders a full understanding of the mechanisms at play. Additionally, there is insufficient research on the effectiveness and ethical implications of current border security measures. Lastly, the relationship between illegal migration and urban crime has not been thoroughly examined, with limited studies exploring how migration impacts crime rates and public safety in cities like Mumbai.

2.4.2 Gap in Understanding the Economic Impact of Illegal Migration

The review highlights a significant gap in exploring the positive contributions of illegal migrants, particularly within the informal economy. While much focus has been placed on the negative consequences, such as overcrowding and competition for low-wage jobs, there is insufficient research on how these migrants contribute to urban economic development and growth. Additionally, there is a lack of data on the effects of illegal migration on urban labour markets, wages, and local businesses. Measuring the true economic impact of undocumented migrants remains difficult due to the challenges in tracking their economic activities within the informal sector.

2.4.3 Political Implications of Illegal Migration

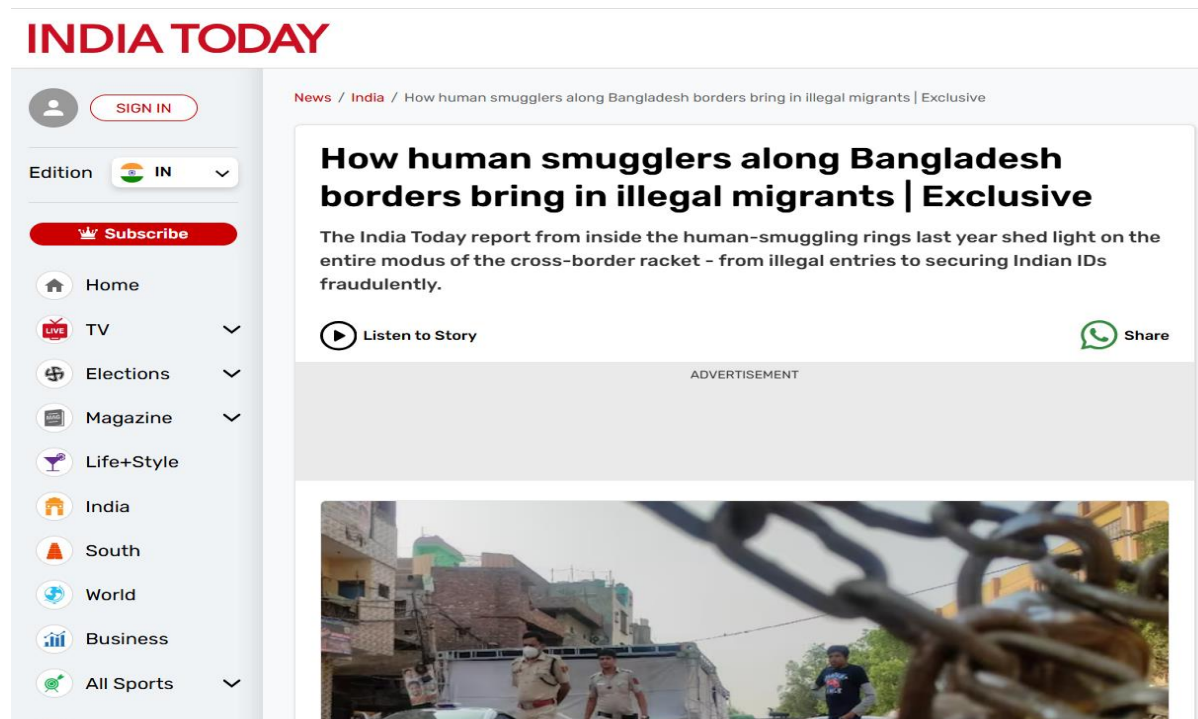
This systematic literature review points out that there is an overemphasis on security concerns, which often overshadows the broader political dimensions of illegal migration. While national security is a key issue, there is limited research on how migration influences local governance, public policy, and political discourse. Furthermore, the gendered political aspects of migration, such as the specific vulnerabilities faced by migrant women, are underexplored. Political responses, particularly those driven by xenophobia, and how they shape election campaigns and public policies, also remain inadequately studied.

2.4.4 Pathways of illegal Bangladeshi Immigrants to enter in India

The examination of methods adopted by illegal immigrants entering India remains limited due to insufficient research in this area and lack of reliable data as well (Dasgupta, 2010). The routes on which people migrate tend to be informal and unregulated, thus difficult to chart or document systematically. The porous border with no fencing exacerbates this issue, as such processes often involve smuggling, trafficking, and corrupt practices. These activities take advantage of porous borders that go unnoticed in the official statistics by academic research.

Research is further complicated by the dynamic nature of migration routes and their requirement of socio-political conditions congruent with the occasion of that activity. The current dearth of first-hand information from the migrants themselves, in addition to limited reporting by border authorities or agencies exacerbates an enormous knowledge deficit. It leads to a significant part of this process no longer being documented or understood systematically.

Knowledge remains just anecdotal and speculative without proper investigation on the systems and networks facilitating irregular migrants. This highlights the necessity for more targeted studies to divulge the underlying mechanisms of these processes.



Link : <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/jahangirpuri-violence-how-human-smugglers-along-bangladesh-borders-bring-in-illegal-migrants-exclusive-1939404-2022-04-19>

2.5 Summary

Illegal Bangladeshi migration to Mumbai presents significant socio-economic and political challenges. The influx of undocumented migrants has strained the city’s infrastructure, contributing to overcrowded slums, increased competition for low-wage jobs, and pressure on public services like healthcare, sanitation, and housing. These issues exacerbate urban poverty and inequality, as many migrants settle in informal sectors with limited access to formal employment opportunities.

Politically, migration has become a serious issue, because of national security threat, particularly following the 7/11 Mumbai bombings. This has called for stricter immigration policies and enhanced border controls. However, the focus on security concerns has overshadowed the broader political and social consequences, such as challenges in governance, rising ethnic tensions, social tension, potential political instability, demographic imbalance, caused by migrant populations.

Moreover, the current literature reveals gaps in understanding the black economic role of illegal migrants, particularly in the informal economy, and the informal networks that facilitate their migration, such as smuggling and trafficking. There is also insufficient research on the effectiveness of border security measures and their ethical implications. These gaps highlight the need for a more comprehensive and balanced approach to managing illegal migration in Mumbai, addressing both the root causes and the socio-political implications, potential threat for health Indian democracy of this ongoing issue.

CHAPTER 3 DATA AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we discuss the foundational elements of the study, including the collection, organisation, and analysis of both primary and secondary data, along with the methodological framework employed to achieve our research objectives. A systematic approach is crucial for ensuring the reliability and validity of the findings. This chapter offers a detailed research design and methods that form the foundation of the study.

The present study utilises both primary and secondary data, and the chapter explains the justification for such selection. It then details the sampling methods, study population, and data collection tools. Additionally, this chapter describes the analytical techniques and statistical methods used to interpret the data and draw meaningful conclusions. Ethical considerations and the challenges faced during the research process are also addressed to ensure transparency and context for the study.

By outlining these critical elements, this chapter seeks to establish the empirical base for the research, thereby providing a solid basis for the subsequent analysis and interpretation of findings. As Creswell (2014) emphasised, "A well-defined methodological not only enhances the credibility of the research but also ensures that the study's outcomes are aligned with its objectives." This chapter adheres to such principles, ensuring a structured and comprehensive approach to the research process.

3.2 Research design

The study employs a mixed-methods design, combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches to address the research objectives thoroughly. This design facilitates the collection of a variety of data types, allowing for a comprehensive, multi-dimensional understanding of the phenomenon being studied. The following sections outline the key components of the research design:

3.2.1 Data Sources

The research is grounded in robust data collection methods, encompassing both **primary** and **secondary** data sources. This mixed-methods approach integrates qualitative and quantitative

data to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. However, this interim report is based on a sub-sample and does not cover all primary data.

3.2.1.1 Primary Data

Primary data forms the cornerstone of this research, providing first-hand insights into the lived experiences of illegal immigrants and the contextual factors influencing their immigration patterns. The primary data collection process was meticulously crafted to gather both quantitative and qualitative data, providing a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. The following methods were employed to gather primary quantitative and qualitative data:

A. Quantitative Survey Method

Quantitative data were collected through structured survey interviews, which were designed to capture a comprehensive array of demographic, socio-economic, and immigration-related information. From a target sample of 3,000 individuals, we successfully surveyed 300 participants drawn from various clusters within the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) for the interim report. The survey instrument comprised both closed and open-ended questions, specifically formulated to address the following key areas:

- **Demographics:** Age, gender, educational background, family structure, and occupation.
- **Housing Conditions:** Type of accommodation, tenure status (e.g., rented or owned), living space conditions, and access to basic amenities.
- **Access to Public Services:** Utilization of healthcare, education, and other social services available to migrants, particularly in the context of legal or illegal status.
- **Immigration Background:** Reasons for immigration, pathways to come to Mumbai, length of stay, immigration routes, Documentation, and socio-economic conditions in the place of origin.
- **Financial Remittances:** Patterns of remittance sending, the sources of income, and economic engagement in the destination region.

The survey was administered by Bengali-speaking field investigators, enabling them to effectively communicate with immigrants and residents from the targeted communities of Bengali-speaking people or their dialects.

B. Qualitative Survey Method

- **Observations**

In qualitative research, observation is an essential data collection method that involves systematically watching and documenting behaviours, actions, events, or phenomena as they occur in their natural settings. This technique offers valuable, in-depth insights into the context, environment, and behaviours, providing information that other methods like interviews or surveys might need to capture fully.

In the present study, we used observation techniques to understand living areas, food preferences, dressing patterns and willingness to participate in the survey among the suspected Bangladeshi immigrants. They usually reside in segregated areas, often in coastal regions of Mumbai. Their housing is predominantly hut-like structures. Their food habits closely resemble those of West Bengal, with a strong preference for rice over roti. Their dressing patterns align with those from other regions, their language is distinctly different from the Bengali dialect spoken in West Bengal. Many immigrants appeared hesitant to engage in the survey, especially when discussing documentation or their migration destinations. Additionally, they seem socially segregated, maintaining minimal interaction with neighbours or forming few friendships outside their group or community.

- **Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)**

To gain insights and understand the broader context of illegal immigration, ten Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) from domain experts were conducted who had specialised knowledge about the migrant population and immigration trends. The key informants included:

- ❖ **Government Officials:** Representatives from local administration and law enforcement agencies who could provide perspectives on immigration policies, border control, and enforcement practices.

- ❖ **Community Leaders:** Local influencers and leaders who have direct engagement with migrant populations, providing insights into community dynamics and challenges.
- ❖ **Brokers and Contractors:** Individuals involved in facilitating immigration, housing, and employment for migrants, offering unique views on the migrant networks and their operations.

The KIIs were semi-structured, allowing for flexibility in responses while focusing on specific themes such as immigration motivations, socio-economic challenges, and perceptions of legal status and border enforcement.

- **In-depth Interviews (IDIs)**

Qualitative data was gathered through ten in-depth interviews with migrants to gain deeper, personal insights into the lived experiences of migrants, focusing on their individual immigration stories, challenges, and coping strategies. The interviews explored areas such as:

- ❖ **Personal Narratives:** Detailed accounts of the migrants' journeys, reasons for leaving their home country, and experiences in the destination region.
- ❖ **Social Networks:** Insights into the role of family, friends, and community connections in the immigration process, including the support systems that facilitate integration into new environments.
- ❖ **Legal and Social Marginalization:** Experiences with being undocumented, encounters with law enforcement, and the social stigma faced by illegal migrants in their host communities.
- ❖ **Economic and Social Opportunities:** Access to work, education, healthcare, and other services, and the ways in which undocumented migrants navigate barriers related to their legal status.

These interviews were carried out with confidentiality and respect, ensuring that participants felt safe and comfortable sharing their experiences.

- **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)**

Two focus group discussions (FGDs) were held to capture collective perspectives on immigration issues within specific communities. The FGDs facilitated group discussions on themes such as immigration experiences, community integration, and health and social challenges faced by migrants. The FGDs were conducted with the following groups:

- ❖ **Commercial sex workers:** This FGD aimed to explore the livelihood strategies of female illegal/undocumented migrants involved in sex work, shedding light on the socio-economic realities of this marginalised group and how they navigate both their immigration status and occupation.
- ❖ **ASHA and Anganwadi Workers in the Govandi Locality (Shivaji Nagar):** This FGD focused on the health and social issues faced by migrant populations, especially in relation to healthcare access, child welfare, and community support systems.

The FGDs were facilitated by trained moderators who encouraged open discussions while ensuring that participants felt comfortable sharing their experiences. The group dynamics provided rich, qualitative data, revealing shared community concerns, coping strategies, and common immigration challenges.

3.2.1.2 Secondary Data

Secondary data from the Census of India since its inception (1872 to 2011) is used to get an in-depth dive into the fluctuating religion-wise data over the years in the growth of the population. This included reports, research publications, government documents, and datasets relevant to the study domain. The integration of secondary data enabled triangulation, ensuring greater reliability and robustness in the research outcomes.

3.2.2 Identifying the Target Population, Strategies and Indicators:

Identifying illegal immigrants involves a combination of systematic approaches and localised knowledge. A literature review provides valuable insights into the locations and patterns of illegal Bangladeshi migrants, enabling researchers and authorities to identify areas of concern and effectively reach migrant groups. Local bodies, including agents, brokers, contractors and community leaders, serve as crucial sources of information due to their direct interactions and deep familiarity with local communities. Key informants from different places further enhance understanding by offering specific details on migrant presence and behaviours. Snowball

sampling proves effective in tracing networks, starting from an individual Bangladeshi migrant to identifying larger groups.

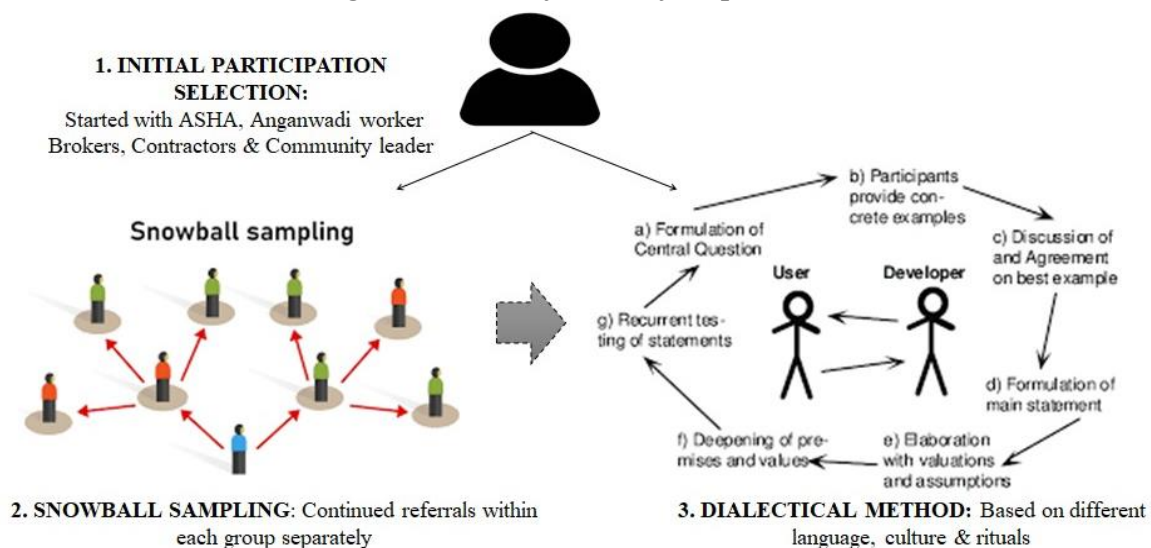
3.2.3 Dialect Method

Linguistic differences are one of the most noticeable markers. Our field staff from West Bengal often report that they cannot fully understand the language spoken by suspected migrants, as it differs significantly from the language of West Bengal. Specific examples include the use of "Teha" instead of "Taka" (money), "Halar po" instead of "Salar beta" (insulting terms), "Bodda" instead of "Boro Dada" (elder brother), "Aiyachi" instead of "Khayechi" (eaten), and "Saar" instead of "Dekhechi" (seen). Additionally, proverbs such as the Chattogram saying "Chatgaiya pola matit porle loha" (a Chattogram baby turns into iron upon touching the earth) reveal distinct cultural roots. Hesitation or inconsistencies during documentation checks, including with visas, passports, and border-crossing processes, further raise suspicion. By integrating these methods with insights from systematic literature, targeted identification and outreach to these migrant communities become more efficient and effective.

3.2.4 Sample Size

The study seeks to establish a vigorous sample size and a target of 3000 participants in the quantitative surveys. Qualitative insights were collected through 10 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with stakeholders, including government officials, Agents, community leaders, brokers, contractors, and locals. 2 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted in the Turve region with prostitution workers. The other one was conducted in Shivaji Nagar of the Govandi region with ASHA and Anganwadi workers. Ten in-depth interviews of immigrants were done to get

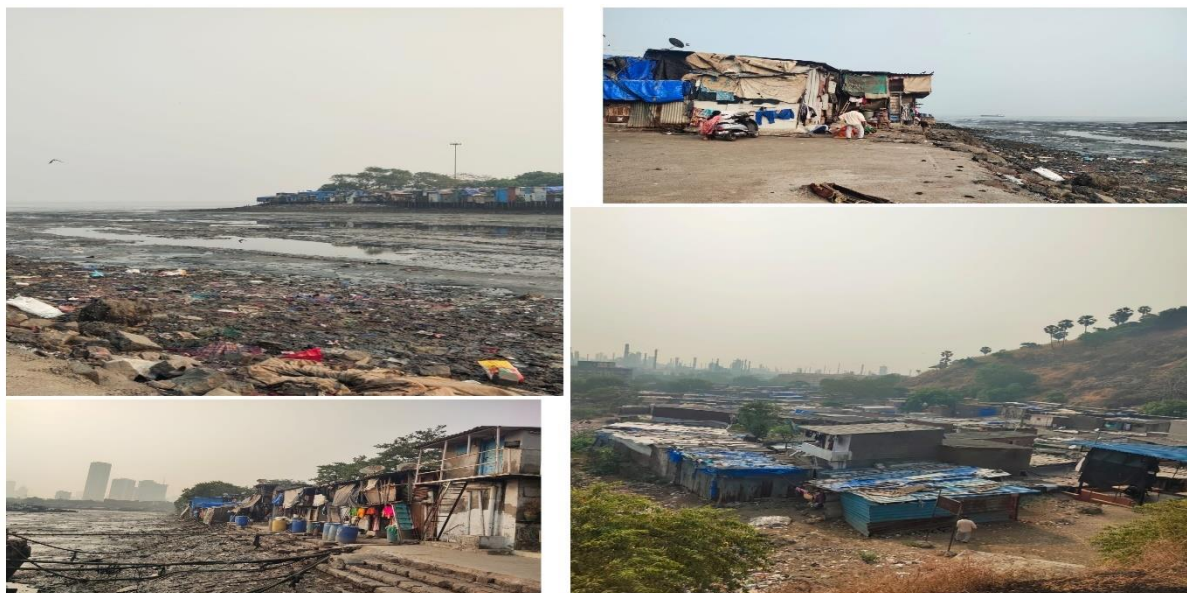
Figure 3.2.1 Identification of Respondents



deep insights.

3.2.5 Study Area

The city part of MMR (Mumbai Metropolitan Region) is covered in the study area. We first divided Mumbai into Seven zones (South Mumbai, Central Mumbai, Western suburbs (2), Eastern suburbs (2), and Northern suburbs). From each zone, we randomly selected six clusters. From each selected cluster we will take around 71 samples from each cluster of immigrants who have illegally migrated to the study area. We particularly emphasise areas with significant Bangladeshi migrant populations, such as Govandi, Dharavi, Kurla West, Colaba, Central Mumbai, Ganesh Nagar, Subhas Nagar, Malwani, Bandra West, Geeta Nagar, Ambedkar Nagar, Mahim, Chandivali, San pada, to capture a brief perspective on the multifaceted aspects of immigration.



3.2.6 Quantitative Data Collection

Surveys were conducted by the Bengali-speaking field investigators with both migrants and residents, collecting information on demographics, immigration backgrounds, housing conditions, access to public services, and financial remittances.

3.2.7 Qualitative Data Collection

A range of stakeholders participated in in-depth interviews and FGDs. ASHA and Anganwadi workers, with direct exposure to the migrant population, shared their observations on the health and social issues impacting illegal migrants. The FGD conducted in the Turve region with

commercial sex workers also helped us gather qualitative data on how female immigrants are earning their livelihood. Their understanding of the community allows them to identify migrants' legal status by referencing specific neighbourhoods or individuals linked to migrant groups. Language is also a valuable indicator, as certain dialects can hint at a migrant's origin, while very few might openly acknowledge being from Bangladesh. Additionally, surveys included questions on visa status to help distinguish illegal migrants directly.

3.2.8 Quantitative Analysis

Descriptive statistics that provide a summary of the population under study, percentage calculations for bar graphs, and a projection model that projects the population for the next forty years were calculated as part of quantitative data analysis.

3.2.9 Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative data was examined using thematic analysis to identify recurring themes and content analysis of government policies to assess effectiveness in addressing immigration-related issues. The grounded theory approach and core theory, hypothesis and theory development were also done.

3.2.10 Spatial Analysis

Using GIS mapping, the illustration of immigration patterns and pathways, as well as areas with higher concentration illegal immigration levels in Mumbai shall highlight the strains put on the urban infrastructure and support targeted policy interventions.

3.2.11 Triangulation

The outcomes from both quantitative and qualitative data were triangulated to strengthen the validity of the conclusions from this study, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the socio-economic impacts of immigration.

3.2.12 Projection

To project migration trends in Mumbai, historical data on migration patterns, population growth, and census records were analysed. The data spans several decades, capturing trends in the inflow of migrants into the city. Key factors influencing migration, such as economic opportunities, employment growth, urbanization, and demographic changes, were considered.

Using a time series analysis approach, the ARIMA model was applied to identify patterns, trends, and fluctuations in migration rates over time. This involved examining how migration has evolved, including periods of rapid growth driven by industrialization or expansion in services and infrastructure. The model accounts for historical variations, such as economic downturns, urban saturation, or policy changes impacting migration.

The projections were made for the upcoming decades, providing an estimate of future migration to Mumbai.

The ARIMA model did the projection of the Hindu population and Muslim population. The predictions were done for 4 decades (2021, 2031, 2041 and 2051).

- Data preparation: Population data from 1951, 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001, and 2011 is used as the input. The dataset includes the population counts segmented by religion for each census year, enabling ARIMA to recognise trends and seasonal patterns over time.
- ARIMA model selection: Parameters for ARIMA (p, d, q) need to be chosen for the time series of each population segment. Typically, this involves:
 - **p**: The number of lag observations in the autoregressive model.
 - **d**: The degree of differencing needed to make the series stationary.
 - **q**: The size of the moving average window.
- Based on model selection criteria (like AIC or BIC), you would have selected optimal values of (p, d, q) for both Hindu and Muslim populations separately.
- Formula:

Differencing Step (d = 1):

$$Y_t = X_t - X_{t-10}$$

AR and MA Steps:

$$Y_t = c + \phi_1 Y_{t-10} + \theta_1 \epsilon_{t-10} + \epsilon_t$$

This formula predicts , the population change, based on:

- A constant c,
- The patent value Y_{t-10} The past error ϵ_{t-10}
- The current error ϵ_t

3.3 Summary

This research provides a comprehensive examination of undocumented immigration patterns in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), focusing on Bengali-speaking migrants through a mixed-methods approach. By integrating both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques, the study has captured the diverse experiences and challenges faced by migrants in terms of socio-economic conditions, legal status, and integration into the urban environment.

The use of surveys, observation techniques, in-depth interviews, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions have provided valuable insights into the lived experiences of the migrant population. Key themes such as housing conditions, access to public services, financial remittances, social networks, and legal marginalization have been explored, highlighting the systemic challenges illegal migrants face. Furthermore, the ARIMA model for projecting population growth offers an understanding of future demographic trends, which is crucial for urban planning and immigration policy development.

By triangulating data from multiple sources and methods, this research ensures a robust understanding of the socio-economic impacts of immigration. The findings emphasize the need for targeted policies that address the challenges faced by illegal migrants while also considering the broader implications of population growth and urban stress in the MMR.

Additionally, the study highlights the importance of ethical considerations and methodological rigor in conducting research involving marginalized communities. The use of local languages and dialects, along with the involvement of community leaders, ensured the accuracy and richness of the data collected.

CHAPTER 4 DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS AND PATTERNS IN MUMBAI

"When borders are porous, cities bear the brunt of unsustainable growth and social strain."

– Douglas Murray

4.1 Introduction

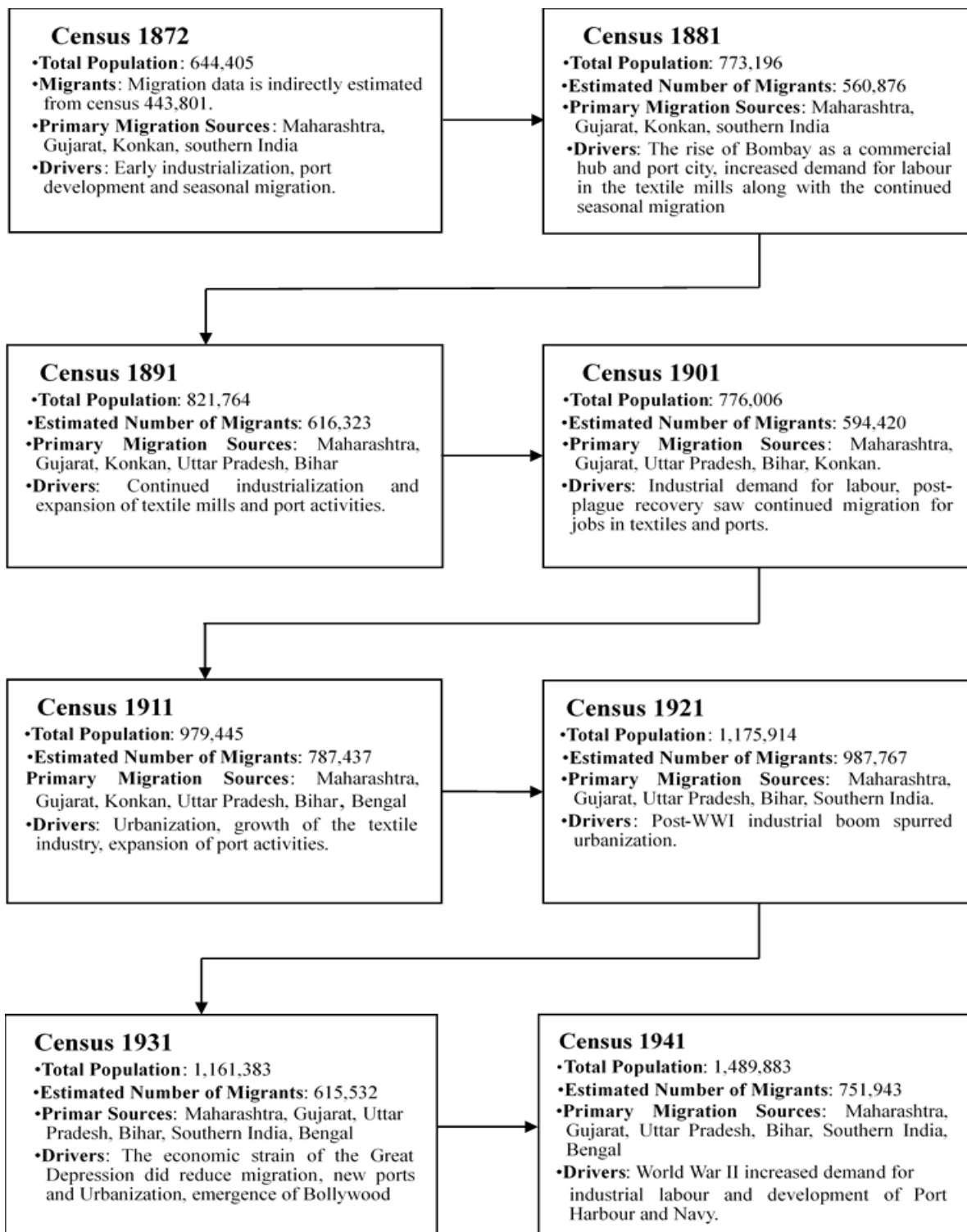
Mumbai, India's global metropolis and financial hub, has long been synonymous with migration. From its origin as commercial port, the city has been a melting pot of cultures, nationalities, and religions, with successive waves of migration contributing to its vibrant and dynamic nature. Among the many immigrant groups impacting Mumbai's social and economic landscape are illegal immigrants from Bangladesh and, more recently, Rohingya refugees. The migration of these people, which were mostly fleeing persecution, economic hardship, politically induced and unstable political environments, has significantly altered the city's demographic makeup. Their arrival has presented city officials and law-makers with a challenging array of issues, including population growth, urban planning, social integration, demographic imbalance and potential security. Mumbai's growing appeal as a global economic hub, offering abundant job opportunities and prospects for upward mobility, is attracting both legal and illegal immigrants. In some areas of the city, the migration of individuals from Bangladesh during the past several decades has been a major source of population expansion due to a combination of environmental and economic causes. In recent times, Mumbai has also been a refuge for the Rohingya, an ethnic minority from Myanmar. Despite the fact that illegal immigrants play a crucial role in the labour market, filling essential jobs in unorganized sectors like small-scale manufacturing, domestic labour, and construction, their illegal status creates social tension, more crime, political stability, governance and legal challenges. The influx of these Bangladeshi and Rohingya migrants has placed immense pressure on the city's housing, public services, and infrastructure, exacerbating the strain caused demographic shifts.

The political and economic instability in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) during the 1960s and 1970s, following the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971, was the primary catalyst for the illegal migration of Bangladeshis to India. Millions of people were displaced at this time, with many of them fleeing to India in search of safety and better economic prospects. Migration has persisted throughout the years, fuelled by several causes such as Bangladesh's environmental deterioration, political unrest, and poverty. Internal displacement in Bangladesh has been made worse by rising sea levels and regular floods in coastal areas. As a result, many people have been forced to cross the porous border into India, with Mumbai serving as a main hub. In contrast, the Rohingya crisis is a relatively recent issue that gained global attention for its potential security threat due to its association with religious extremism. The Rohingya people in Myanmar have tasted decades of religious extremism, separatist mentality and religious induced destabilizing mentality. Due to this, hundreds of thousands of Rohingya have been explored to migrate to neighbouring countries, with a significant number seeking refuge in India. Many Rohingya have moved to major cities like Mumbai.

The demographic changes brought by Bangladeshi and Rohingya immigrants have been most visible in the city's peripheral slum areas. Informal settlements like Nalasopara, Byculla, Kurla, Govandi, Turbhay, Kamathipura, Mankhurd, Malvani, Dharavi, and Kurla have seen a marked rise in immigrant populations, altering the socio-economic dynamics of these areas. These densely populated localities, already characterized by substandard living conditions, have become hubs for low-wage migrant labourers. The effects of demographics are complex. Firstly, the growth of slum populations due to illegal immigration has exacerbated issues such as overcrowding, sanitation, and access to public services like electricity and water. Secondly, the local labour market has been impacted by the shifting demographics. There is growing concern among residents about increased competition for jobs, especially in the informal sector. Social instability and conflicts have occasionally resulted from the antagonism between immigrants and locals in some areas of the city. Additionally, the rising population of illegal immigrants in Mumbai has further strained the city's already overloaded public health and education systems. Many public services are unavailable to immigrants from Bangladesh and the Rohingya minority, as they do not have the necessary papers. In an emergency, people still rely on government-run hospitals and schools, which places additional pressure on these institutions, leading to longer wait times and reduced resources for the community. The economic need and

affordability of housing play a major role in determining the spatial distribution of immigrants from Bangladesh and the Rohingya community in Mumbai. Since a large number of these immigrants work in low-paying, informal black economy sector, they frequently congregate in low-income housing areas, frequently residing in slums and informal settlements that are already overcrowded and mostly located on the outskirts of the city or some particular ghetto with some religious affiliation. These communities provide some privacy and easy access to informal job markets; both crucial for illegal immigrants seeking to avoid detection by law enforcement. However, the quality of life in these places is frequently appalling, with poor access to clean water, poor sanitation, and frequent outbreaks of infectious diseases. The concentration of immigrants in specific neighbourhoods has led to growth of ethnic enclaves which provide a support network for newly arrived immigrants but also impacts the demographic balance of that area. The presence of many illegal immigrants has created socio-political challenges for Mumbai. Their presence has sparked debates about national security, identity, and the burden on public services. Nonetheless, their presence has fuelled security concerns, particularly among right-wing political groups.

Figure 4.1. Migration trends and patterns in Greater Mumbai by Decades 1872--1941



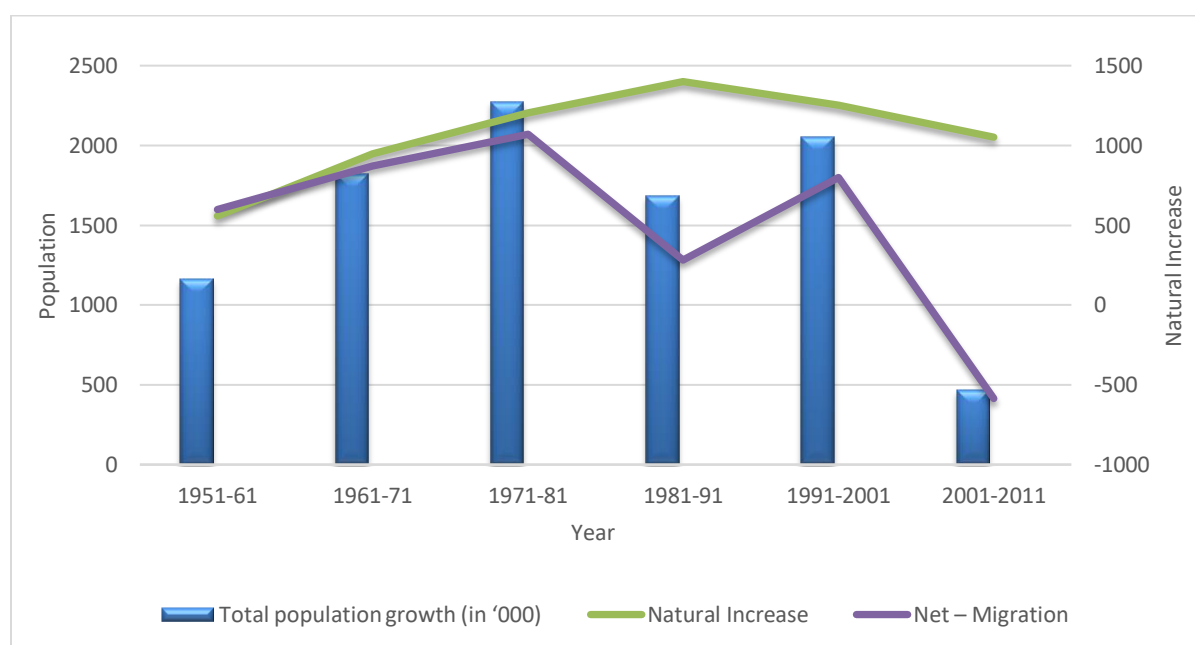
4.2 Findings

Table 4.2.1 Demographic Changes in Mumbai, 1951 – 2011

Year	Total population growth (in '000)	Population Growth Rate	Natural Increase	Net – Migration
1951-61	1158	3.87	558	600
1961-71	1819	4.38	947	872
1971-81	2273	3.81	1203	1070
1981-91	1682	2.04	1400	282
1991-2001	2053	2.07	1254	799
2001-2011	464	0.39	1050	-586

Source: (Bhagat, R. B.,2020) Demographics dynamics of mega-urban regions. The case of Mumbai

Figure 4.2.1 Components of Population Growth in Greater Bombay



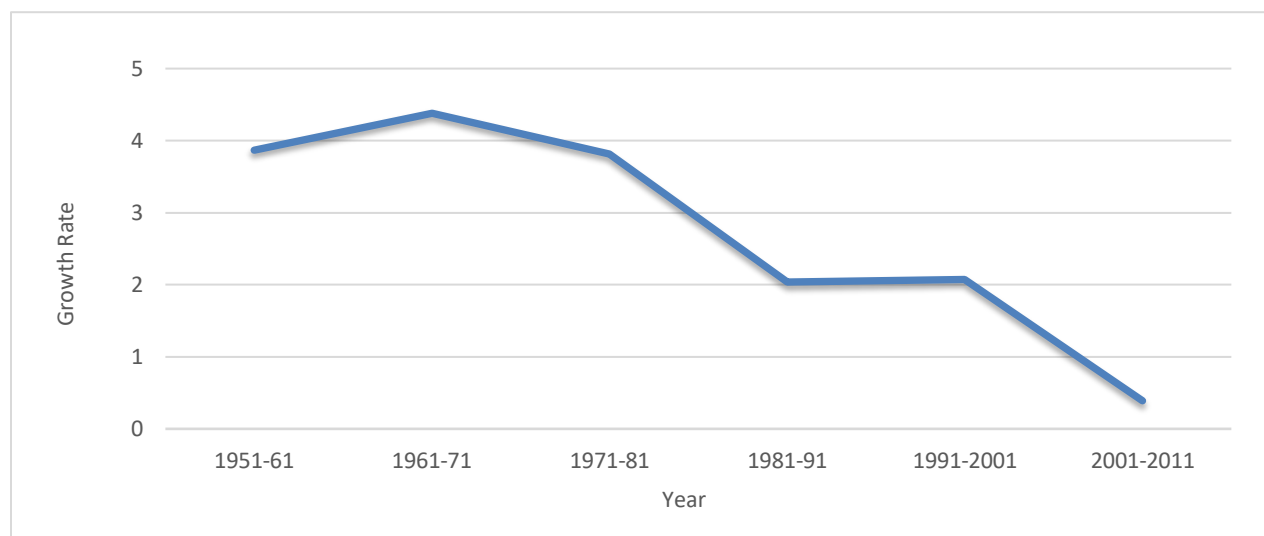
Source: (Bhagat, R. B.,2020) Demographics dynamics of mega-urban regions. The case of Mumbai

Fig. 4.2.1 shows the components of population growth in Greater Bombay over the decades from 1951 to 2011, focusing on total population growth, net migration, and natural increase. The blue bars represent the total population growth, the green line indicates net migration, and the red line represents natural population increase. From 1951 to 1981, there is a consistent rise in both population growth and natural increase, as seen in the red line peaking during the 1971-1981

decade. This period corresponds to rapid industrialization and economic expansion in Mumbai, which attracted a large number of migrants. The net migration (green line) also rises during this time, contributing significantly to the city's population increase. However, after 1981, there is a noticeable decline in both natural growth and migration. The red line (natural increase) drops significantly, especially from 1991 onwards, indicating a reduction in the birth rate or natural growth of the population. The green line representing net migration also starts to sharp decline, particularly between 2001 and 2011, suggesting a shift in migration trends.

Overall, the graph highlights how migration patterns and natural population growth have evolved in Greater Bombay, with the city transitioning from rapid industrial expansion and high migration inflows to a more stabilized, yet slower, growth rate influenced by socio-economic

Figure 4.2.2 Represents the Population Growth Rate Recorded in Mumbai Between 1951 and 2011 factors.



Source: (Bhagat, R. B.,2020) Demographics dynamics of mega-urban regions. The case of Mumbai

There was a significant decrease in the growth rate over time the years. In 1951, the growth rate was pretty high, close to 4%. It increased to 4.38 by 1961 and recorded the highest growth rate but steady decrease in the population growth rate since 1971, a trend that seems to be continuing in the next few decades as well. By 2011, the growth rate had eased below 0.4% a clear indicator of a significant deceleration. Urban saturation, shifts of migration to surrounding areas, high cost of living, and changes in birth rates are some of the possible factors that may have led to lesser population growth in Mumbai.

Table 4.2.2 Gender-Wise Urban Population Distribution in Mumbai, 1951-2011

Year	Male	Female	Sex ratio
1951	1868335	1125109	602
1961	2496176	1655880	663
1971	3478378	2492197	716
1981	4652646	3590759	772
1991	5460145	4465746	818
2001	6619966	5358484	809
2011	6715931	5726442	853

Source: (Bhagat, R. B.,2020) Demographics dynamics of mega-urban regions. The case of Mumbai

Table 4.2.2 shows that both male and female urban populations are increasing. And the period from 1951 to 2011, the male population is consistently higher than the female population. This characteristic of urban areas, where males are primary earners, especially in the year decades, leads to male-dominated migration. In 2011, the year gap between male and female populations narrowed; this reflects the changing social and economic trends, with more females migrating to cities.

The 1971 most significant growth in both male and female population could be due to the economic boom, increasing migration and large-scale infrastructure and industrial development. While the male population is continuously higher than the female population, gap between them narrowed down from 1991 to 2011 which could be attributed to improved gender equality, better job opportunities for women and changes in migration patterns. Lastly, we observe that a smaller increase in the population growth rate from 2001 to 2011 compared to previous years could be due to urban saturation, slowing down migration rate, overcrowding, high cost of living, etc.

Table 4.2.3 Duration of Residence in Place of Enumeration

Duration in year	1991			2001			2011		
	Male	Female	N	Male	Female	N	Male	Female	N
Less than 1 year	50.56	49.44	68610	56.01	43.99	72961	58.75	41.25	137853
1-4 years	53.93	46.07	540835	58.53	41.47	562017	55.38	44.62	582688
5-9 years	54.78	45.22	554960	58.59	41.41	564752	55.17	44.83	562914
10-19 years	57.06	42.94	972141	56.25	43.75	988816	53.93	46.07	964307
20+ years	60.00	40.00	1298938	59.74	40.26	1526950	55.93	44.07	1923490

Source: <https://censusindia.gov.in/census.website/data/census-tables>

Table 4.2.3 shows a significant shift in the residential patterns of both males and females in Mumbai from 1991 to 2011. A notable trend in Mumbai is the increasing proportion of individuals who have lived in the same place for over 20 years, reflecting greater stability and permanence within the city's population. While short-term residency remains low, medium-term stays have declined, indicating that people are either settling quickly or opting for shorter stays before moving. Gender differences in residency duration are apparent, with males initially outnumbering females in long-term residency. However, this gap has been narrowing, likely due to enhanced economic and social opportunities for women, leading to more females staying in the city for extended periods.

Table 4.2.4 Migration Trends of Mumbai since 1961-2011

Year	Male	Female	Total migrant population	Total population	Migrants Population Share to population share
1961	1454752	1212248	2667000	4152056	64.23
1971	1809176	1562824	3372000	5970575	56.47
1981	2271240	1957760	4229000	8243405	51.30
1991	2116093	1602031	3718124	9925891	37.45
2001	2263475	1628945	3892420	11978450	32.49
2011	2366251	1905311	4271562	12442373	34.33

Source: <https://censusindia.gov.in/census.website/data/census-tables>

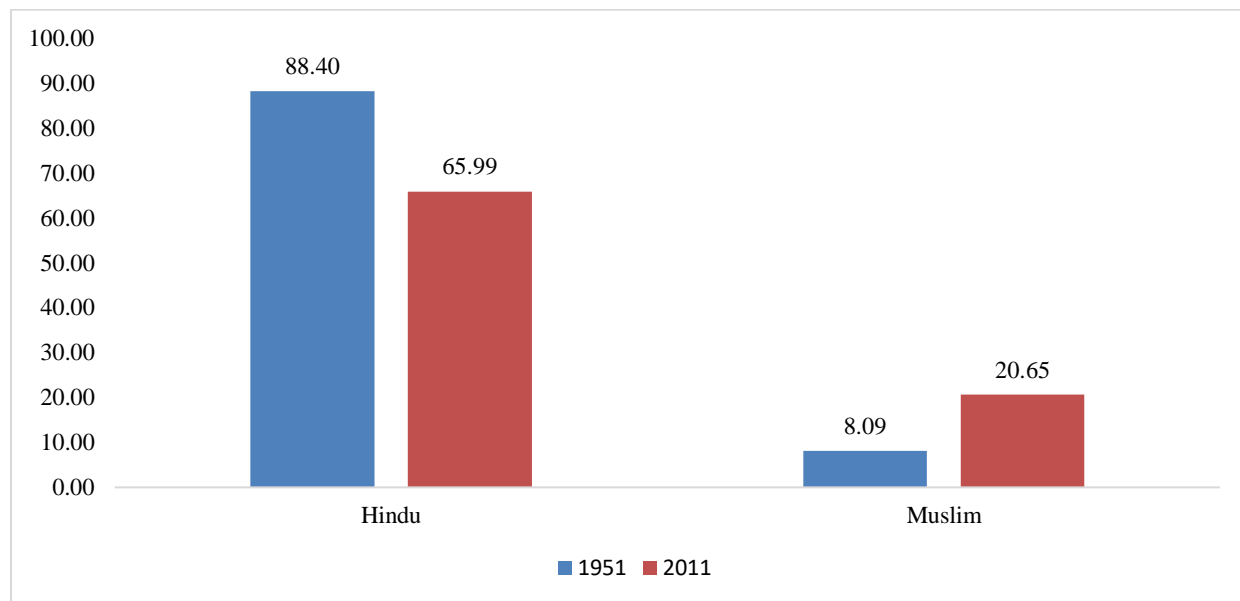
Table 4.2.4 shows that the total number of migrants, both male and female, gradually increased over the year, with the highest number of migrants recorded in 2011. Male migrants are, most of the time, higher than female migrants, in 1961 and 1971, where the gap between male and female migrants is significant. This reflects a pattern where male-dominated migration was more common. On the other hand, the number of female migrants shows a consistent upward trend, although it consistently remains lower than the number of male migrants across the decades. Although female migration has consistently been lower than male migration, the gap between the two has narrowed significantly by 2011. This suggests a changing migration dynamic, with more women migrating to cities, likely driven by increasing employment and educational opportunities. The total migrant population experienced its highest point in 1981, driven by significant increases in both male and female migration. This likely coincides with the rapid industrialization and urban expansion in Mumbai during the late 1970s and early 1980s. After 1991, the migrant population continues to grow, and the rate of increase slows down. Due to the limitations in infrastructure and housing, Mumbai had reached a saturation point, leading to a slower rate of migration compared to earlier years.

Table 4.2.5 Religion-wise Distribution of the Population of Mumbai, 1872-2011

Religion	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Others	Total
1872	63.42	21.36	5.39	9.83	100
1881	65.03	20.44	5.47	9.06	100
1891	66.12	18.89	5.51	9.48	100
1901	65.54	20.15	5.82	8.49	100
1911	67.8	18.31	5.85	8.04	100
1921	71.24	15.71	5.8	7.26	100
1931	68.99	18.02	6.95	6.04	100
1941	68.51	16.87	5.25	9.37	100
1951	88.4	8.09	1.46	2.5	100
1961	69.1	12.97	6.94	10.08	100
1971	68.85	14.13	6.29	10.73	100
1981	75.33	14.83	4.16	5.69	100
1991	67.98	16.83	4.45	10.75	100
2001	67.4	18.56	3.73	10.31	100
2011	65.99	20.65	3.27	10.09	100

Source: <https://censusindia.gov.in/nada/index.php/catalog>

Figure 4.2.3 Religion Wise Distribution Based on Year 1951 & 2011



Source: <https://censusindia.gov.in/nada/index.php/catalog>

Table 4.2.5 outlines the religious composition of the population over a period spanning from 1872 to 2011. It reflects the proportions of Hindus, Muslims, Christians, and others across different census years, revealing significant shifts in religious demographics. From 1872 to 1921, the proportion of Hindus gradually increased, starting at 63.42% and reaching a peak of 71.24% in 1921. However, this upward trend reversed in 1931, when the Hindu population dropped to 68.99% and continued to fluctuate. By 2011, the Hindu population had declined to 65.99%, indicating a gradual decrease in its relative share over the decades.

The Muslim population showed a different trend. In 1872, Muslims comprised 21.36% of the population, and while there were slight decreases in the following decades, by 1921 their share had reduced to 15.71%. However, from 1931 onward, the Muslim population began to rise again, reaching 20.65% by 2011. This steady increase suggests a significant demographic shift because of much higher fertility among Muslims than Hindus and continuous migration, especially in the latter half of the 20th century.

The proportion of Christians remained relatively stable throughout the period, ranging from around 5% to 6%, with some fluctuations. Starting at 5.39% in 1872, the Christian share peaked at 6.95% in 1931 but gradually declined to 3.27% by 2011. This indicates a reduction in the Christian community's relative size in the population over time. The category of Others, which

includes smaller religious groups, shows a varied pattern. Starting at 9.83% in 1872, the proportion of others fluctuated throughout the years, peaking in 1971 at 10.73% before gradually decreasing to 10.09% by 2011. The "Others" category experienced several shifts, particularly around periods of political and social change, which may have influenced the makeup of smaller religious communities. Overall, the data reveals that while Hindus have remained the majority religious group throughout this period, their share of the population has decreased over time, particularly after 1921. Muslims, on the other hand, have seen a consistent increase in their share, particularly from the mid-20th century onward. Christians and Others have experienced fluctuations in population share but have generally remained smaller religious communities.

Table 4.2.6 Percentage of Migrants in Greater Mumbai District Based on Place of Birth Data

Total Population (in '000)	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Share of Migrants to Mumbai	4152	5971	8243	9926	11978	18464
Share of Intra-state migrants to Mumbai	64.21	56.48	51.31	37.24	43.29	43.02
Share of Interstate migrants to Mumbai	26.75	23.48	21.67	15.34	16.19	17.01
Share of International Migrants to Mumbai	34.09	30.7	28.13	21.11	26.48	25.90

Source: <https://censusindia.gov.in/census.website/data/census-tables>

Table 3.6 represents the total population over 50 years from 1961 to 2011, showing a gradual increase from approximately 4 million in 1961 to 8 million by 1981. The trend continues upward, reaching 10 million in 1991, with a peak of 12 million in 2001. By 2011, the population further increases to around 18 million. The percentage of migrants over this period starts high at nearly 70% in 1961 but gradually declines, reaching about 55% in 1981. The sharpest decline occurs by 1991, when the percentage drops to approximately 40%. From 1991 onwards, there is a slight recovery, with the percentage rising to around 45% by 2001 and remaining stable through 2011. This trend reflects that after a significant drop in migrant percentage from 1961 to 1991, migration trends began to stabilize over the following two decades. The percentage of within-state migrants began at around 27% in 1961, declining steadily over the next few decades. By 1971, it dropped to approximately 22%, continuing downward to reach close to 20% in 1981. The sharpest decline is in 1991 when the percentage fell to about 15%. After 1991, the percentage of within-state migrants slightly increased over time to around 17% in 2011, suggesting changes in migration dynamics within the states over the years.

The percentage of migrants moving to other states within the country stood at around 35% in 1961 but gradually declined over time. In 1971, it dropped slightly to around 32% and continued to decline, reaching about 25% in 1991, marking the lowest point. After 1991, the percentage of interstate migrants increased slightly to around 28% by 2001, remaining steady through 2011. This trend indicates a general decline in interstate migration until 1991, followed by a gradual increase, reflecting changing internal migration patterns and socio-economic factors. The percentage of international migrants to India in 1961 was relatively high at around 3.5%, likely due to the Partition of India in 1947 and the influx of refugees from neighbouring countries. Over the following decades, the percentage steadily declined, reaching approximately 2.5% by 1971, reflecting a stabilization of cross-border tensions. By 1981, the percentage dropped to around 1.5%, coinciding with fewer geopolitical upheavals. In 1991, the percentage fell below 1%, likely due to stricter policies and regional refugee crises. Between 2001 and 2011, the percentage remained stable at around 0.5%, with a slight increase observed by 2011, possibly due to economic migration. India became a more attractive destination for economic opportunities, particularly for migrants from neighbouring countries like Nepal, Bangladesh, and Bhutan.

4.3 Projection

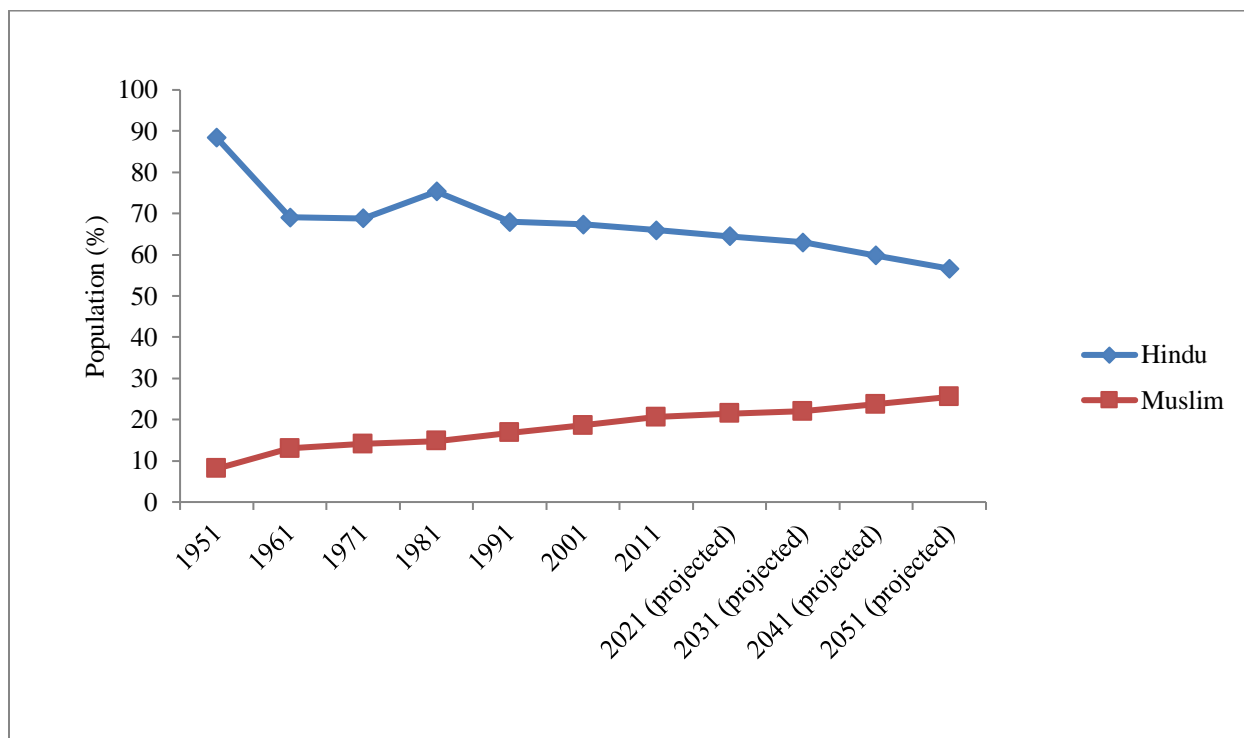
Population projections are estimates of future population size and composition based on current demographic trends and assumptions about future changes. These projections serve as vital tools for policymakers, researchers, and planners, providing insights into potential demographic shifts and their societal implications. They are conducted for various reasons, including policy and resource planning, economic forecasting, and social service development. By anticipating future needs in areas like housing, healthcare, and education, projections enable governments and organizations to allocate resources effectively. They also play a critical role in understanding labour market trends, workforce requirements, and economic growth, guiding decisions on pensions, employment policies, and demand for goods and services.

Additionally, population projections inform urban development, helping planners design transport systems, public utilities, and sustainable urban spaces to meet future demands. They are also essential for assessing environmental challenges such as resource consumption, waste management, and climate change impacts. Demographic research relies on projections to study

long-term trends in fertility, mortality, and migration, which influence societal dynamics. Projections also support disaster preparedness by identifying regions at risk of overpopulation or underpopulation, allowing for better management of food security, health crises, and other challenges.

Projections highlight potential changes in specific demographic groups, ensuring equity and inclusivity in policy development. Their methodology involves statistical models based on fertility and mortality rates, migration trends, and current population data. While they provide a foundation for anticipating future scenarios, projections are not precise predictions and are subject to the accuracy of their underlying assumptions. Unforeseen events such as pandemics or technological breakthroughs can significantly alter projected outcomes, making them tools for preparation rather than definitive forecasts.

Figure 4.3.1 Population Growth of Hindus and Muslims in Mumbai, 1951-2051



Source: Compiled by the Author based on primary data

The graph depicts the historical and projected population percentages of Hindus and Muslims from 1951 to 2051, with projections starting from 2021. The population percentages are represented on the vertical axis (y-axis), and the years are on the horizontal axis (x-axis), including both actual census years and future projections.

Hindu Population Trend

The Hindu population shows a consistent decline in its share over the years. In 1951, the Hindu population had a significantly higher percentage (around 85-90%). However, there was a sharp drop in the following decade (1961), likely due to demographic changes, migration, or growth rates among different communities.

From 1971 to 2011, the decline in the Hindu population percentage became gradual but steady, with a slight plateau in the 1981 census, indicating a temporary stabilization in growth patterns. Post-2011 projections suggest a continued decrease in Hindu population share over the next four decades (2021-2051), reflecting a slower growth rate relative to other population segments.

By 2051, the Hindu population is projected to be close to 60%, marking a significant reduction over a century.

Muslim Population Trend

In contrast, the Muslim population percentage shows a consistent upward trend over the decades. Starting at a lower percentage (approximately 8-10%) in 1951, the share of the Muslim population gradually increased in subsequent decades. This steady growth highlights higher population growth rates within the Muslim community compared to the Hindu community.

The projections for 2021 to 2051 indicate a continued, albeit gradual, rise in the Muslim population share. By 2051, the Muslim population is projected to reach approximately 25-30%, reflecting sustained growth trends.

Overall Insights

The graph highlights a demographic shift over the century. While the Hindu population remains the majority, its proportional share has been declining. In contrast, the Muslim population share has steadily increased, driven by factors such as varying fertility rates, migration patterns, and socio-economic dynamics.

4.4 Discussion

The demographic impact of Bangladeshi and Rohingya immigration on Mumbai, as detailed in this study, highlights a complex interaction between migration patterns, urban growth, and socio-political dynamics. Mumbai, a city traditionally shaped by waves of migration, has experienced

significant challenges in recent decades due to the influx of illegal immigrants from Bangladesh and Myanmar. The pressure exerted by these migrant communities on the city's already overburdened infrastructure, labour markets, and public services has led to both tangible and intangible consequences, while migration can benefit some economies, it may harm host societies by increasing social tension and affecting local labour markets (Collier, P. (2013). A key aspect of this demographic shift is the concentration of Bangladeshi and Rohingya immigrants in the city's peripheral slums, such as Govandi, Dharavi, and Mankhurd. These areas, already marked by poor living conditions, have become hubs for low-wage, undocumented workers employed in unorganised sectors like domestic work, construction, and small-scale manufacturing. This influx has worsened overcrowding and created an urban environment where access to essential services such as water, electricity, healthcare, and education is significantly limited.

The economic impact of this demographic shift is significant. Immigrants, often without paper, typically fill low-wage jobs in the informal economy, sectors traditionally occupied by urban poor (Borjas, G. J. (1999)). This has heightened competition for employment, particularly in these areas, leading to occasional tensions between locals and immigrants. Accusations have been made that the influx of immigrants contributes to wage suppression and job scarcity. The antagonism in these areas reflects broader social and political concerns about resource allocation, identity, and security.

Additionally, the demographic changes resulting from illegal immigration have placed a heavy burden on Mumbai's public services. Many immigrants, lacking documentation, are ineligible for formal public services, but still depend on emergency state-provided services such as hospitals and schools. This has resulted in longer wait times and diminished access for the local population, underscoring the challenges of integrating large, undocumented populations into a city already grappling with urban overcrowding and economic inequality.

Finally, the presence of these immigrants has sparked a contentious debate within political circles about the implications of such migration for national security. The involvement of illegal immigrants in criminal activities or posing a threat to national identity has further fuelled an already polarised discourse.

CHAPTER 5 UNDERSTANDING THE PROCESS AND PATHWAYS OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION TO MUMBAI

*"The pressure of migration on resources reveals the limits of what even the strongest cities
can bear."*

– *Samuel P. Huntington*

5.1 Introduction

Illegal migration to Mumbai is a complex phenomenon, shaped by regional history, economic inequality, and environmental displacement, presenting both opportunities and significant threat for the city. Illegal migration typically involves individuals entering a country without necessary documentation or staying beyond the expiration of their visas. Unlike regular migrants who undergo structured processes such as obtaining passports, visas, and relevant permits, illegal migrants often leave abruptly due to urgent economic or political factors. For many, the decision to migrate without proper papers, is driven by extreme economic hardship, environmental crises, or religious induced motivation, compelling them to cross borders via unauthorized routes, often relying on smugglers or traffickers. This trend is particularly evident among migrants from neighbouring countries like Bangladesh and Pakistan, who come to Mumbai in search of safety and better opportunities. Their journeys, marked by significant risks and limited legal pathways, highlight the broader challenges of illegal migration in the region (UNHCR, 2019; De Haas, 2021).

Historically, illegal migration from Bangladesh increased significantly after its independence in 1971, driven by economic hardship and environmental vulnerability. Many Bangladeshis sought refuge in economically thriving cities like Mumbai. Literature on migration patterns indicate that climate-related disasters, such as floods and cyclones, have further intensified these flows, transforming migration into a vital survival strategy rather than merely an economic choice. Migrants fleeing religious persecution in Bangladesh and political instability in Pakistan often find their way to Mumbai, settling in areas where they can integrate into established migrant communities and secure informal labour opportunities (Kabra, 2020). Existing literature

highlights specific areas within Mumbai where illegal migrants tend to settle, particularly in neighbourhoods like Dharavi, Govandi, and Mankhurd. These areas provide low-cost housing options, informal labour markets, and established migrant networks, creating an environment where undocumented migrants find relative anonymity and job opportunities despite harsh living conditions (Kabra, 2020; Desai & Soman, 2017; Rath, 2019).

To reach these migrant populations for research purposes, snowball sampling was used, a technique commonly used in studies of hard-to-reach or hidden populations. The process started by contacting a few individuals within the migrant communities, who were then asked to refer additional respondents. This chain-referral approach facilitated access to a wider group of illegal migrants, providing a more detailed understanding of their demographic characteristics, economic activities, and everyday challenges. After identifying the respondents, dialect method such as accents, phrases, and linguistic nuances has been used to distinguish Rohingya and Bangladeshi immigrants without direct questioning. This approach allowed for a more accurate understanding of their demographic spread, particularly in neighbourhoods known for high concentrations of undocumented migrants.

However, this illegal migration significantly impacts Mumbai's socio-economic and political landscape as they contribute to the informal economy, filling labour shortages in industries like construction, domestic work, and street vending. Furthermore, the issue of illegal migration has become politically charged, often surfacing in election campaigns as parties leverage it to rally support, framing the matter within debates on national identity and security. Crackdowns on illegal migrants, motivated by security concerns, have led to periodic deportations; however, the scale of migration complicates enforcement efforts, allowing many migrants to evade detection. The enduring cycle of illegal immigration thus reflects ongoing regional challenges related to economic disparity, environmental crises, and political instability, highlighting the need for balanced policies that address both the socio-economic contributions and the infrastructural demands posed by illegal migrants in Mumbai.

5.2 Overview of Illegal Immigration to Mumbai: Patterns and Networks

The analysis of illegal immigration to Mumbai reveals a significant influx of migrants, primarily from Bangladesh and Myanmar, with smaller groups from Pakistan and Nepal. These migrants

are concentrated in neighbourhoods like Dharavi, Nalasopara, Govandi, Mankhurd, Chembur, Ambedkarnagar, Kurla, Kamathipura, Ghatkopar, Byculla, Turbha, Vikhroli, and Sarradung, with many arriving with family or friends, although some migrate alone. Established networks of relatives and acquaintances in Mumbai play a pivotal role in facilitating migration by providing essential support, such as securing employment, housing, and navigating bureaucratic processes. These networks, along with brokers and agents, help migrants settle by offering temporary shelter and guidance, often through informal channels. Many migrants maintain strong connections with their home communities, forming cohesive networks that provide mutual aid. The average duration of residence before migration to Mumbai for Bangladeshi migrants is around 20 years, indicating long-standing socio-economic patterns of cross-border movement. Social networks, brokers, and political actors, particularly during elections, significantly shape this migration process. Migrants rely on these connections to reduce the risks and uncertainties of migration, while political patronage sometimes binds them to political actors, further perpetuating their vulnerable status.

5.2.1 Migration Patterns

The migration patterns of Bangladeshi nationals, particularly illegal migrants to Mumbai, follow both traditional and evolving paths. A significant trend within these patterns is the family-first strategy, where typically one member, often a male, migrates first to secure work and housing, laying the groundwork for other family members to join later. This strategy minimizes risks and spreads the financial and logistical costs of migration, allowing for smoother integration into urban life. Traditional migration pathways heavily rely on established family connections and networks, enabling migrants to navigate the challenges of relocation more effectively. In this context, family members who have already settled in Mumbai often serve as crucial resources, providing housing, employment leads, and emotional support to newcomers.

In contrast, evolving migration paths reflect shifts in socio-political dynamics and economic opportunities. A growing observation is the increased migration of Bangladeshi women, often originating from rural areas where economic opportunities are severely constrained. These women seek better economic prospects, drawn by the hope of improved livelihoods in Mumbai. Some are driven by family pressures or personal circumstances and may even migrate as part of organized groups influenced by political affiliations. With limited job opportunities, however,

many face difficult choices upon arrival in Mumbai, some drawn into black market industries like prostitution and drug trafficking, often concealing their actual job profiles from families back home.

Table 5.2.1 below highlights the distribution of illegal migrants to Mumbai according to their region or country of origin, shedding light on the stopover destination before arrival in Mumbai.

Table 5.2.1 Country and State of Residence Before Arrival in Mumbai: Distribution of Population

Residence before arriving Mumbai	Population (%)
West Bengal	46.3
Assam	10
Tripura	6.7
Jharkhand	11
Direct Maharashtra/Mumbai	14.3
Bihar	6.7
Uttar Pradesh	3.3
Nepal	1.7

Source: Compiled by the Author based on primary data

Table 5.2.1 shows the stopover destination of illegal immigrants before arriving in Mumbai on the basis of question asked about the last place of residence, highlighting that 46.3% come from West Bengal after coming to India through the porous border. Jharkhand and Assam follow with 11% and 10%, respectively. Tripura and Bihar each account for 6.7% of the illegal immigrants, with people from Bangladesh coming directly to Maharashtra (14.3%), indicating notable cross-border migration patterns. Smaller contributions come from Uttar Pradesh (3.3%) and Nepal (1.7%).

Tripathi (2016) highlights the socio-economic and demographic impact of illegal Bangladeshi immigration on urban areas like Mumbai, where government responses have been inconsistent. As these female migrants, particularly those who come alone, engage in low-wage, labor-intensive sectors such as domestic work or small-scale manufacturing, they contribute to the informal economy while simultaneously facing precarious living conditions. Despite these challenges, the ability to send remittances back home provides these women with a sense of agency and control over their economic future, even as they navigate the complexities of illegal migration.

Through these interconnected migration patterns, it becomes evident that Bangladeshi women, like their male counterparts, are actively shaping the landscape of migration to Mumbai. Their journeys, often fraught with risk, demonstrate resilience and adaptability to the demands of urban life while maintaining strong ties to their communities back in Bangladesh. The role of political affiliations, family networks, and remittance flows all contribute to the evolving dynamics of illegal Bangladeshi migration to Mumbai, offering a nuanced understanding of how gender and socio-political factors intersect within migration processes.

5.2.2 Duration of Stay of Illegal Migrants

The data on the duration of stay of illegal migrants from Bangladesh provides crucial insights into the socio-economic integration trajectories of undocumented migrant populations in urban settings like Mumbai.

Table 5.2.2 Duration of Stay for Illegal Bangladeshi Immigrants in India

Duration of Stay (years)	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
< 1 year	53	17.7%
1 > - < 5 years	137	45.7%
5 > - < 10 years	83	27.7%
10 > years	27	9%

Source: Compiled by the Author based on primary data

About 45.77% had 1 to 5 years duration of stay in Mumbai navigating the intermediate stages of settlement relying heavily on informal labor markets and communal networks to mitigate risks and secure economic opportunities.

Migrants who have stayed for 5 to 10 years (27.67%) secured more permanent employment in the informal sector, such as construction, domestic work, or small-scale retail, and have also developed informal housing solutions in slum areas or unregulated settlements. Their growing access to essential services, though often through unofficial channels, represents a gradual yet significant form of urban integration. Over time, their deepening presence in Mumbai's economic and social fabric not only secures their own livelihoods but also helps pave the way for new migrants, a trend that aligns with the theories of cumulative causation in migration studies. (Massey et al., 1993).

There were about 9% long-term migrants who have stayed for ten years or more in Mumbai. Long-term migrants are often key facilitators of informal support systems, acting as

intermediaries between newly arrived migrants and the resources they need. This network-based assistance perpetuates the migration cycle by lowering the barriers for new migrants, thereby reinforcing Mumbai's role as a magnet for illegal immigration from Bangladesh. These findings align with studies on transnational networks, where established migrants serve as “bridging capital” (Putnam, 2000), fostering community-based mechanisms of survival and integration.

There were about 17.7% illegal migrants who were new arrivals meaning their stay in Mumbai was for less than one year whose reliance on brokers, community leaders, and social networks not only compensates for their lack of legal standing but also allows for rapid economic participation.

The data highlights a complex relationship between the length of stay and the socio-economic integration of undocumented Bangladeshi migrants. Short-term migrants are swiftly integrated into informal labor markets, while medium- to long-term migrants strengthen their economic positions and serve as facilitators for future migration. This creates a self-reinforcing cycle, where each wave of migration supports the next, aided by established community networks and the informal economy. The findings emphasize the need to address not only the legal status of migrants but also the broader socio-economic systems that enable and sustain such migration.

5.2.3 Problems Faced Immigrants During Border Crossing

The phenomenon of illegal immigration poses a myriad of challenges for individuals attempting to cross borders. Among these, Bangladeshi migrants often face significant hurdles that impede their journey and impact their well-being. Analyzing the data from recent surveys reveals key issues that highlight the urgent need for improved border security and migrant support systems in India.

Table 5.2.3 summarizes the common problems encountered by illegal Bangladeshi immigrants during their border crossings. The findings illustrate a range of significant challenges that these migrants face, emphasizing the complexities involved in their migration journeys.

Table 5.2.3 Common Problems Faced by Illegal Bangladeshi Immigrants During Border Crossing: Population Breakdown by Issue

Problems Faced During Border Crossing	Percentage
Lack of Documents	20.96
Bribery/Corruption	15.59
Language Barriers	13.98
Detention by Border Authorities	10.22
Physical Violence or Harassment	8.60
Separation from Family Members	5.91
Lack of Food/Water/Shelter	4.84
Long Waiting Times	5.38
Health Issues	3.76
Transportation Problems	3.23
Other (specify)	7.53
Did Not Participate	38.00
Total	100

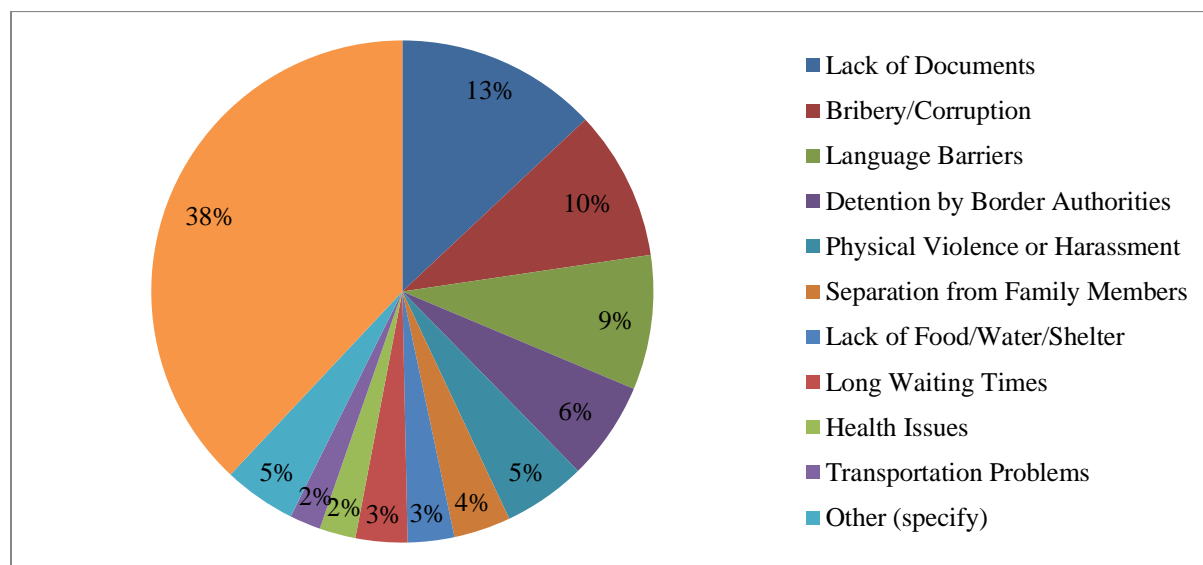
Source: Compiled by the Author based on primary data

Among the 300 respondents, a notable portion (20.96%) reported a lack of documentation as their primary challenge, highlighting the widespread issue of insufficient or missing legal papers that complicate border crossings. Bribery and corruption emerged as another significant issue, affecting (15.59%), which indicates that migrants often have to navigate through illicit payments to facilitate their crossing. Language barriers were cited by (13.98%) respondents, pointing to communication difficulties that hinder their interactions with border authorities or local communities. Detention by border authorities impacted (10.22%), reflecting the legal risks involved in crossing borders without proper documentation. Furthermore, (8.60%) reported experiencing physical violence or harassment, while (5.91%) faced separation from family members, indicating the emotional toll of migration.

Basic needs also emerged as a concern, with (4.84%) respondents indicating a lack of access to food, water, or shelter, and (5.38%) reporting long waiting times during border crossing. Health issues were reported by (3.76%), and transportation problems were cited by (3.23%), underscoring additional logistical challenges. A smaller segment (7.53%) mentioned other unspecified challenges, which may include unique or context-specific issues. Notably, (38%) did not participate in sharing their experiences, indicating potential hesitation or reluctance to disclose sensitive information regarding their migration journey.

The data from this survey illustrates the multifaceted challenges illegal Bangladeshi immigrants face during border crossings, revealing a pressing need for enhanced border security and supportive measures. The high percentage of respondents reporting a lack of documentation underscores the urgency of addressing legal pathways for migration. Strengthening anti-corruption measures is vital, as indicated by the significant number of individuals who faced bribery. Additionally, language barriers complicate interactions with border authorities, suggesting a need for multilingual support services to facilitate communication.

Figure 5.2.1 Problems Suffered by the Immigrants in Crossing the Borders



Source: Compiled by the Author based on primary data

Given these challenges, there is a clear call for more robust border security frameworks that prioritize humanitarian considerations alongside enforcement. Enhanced training for border personnel, improved legal assistance for migrants, and the establishment of safe passage protocols could mitigate the challenges faced by individuals crossing borders illegally.

Furthermore, the high percentage of non-participation in the survey indicates potential fear or mistrust of authorities, reinforcing the need to build trust between migrant communities and border management entities. Addressing these complexities through informed policies and protective measures will be crucial in creating a safer and more just migration experience in India.

5.2.4 Assistance and Social Support Received by Illegal Migrants

Illegal Bangladeshi migrants to Mumbai rely heavily on various forms of informal support throughout their migration journey, as observed during our field investigations, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions (FGDs). The support for migrants begins at the initial stage, where politically connected networks or intermediaries help them cross borders. These groups play a crucial role in arranging transportation, providing forged documents, and guiding migrants through complex routes to avoid detection. However, reliance on such networks often exposes migrants to exploitation, as intermediaries charge exorbitant fees, resulting in cycles of debt and dependency.

Upon arrival in Mumbai, migrants are supported by informal community networks. These networks, consist of relatives, co-nationals, or previously settled migrants, provide essential short-term assistance, such as temporary accommodations in overcrowded slums and access to basic necessities like food and sanitation. While these support systems help migrants manage the immediate challenges of urban life, they offer little long-term stability or security.

The most significant support is found in the realm of employment. Migrants, particularly women, often secure jobs through social connections established by earlier arrivals. These informal networks help them access work in sectors such as domestic labor, small-scale manufacturing, or other low-skilled industries. While these connections are vital for employment, the lack of formal employment channels leaves migrants vulnerable to poor working conditions, low wages, and exploitation. The absence of legal protections in these jobs further marginalizes migrants within the urban economy.

Our research highlights the dual nature of these support systems. On the one hand, they are indispensable for the survival and initial settlement of migrants in Mumbai, providing access to basic resources and employment opportunities.

5.2.5 Community Networks and Integration

Once settled, migrants often integrate into community networks that provide both economic and social support (Table 5.2.4). These networks are rooted in shared ethnic, regional, or religious identities, helping migrants maintain ties to their home regions while adapting to urban life. Religious and family gatherings act as key occasions for migrants to connect with others from similar backgrounds, fostering a sense of community in an otherwise foreign city. Events like Eid, Muharram, and various family functions play a crucial role in reinforcing these connections. During these celebrations, migrants invite not only their family and friends but also those who have supported them in their journey. This includes brokers, community leaders, and political figures who have been instrumental in providing support or resources. Brokers and agents, in particular, are often integral to these gatherings. They have established relationships within the community and can facilitate connections between newcomers and local residents. By inviting these individuals, migrants not only show gratitude but also strengthen their social networks, creating a web of mutual aid that can be vital in times of need.

Table 5.2.4 Support Networks for Illegal Bangladeshi Immigrants: Number of Population by Type of Supporter

Migration Supporters	Percentage
Family	40.00
Relatives	15.00
Neighbors	11.70
Friends	8.30
Group/NGO	16.70
No Help	8.30
Total	100

Source: Compiled by the Author based on primary data

The data on support networks for illegal immigrants from Bangladesh reveals the main community resources that these people depend on. Out of the 300 respondents, the largest group, (40%), received assistance from family, suggesting that family ties are essential for both enabling and maintaining migration. This family-based support likely includes financial assistance, housing, and other resources necessary for starting a stable life in the host nation. Relatives contribute significantly, helping (15% of the total population), while neighbors provide support for (11.7%), demonstrating the importance of community relationships for migrants beyond their

immediate family. Friends offer assistance to (8.3%), indicating that friendships, although smaller in number, still play a role in the support system. Additionally, (16.7%) receive help from groups and NGOs, suggesting organized community support that aids migrant in navigating obstacles or gaining access to resources. However, (8.3%) report not receiving any assistance, indicating that a small percentage of individuals lack a solid support system. Overall, this data highlights the crucial role of close-knit support systems, particularly family, in helping undocumented immigrants from Bangladesh overcome the challenges associated with migration.

5.2.6 External Contact Status

The data on external contact status among the Bangladeshi immigrant population in Mumbai reveals that a substantial portion has connections outside India (**Table 5.2.5**).

Table 5.2.5 Bangladeshi Immigrant Population in Mumbai: External Contact Status

Outside Indian Contacts	Percentages of Population (%)
Yes	45
No	55
Total	100

Source: Compiled by the Author based on primary data

Out of 300 respondents, 45% of individuals report having external contacts, while 55% do not. These external contacts could serve various purposes, potentially offering information or facilitating connections. The remaining 55% without such contacts may have a more localized support system within Mumbai itself, relying on networks in their immediate environment. This distribution indicates that nearly half maintain ties outside India, which could influence their movements or decisions, while the rest rely more exclusively on local support.

5.2.7 Planned International Destinations

The data on planned international destinations among the Bangladeshi immigrant population in Mumbai indicates that a portion of the population is considering migration beyond India.

Table 5.2.6 Distribution of Bangladeshi Immigrants in Mumbai by Planned International Destinations

Planned Destination Outside India	Number of Population (%)
Yes	40
No	60

Total

100

Source: Compiled by the Author based on primary data

Out of 300 respondents, 40% report planning to move to destinations outside India, while the remaining 60% do not have such plans (Table 5.2.6). This suggests that while the majority of immigrants are likely to remain in India, a significant minority is looking at further relocation. These plans could be driven by various factors, such as perceived opportunities abroad or personal circumstances. The data highlights that while most respondents appear settled in their current location, there remains a notable interest in relocating internationally among a portion of the population.

5.2.8 Undocumented NGOs and Religious Groups

The research findings reveal significant involvement from undocumented NGOs and religious community groups, which operate in a legal grey area to provide essential services to illegal migrants while avoiding official scrutiny. Often led by community leaders or politically influential individuals with vested interests, these organizations facilitate access to healthcare, education, and informal banking for migrants, particularly those from Bangladesh and Pakistan. Due to fears of legal repercussions, many migrants hesitate to disclose their connections to these groups. However, these undocumented organizations play a crucial role in integrating migrants into their new communities through shared religious practices, festivals, and events that foster social ties and mutual support.

Additionally, there is a growing connection between illegal migrants and local political figure. Some migrants have reported receiving assistance from politicians or their representatives, who help secure housing or provide fake documents in exchange for political loyalty. This relationship is often leveraged during elections, as political figures rely on migrant votes, creating a complex web of dependency that complicates migrants' integration into the city's legal frameworks. Community leaders and undocumented NGOs also act as intermediaries, ensuring that migrants receive necessary protections and services despite their illegal status. This dynamic foster mutual dependency: migrants rely on these leaders for resources, while political actors benefit from the support of this vulnerable population.

In contrast, registered NGOs face significant legal and bureaucratic barriers that limit their ability to assist undocumented migrants. Most legal organizations avoid engaging with these

populations to remain compliant with government regulations, leaving a void that undocumented NGOs fill. While these informal organizations provide critical support, they often lack the legal legitimacy to challenge exploitation or advocate for migrants' rights, perpetuating a cycle of dependency without guaranteeing stability or legal recognition.

Despite their illegal status, many migrants successfully integrate into Mumbai's social and economic fabric through these informal systems. They often form community groups based on regional, religious, or experiential commonalities, providing emotional, social, and financial support. Cultural and religious events play a vital role in maintaining these connections, allowing migrants to gather and share resources. However, this integration into the informal economy presents challenges, as migrants are frequently exploited due to their vulnerable status. Accessing formal employment, housing, and legal services remains difficult, and their reliance on undocumented NGOs and political actors perpetuates informality, hindering their prospects for legal recognition and long-term stability.

5.3 Summary

The study emphasizes the complexity of illegal migration patterns to Mumbai, with a particular focus on the substantial influx of migrants from Bangladesh and Myanmar. The concentration of these communities in specific areas highlights the establishment of localized support networks, which play a vital role in the migration process. These networks not only ease the initial adjustment to urban life but also provide ongoing assistance in securing employment and housing, thereby fostering social cohesion among migrants.

Despite the advantages offered by these informal networks, the limited engagement with governmental and non-governmental services points to a potential area for policy intervention. Enhanced access to support systems could improve the socio-economic conditions of illegal migrants, fostering greater integration into the urban fabric of Mumbai.

Furthermore, the ongoing connection to their home communities indicates that migration is not simply a one-time event but part of a broader socio-economic strategy for many individuals. Addressing the challenges faced by these migrant populations, such as lack of documentation and restricted access to resources, is essential for fostering inclusive urban development and protecting the rights of marginalized communities.

Based on these findings, further research is needed to examine the socio-political implications of illegal migration in Mumbai, particularly in relation to integration policies and community development initiatives that can support both migrants and the broader urban population.

CHAPTER 6 DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF ILLEGAL BANGLADESHI AND ROHINGYA IMMIGRANTS

"If a city is not prepared for newcomers, they may become burdens rather than contributors."

– Victor Davis Hanson

6.1 Introduction

In India, the migration of Bangladeshi and Rohingya populations has contributed to the settlement of these groups in particular areas of cities, resulting in the informal expansion of these neighbourhoods. The influx of illegal immigrants from Bangladesh fleeing persecution in Myanmar, along with the arrival of Rohingya communities, has significantly influenced migration patterns. Understanding the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of these groups is crucial to assessing their impact on the society and economy of Mumbai.

The push factors driving migration from Bangladesh and Myanmar are diverse, including severe economic hardship, political instability and systemic discrimination. Migrants often arrive in Mumbai with limited resources, facing significant challenges in building a new life in a city marked by its socio-economic diversity. The experiences of Bangladeshi illegal immigrants and Rohingya refugees are part of a broader context of migration and survival, necessitating a closer examination of their effects. Bangladeshi migrants are primarily motivated by economic factors, seeking better opportunities due to limited job prospects and poor living conditions in their home country (Sharma & Raju, 2020). Along the ridge border, the economic disparity between Bangladesh and India has contributed to a continuous flow of Bangladeshi migrants into India. Data reveals that millions of undocumented Bangladeshi immigrants live in India, with a significant population in states like West Bengal, Assam, Tripura, and Maharashtra, where cultural and linguistic similarities reduce their visibility (Bhattacharya, 2019). These migrants

often find work in low-wage industries such as construction, agriculture, domestic labour and work and other manual sectors (Jha & Bose, 2021).

Ethnic persecution and violence have been major driving forces behind Rohingya migration, as they remain one of the most marginalized communities in Myanmar. Despite being granted citizenship under Myanmar's 1982 Citizenship Law, the Rohingyas face severe restrictions on access to travel, education, and health care, making life in Myanmar unbearable (UNHCR, 2022). These oppressive conditions have forced hundreds of thousands of Rohingyas to seek refuge in neighbouring countries, including Bangladesh, India and Malaysia, where large populations have settled (Ahsan Ullah, 2021). In India, Rohingyas often live in temporary settlements with limited basic services, further hindering their social and economic integration. Unlike Bangladeshi migrants, who share linguistic or cultural ties with Indian communities, Rohingya migrants face additional obstacles due to linguistic & cultural differences, exacerbating their socio-economic barriers the exclusion is further higher (Ghosh & Sarkar, 2020).

The demographic profile of Rohingya migrants in Bangladesh differs in several ways, reflecting their unique migration experiences and socio-economic conditions. Bangladeshi immigrants are predominantly young men seeking employment opportunities, while the Rohingya migrants typically move as family units, escaping violence (Molla & Chowdhury, 2020). In addition, literacy rates among these people are often low, which restricts their employment prospects, confining them mostly to low-wage jobs and informal sectors (Khan & Gupta, 2018). This report aims to offer a comprehensive analysis of the demographic, social and economic aspects of the illegal Bangladeshi and Rohingya migrants. This understanding is crucial, as the socio-economic inclusion of this population has significant implications for India's labour market dynamics, social inclusion efforts and public policy framework.

Existing literature indicates that these communities face significant challenges in accessing employment, housing, healthcare, education and basic services. Upon arrival, many migrants experience difficult economic conditions, often relying on informal labour and low-wage jobs, which further marginalize them in urban areas while hindering their socio-economic advancement. Understanding this process is crucial to grasp how illegal immigrants navigate the complexities of urban life in Mumbai and its impact on local economies. Factor such as age,

gender and family structure play a vital role in shaping the experiences of illegal Bangladeshi Rohingya migrants in Mumbai. The size of these groups influences their social networks and support systems, which are essential for their survival. These dynamics also raise important questions about local responses to migration, especially in cases where residents fear cultural crises or economic competition. Such concerns can manifest in various forms, from social exclusion and discrimination to organized protest against perceived threats posed by immigrant communities.

As Mumbai grapples with migration challenges, it is crucial to consider the broader social implications of illegal migration. This study aims to highlight the socio-economic difficulties faced by illegal immigrants and their impact on the urban landscape of Mumbai. By examining the experiences of these communities, we aim to foster a more nuanced understanding of migration, moving beyond the simplistic narrative of exploitation and hostility.

6.2 Results

Table 6.2.1 shows the socio-economic immigrants in Mumbai. Out the 300 respondents selected for the study, 164 (54.7%) are men, and 136 (45.3%) are women. The comparatively lower percentage of women may reflect several social reasons, including family dynamics, cultural norms around migration, or the economic circumstances of the community in question

Table 6.2.1.Socio-economic Characteristics of Immigrants in Mumbai

Socio-Economic Characteristics	Male	Female	Total
N	164	136	300
Religion-wise Distribution (%)			
Hindu	1.3	2.3	3.6
Muslim	53.3	43.0	96.3
Social Category (%)			
Unreserved	30.0	20.0	50.0
OBC	18.0	20.3	38.3
SC	6.6	5.0	11.6
Educational Attainment (%)			
Illiterate	20.0	16.6	36.6
Primary	8.3	5.0	13.3
Secondary	16.6	13.3	30.0
Higher	6.6	1.6	8.3
Madarsa	3.0	8.6	11.6
Marital Status			
Unmarried	25.0	15.0	40.0
Currently Married	23.3	23.3	46.6
Divorced	3.3	1.7	5.0

Widow	3.0	5.3	8.3
Employment Status			
Employed	46.6	33.3	80.0
Unemployed/ Unreported	8.0	12.0	20.0

Table 6.2.1 provides a comprehensive socio-economic profile of illegal immigrants in Mumbai, highlighting characteristics such as religion, social category, education, marital status, and employment. A striking feature is the religious composition, where 96.33% of the surveyed individuals identify as Muslim, while only 3.676% identify as Hindu. This significant representation of Muslim individuals suggests specific migration patterns potentially influenced by geographic, political, or economic factors. In terms of social categories, the data reveals that half of the population belongs to the unreserved category, while the rest are distributed among Other Backward Classes (38.33%), and Scheduled Castes (11.67%). This diversity in social categories indicates a blend of backgrounds among the immigrants, although the unreserved category remains the majority.

Educational attainment was low with 36.7% being illiterate and only 8.3% having higher education though about 30%, completed secondary education. Additionally, 11.7% have received madarsa education which is a low level of formal education and restricts contribution and value through participation in economic activity. Marital status data shows that 46.67% are married, while 40% are unmarried, and small percentage are either divorced (5%) or widowed (8.3%). The high number of married individuals suggests family responsibilities that might influence their socio-economic needs, whereas the significant number of unmarried individuals may indicate younger migrants or those without family ties.

Employment data reveals that 60% of the population is employed, with 23.33% of women signifies economic activity, but 40% of unemployed population which is quite high with Indian women participation rate. This high unemployment rate underscores economic challenges and potential instability within the community, possibly leading many to depend on informal work.

Table 6.2.2 Basic facilities accessed by Immigrants (%)

Basic Facilities where?	Yes	No	Total
Private Toilet Facility	65.7	34.3	100
Water Facility	92.0	8.0	100
Medical Insurance	42.7	57.3	100
Bank Account	47.0	53.0	100

Source: Compiled by the Author based on primary data

The data on basic amenities accessible to the assessed population reveals important information about their living circumstances and access to key services (**Table 6.2.2**). The vast majority of the respondents 65.67% have access to private toilet facility, while 34.33% households use public or communal facilities. Regarding the availability of water facilities, 92 % of the respondents said they had access to safe water sources, whereas just 8% of people lacked this essential source.

About 42.7% of illegal immigrants have health insurance, and 47% of respondents have bank accounts even though they are undocumented.

6.3 Discussion

The demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the Bangladeshi immigrants illustrate complicated patterns that increase sizeable concerns regarding social cohesion. While migrants regularly make contributions to the economy, their presence also exacerbates social pressure and various challenges (González, 2020; Papademetriou et al., 2019).

The socio-economic and demographic nature of migrants reveals notable disparities. A significant gender imbalance characterises the migrant population, with men making up the majority of immigrants, a trend consistent with global migration patterns. This imbalance presents unique social challenges, often leading to strained social systems and dynamics. This trend reflects broader migration patterns where individuals primarily move for economic or employment opportunities, while social and cultural often limit women’s mobility. This gender disparity not only highlight social barriers but also influences the demographic makeup of the migrant communities, creating a skewed gender ratio that influences family structures and social integration in Mumbai. Financial exclusion further intensifies the vulnerabilities faced by

Bangladeshi immigrants. Without access to banking services, many migrants continue to be reliant on informal financial systems which impact both family dynamics and social integration (Kumar & Mirdha, 2021). This economic instability often leads to political mobilization, as unemployed or underemployed migrants are susceptible to exploitation by political parties that seek to capitalize their grievances (Bansal & Srivastava, 2021). Such instability can exacerbate tensions between native people and the migrants, contributing to growing community divisions (Haque, 2021).

Among the immigrants, Muslims are the largest group accounting for 53.33%. This high number also reflects religious and socioeconomic factors, as Muslim communities often face limited economic opportunities in Bangladesh promoting migration to urban areas of India. The present study shows unemployment is a major issue, while 40% of respondents reported unemployment. This economic insecurity can lead to uneven social development, poverty and low growth rates in these communities, especially when combined with low levels of education (Singh & Gupta, 2018). However, such concentrated migration raises social and economic concerns, as these communities may face additional challenges related to social integration and access to resources in urban areas, which can exacerbate existing marginalization (Kabra, 2020). In addition, cultural expectations of gender roles also discourage women from participating in the labour market, perpetuating economic inequality (Mastrorillo et al., 2016).

Apart from that, the religious composition of the immigrants, including a large representation of Muslims and other minority groups, complicates the social situation. This marginalization contributes to feelings of alienation and resentment, hinders social cohesion, and increases the potential for social violence. This situation not only affects individual acceptance in the community but also affects access to economic opportunities and support networks, which are important for successful integration (Rath, 2019). Further, immigrants from historically marginalized groups, such as Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST), exhibit underlying social structures.

The study also highlights that 34.33% of respondents do not have private sanitation facilities, increasing the risk of that drain communal resources and also lead to community violence (Jha et al., 2020). This not only undermines migrants' well-being but also fosters fear and mistrust among natives, who place a burden on migrants' public health systems. This poor sanitation

environment also contributes to health risks comes, reduces quality of life and underscores the challenges of urban infrastructure keeping pace with the demands of a growing migrant population (Desai & Soman, 2017).

6.4 Summary

The study illustrates that the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the Muslim immigrant population in Mumbai present significant challenges to social cohesion and urban integration. Economic vulnerabilities, especially in terms of formal income and unstable employment, leaving many immigrants in risk of social and political marginalization, particularly by larger religious communities, such as Muslims, exacerbating discrimination. Furthermore, inadequate sanitation facilities and educational deficiencies reveal critical gaps in urban infrastructure and resources, exacerbating health risks and limiting the potential for social and economic mobility. Addressing these interrelated issues requires comprehensive policy interventions that promote social inclusion, improve access to basic services, and support equitable economic participation, creating a more integrated and cohesive urban environment.

CHAPTER 7 ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES OF ILLEGAL BANGLADESHI AND ROHINGYA IMMIGRANTS IN MUMBAI.

"In a city, unchecked migration doesn't just change demographics; it shifts the fabric of the economy and society." – Michael Lind

7.1 Introduction

People generally migrate, either legally or illegally, due to various socioeconomic and environmental factors such as poverty, unemployment, climate change, or in search of better opportunities, including work and education. According to the 2001 Census data in India, the total number of migrants is approximately 314 million, with around 10 to 20 million migrants coming from Bangladesh, many of whom are undocumented and have crossed the border illegally. (Ref: *Artha-Journal of Social Sciences* 2019, Vol. 18, No. 4, 25-42 ISSN 0975-329X|<https://doi: 10.12724/ajss.51.2> 25 Illegal Migration and Strategic Challenges: A Case Study of Undocumented Migration from Bangladesh to India by M Mayilvaganan). Mayilvaganan has also pointed out that

the economies of the north-eastern states of India, which border Bangladesh, are largely based on industries such as tea, petroleum, and forest produce, with agriculture serving as the primary livelihood for most of the population. The significant illegal migration from Bangladesh exacerbates the strain on already limited resources, reducing the share of produce available to locals. Additionally, the influx of illegal migrants has also displaced local workers, as the immigrants are willing to accept lower wages than native labourers. In some areas, this has resulted in increased competition for jobs, leading to tensions and conflicts.

Mumbai has long been a main destination for these migrants seeking better livelihoods, and employment opportunities. For instance, in the Dharavi slum, thousands of small factories provide work for over a quarter of a million people. (rossett geography, 2024). If we analyse on the supply side these migrants come from economically disadvantaged regions, primarily rural areas in states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and neighboring countries like Bangladesh. On the demand side employers get cheap labour due to migrant’s low bargaining power, leading to establishment of immigrant community. The presence of established immigrant communities can trigger a self-reinforcing cycle of migration, where existing networks and social connections facilitate further immigration through chain migration. This cycle of migration leading to replacement of native labour at workplace by immigrants.

7.2 Result

7.2.1 Work Participation Rate of Migrants

Table 7.2.1 presents data on the total number of workers and the work participation rate (WPR) for males and females over several years. The number of male workers increased steadily from 1,540,861 in 1961 to 3,965,331 in 2011. The Work Participation Rate (WPR) for males decreased slightly from 61.73% in 1961 to 60.6% in 2011, indicating that, despite the increase in the number of male workers, the proportion of working males relative to the total male population has remained relatively stable. This reflects the city's traditionally male-dominated workforce, where men participate more in economic activities, particularly during periods of industrial and commercial growth. The number of female workers increased significantly from 145,807 in 1961 to 1,054,086 in 2011. The Work Participation Rate for females, which was quite low at 8.81% in 1961, gradually increased over the years to reach 18.8% in 2011. This indicates a notable rise in female participation in the workforce, although it remains considerably lower than the male WPR. This may be attributed to access to education, changing social norms, and more job opportunities for women in the services and education sectors. In 2011, the gender gap in work participation was significant, with 60% of males compared to 20% of females. Both male and female labour force participation has grown, and females have shown a significant increase in the WPR over the decades, though still lagging behind males in terms of workforce involvement.

Table 7.2.1 Work Participation Rate of Migrants by Sex in Mumbai, 1961-2011

Total Workers	Work Participation Rate
---------------	-------------------------

Year	Male	Female	Male	Female
1961	1540861	145807	61.73	8.81
1971	2005728	192370	57.66	7.72
1981	2579978	322221	55.45	8.97
1991	3007332	492010	55.08	11.02
2001	3764550	699698	56.87	13.06
2011	3965331	1054086	60.6	18.8

Source: (Bhagat, R. B.,2020) Demographics dynamics of mega-urban regions. The case of Mumbai

Initially, migrants often have a different economic status compared to the local population. However, over time, their economic position evolves based on the types and availability of job opportunities they can access, in contrast to those available to natives. This dynamic is especially significant in the context of immigration in Mumbai, where many migrants stay for extended periods. With support, they are able to adapt and improve their economic status through various employment opportunities. (Balan, 1969, Gurak and Caces, 1992; Mitchell and Pain, 2003; Massey and Zenteno, 1999).

Illegal migrants work in low-skilled, informal jobs that includes roles in construction, domestic work, and street vending. However, these positions often entail poor working conditions and low wages with considerable economic insecurity for these workers.

Table 7.2.2 Occupation of the Migrants by Sex

Occupation Type	Male	Female	Total
Trader	6.7	2.3	9.0
Industrial Worker	8.3	5.3	13.7
Delivery /Driver	6.3	0.0	6.3
Hawkers	5.0	2.7	7.7
Labour	10.0	6.3	16.3
Marine/Fishing Industry	15.0	6.0	21.0
Construction Worker	3.7	1.7	5.3
Domestic Worker	1.0	10.3	11.3
Prostitute & Others	0.0	9.3	9.3
Total	56	44	100

Source: Compiled by the Author based on primary data

The table 7.2.2 provides a detailed breakdown of the gender distribution across various occupation types. It reveals significant gender disparities in different fields of work. For instance, in occupations like traders, industrial workers, and marine/fishing industries, males dominate the workforce. Specifically, 6.7% of men work as traders, compared to only 2.3% of women. Similarly, in the industrial sector, 8.3% of males are employed, while 5.3% of females are involved. The marine/fishing industry shows a more pronounced gender gap, with 15% of males employed compared to just 6% of females. On the other hand, occupations such as domestic work and prostitution are predominantly female. The domestic work sector sees a significant 10.3% of women, while only 1% of men are employed in this field. In the case of prostitution, the entire 9.3% of the workforce is female, with no male representation.

Other occupations, like hawkers and construction workers, show a moderate gender disparity. In hawking, 5% of males and 2.7% of females are engaged, while in construction work, 3.7% of males and 1.7% of females are involved. Delivery and driving, a predominantly male occupation, reflects a stark contrast, with 6.3% of men working in this field and no females represented. The overall gender distribution shows a larger proportion of men in the workforce, accounting for 56% of the total workforce, compared to 44% women. This reflects the broader trend of men being more represented in physically demanding or outdoor work, while women tend to dominate sectors like domestic work and sex work, both of which are often associated with gendered societal roles. The total occupation percentages add up to 100%, emphasizing the overall composition of the workforce based on gender across different fields.

Illegal migrant women often get involved in sex work for survival due to limited job opportunities because of legal documents issues. For many women, sex work becomes a necessary means. For many illegal migrants driven by economic necessity.



Present study show that the majority of migrants from Bangladesh are women so this can be analysed that these women might have been the victim of human trafficking but it is not true because many respondents revealed that they have come to Mumbai from Bangladesh to involve into this business only by their own choice and they used to send regular remittance to their home by not revelling their original work to natal family in Bangladesh. KII reveals that, Muslim migrant women from Bangladesh adopt the strategy of marrying Muslim men in Mumbai to become a legal native of India.

The survey also found that over time immigrants and their descendants improved their language and adapted to local ways of living.

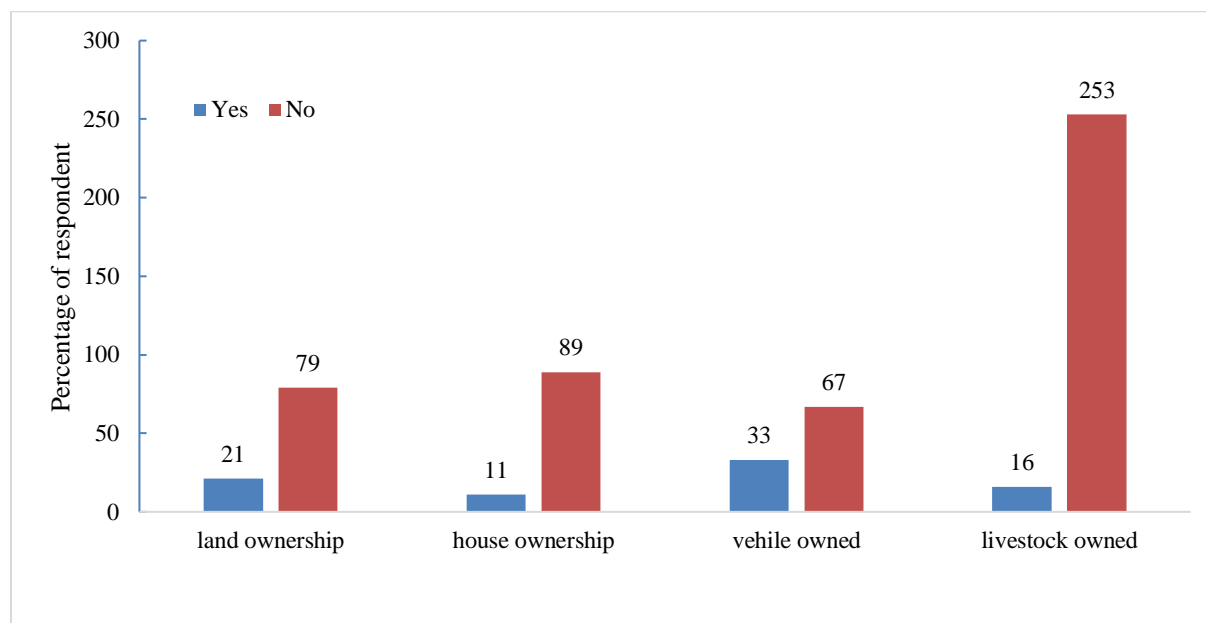
7.3 Discussion

7.3.1 The Drain on Public Resources

Increased pressure on local limited public resources is one of the most direct impacts of illegal immigration in Mumbai. Economists like George Borjas have also extensively documented the adverse economic impact of illegal immigration on local resources in the US (Borjas, 2017) Illegal immigrants tap into the public welfare system, utilizing education, healthcare, and other services without contributing to the tax base, causing strain on public services and potentially affecting the quality of life quality in the local area.

Housing policies, including rent control and slum rehabilitation initiatives, play a crucial role in shaping the living conditions of migrants and illegal migrants has significant housing-related financial implications for the government.

Figure 7.3.1 Economic Characteristics of Migrants: Assets Owned



Source: Compiled by the Author based on primary data

The survey data from 300 migrants shows that around 21% have land ownership, around 11% own houses and 33% own vehicles and around 16% migrants have livestock.

7.3.2 Problem in accomplishing SDG goals

Immigrants who do not make a good earning often stay in slum areas like Dharavi, Govandi, Malad and Ambedkarnagar etc. and live in unauthorized slums or squatter settlements due to the lack of affordable housing options. As of 2001, approximately 54% of the city's population resided in slums, occupying just 6% of the total land area. Reference add that Due to overcrowding in these settlements, immigrants often lack essential services like sanitation and clean water, which creates bottlenecks in achieving SDGs.

7.3.3 The Impact of Employment

Another critical economic implication of illegal immigration is its impact on employment. Often willing to work for less, illicit immigrants can displace local workers, leading to increased competition and salary reduction in lower-skilled jobs which breeds hostility and adds to the already existing unemployment problem the influx of illegal migrants leads to the perception that they are taking jobs away from locals, particularly during economic downturns or periods of high unemployment.

7.3.4 Unrecorded Remittances and Loss of Revenue

Illegal immigrants in Mumbai often have ties to their countries of origin and send remittances that remain unrecorded in the country's financial system. This untracked flow of money leads to a significant loss of potential tax revenue for the government survey revealed that around 84 % of the migrants send money back to their relatives.

7.3.5 Social security

Our study found that Illegal migration in Mumbai is frequently associated with various criminal activities, such as smuggling and drug trafficking where organized crime networks create an environment where illegal migrants easily become entangled in drug trafficking operations.

Our Key informant states that many illegal Bangladeshi immigrants engage in drug trafficking as a means to earn quick money targeting school students in Govandi, Kurla and Malad area. A study by the Global Organized Crime Index in 2024 highlights that major destinations for cocaine within India are affluent urban areas like New Delhi and Mumbai. This connection raises serious concerns about public safety and the socio-economic dynamics within these cities. In a study made by the National Council of Applied Economic Research in 1995 the supply from

Bangladesh is less, they smuggle arms, gold and narcotics to India. This is obviously facilitated by the linkage between infiltrators, smugglers and terrorists.

7.4 Critical observation

Illegal migration often results from unpredictable economic and political changes, both in the migrants' home countries and the destination countries. While immigration can provide economic benefits to migrants, such as better employment opportunities and higher earnings, as well as advantages for employers through a larger labour pool and reduced labour costs, it can also have negative consequences. The influx of immigrant labour can displace low-skilled native workers, putting downward pressure on wages and reducing economic opportunities for the domestic poor. This highlights the need for policies to address the negative impacts of immigration, particularly on vulnerable local populations.

7.5 Summary

This chapter examines the economic challenges posed by illegal immigration in Mumbai, where rapid population growth exceeds the creation of employment opportunities. Immigrants add to labour market competition by providing cheap labour, leading to tensions with native workers, while overcrowding in slum areas and increased pressure on public resources worsen the city's socioeconomic problems. Illegal remittances also cause revenue loss for the government. Social issues, including drug and human trafficking, especially affect the younger generation. However, immigrants play a role in the city's development by filling labour gaps in crucial industries. To address these challenges, the government should strengthen immigration laws, regulate remittances, and invest in social safety nets to alleviate economic strain, improve living conditions for immigrants, and address social problems like trafficking and crime.

CHAPTER 8 SOCIAL CONSEQUENCE OF ILLEGAL MIGRATION IN MUMBAI

"When immigration outweighs integration, society becomes fragmented, and cohesion is lost."

– Patrick Buchanan

8.1 Introduction

India's position as a significant player in global migration dynamics is underscored by its dual role as both a major source and a destination for migrants (Nandy, 2005). Approximately one in twenty migrants worldwide are of Indian origin. 71.3% of all international migrants to Asia originated from within the region (Connor, 2017). India has established itself as the leading host for international migrants in Asia, accommodating around five million individuals, predominantly from neighbouring countries such as Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Nepal (Asian Development Bank, 2018).

Migration from Bangladesh to the eastern and north eastern regions of India has been a continuous occurrence. However, it was deemed illegal after the partition of India in 1947. Many waves of forced migration were triggered by particular events, such as the partition of India in 1947, the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971, famine in Bangladesh in 1974, and finally the construction of the Kaptai hydroelectric dam. Further, the ethnic conflict in the Chittagong hills tracts led to the Chakma and Hajong migration in the 1970s and 1980's. It has been seen that the forced migrations have since subsided because of the religious prosecution on minority Hindus in Bangladesh. Nevertheless, the illegal, unauthorised movement of people from Bangladesh to India persists due to reasons such as environmental crisis, greater economic opportunities and higher living standards in India (Nandy, 2005; Singh, 2009; Nath & Nath, 2011; Mayilvaganan, 2019).

Migration can have both positive and negative effects on social fabric of the host country. But the Bangladeshi and Rohingya religious induced or intentional migration causes the availability of cheap labour force by disrupting the existing labour market and the impacts they have exerted on the local resources, leading to economic, social, and environmental crises, potential crime threat in the host region. Apart from the other effects, the government diverge substantial resources to support this large segment of the population (Mayilvaganan, 2019; Nath & Nath, 2011), which

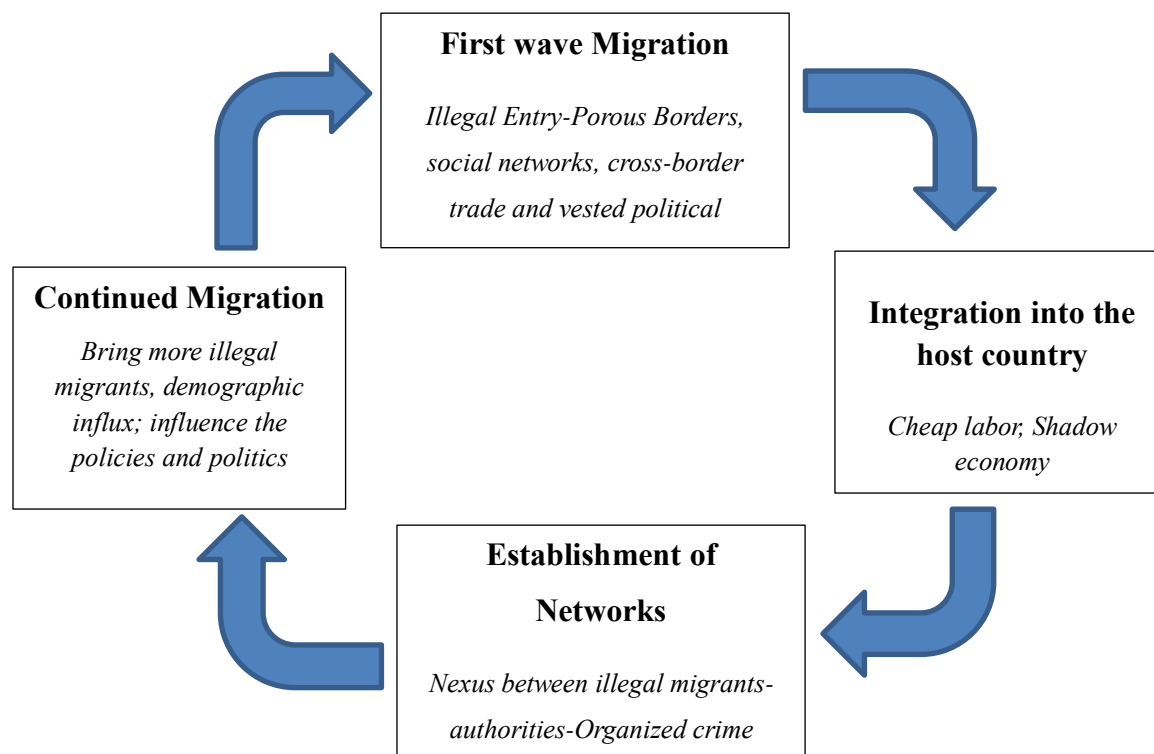
could have catered to the in development of the host country. Our study has shown that the illegal migration has led to various social changes and its potential threat in Mumbai that we have discussed in this chapter in detail.

8.2 Social Consequences of the Illegal Migration in Mumbai ---Explored by our Study

Illegal migration has further implications for the social, political and economic fabric of the country. It's evident from the study that the country faces a perpetual cycle of migration and integration which makes it a challenging issue to curb.

8.2.1 Perpetual cycle of migration and integration

Figure 8.2.1 Perpetual Cycle of Migration and Integration



8.2.1.1 First wave Migration

Studies have shown that the migrants choose illegal route over the legal because of the following reasons such as there is lack of complex documentation through an illegal route, higher success getting into India illegally, better employment prospects in India, affordability and the ease of illegal entry and finally the restrictive time limit in the formal process, etc. (Mayilvaganan, 2019; Nath & Nath, 2011).

The illegal migrants from Bangladesh enter India illegally because of the facilitating factors such as the riverine, porous borders which are densely populated. A nexus formed between the border security personnel, illegal migrants and the smugglers has helped the migrants enter India illegally (Afsar, 2008). After the migrants enter India illegally, they integrate with the host country.

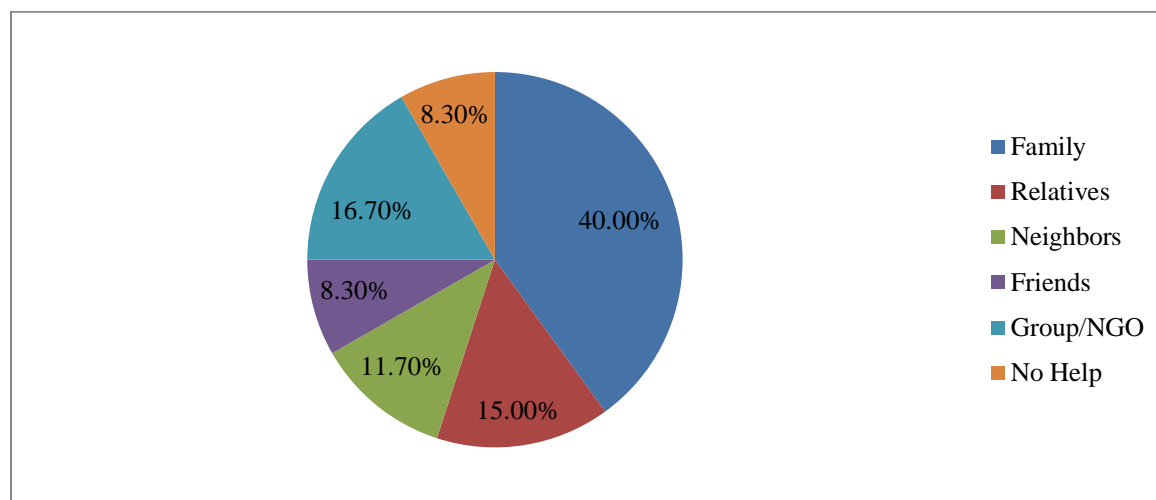
8.2.1.2 Establishment of Network

Through involvement in illegal activities, migrants establish connections with influential individuals, creating a nexus between migrants, authorities, and organized crime groups. These migrants engage in anti-social behaviours, such as goondaism, drug trafficking, and human and animal trafficking, which disrupt public order. They gain control of key areas and strategic locations in cities, such as Mohammad Ali Road and coastal regions in Mumbai, thereby influencing urban operations. As their numbers grow, they become a significant vote bank, exerting influence on the economic and socio-political landscape of the country. As their demographic and economic strength increases, they impact the policymaking processes of the country to which they do not belong, thereby affecting the lives of its citizens. This analysis is based on findings from our key informant study.

8.2.1.3 Continued Migration

By leveraging their connections with influential individuals, illegal migrants facilitate the entry of additional migrants into India via various routes. This contributes to a demographic influx, which in turn creates tensions with local citizens as resources become increasingly strained. Our study indicates that newly arrived migrants often receive assistance from those who have previously migrated, further exacerbating these challenges.

Figure 8.2.2 Supporters of Illegal Migrants for Continued Migration



Source:

Compiled by the Author based on primary data

8.2.2 Impact on the demography

Population dynamics of the north-eastern states of India have been affected severely due to illegal migration from Bangladesh, Nepal and Myanmar. For instance, in states like Assam and Nagaland, the population growth rate was higher compared to the national average. The growth hasn't been consistent in all parts of the states. It can be seen that the growth rate is disproportionately higher in the areas bordering Bangladesh (Singh, 2009). This demographic invasion has led to many conflicts between the Indians and the migrants that affect the governance of the states in India (Weiner, 1983). Our study also found a similar pattern of religiously induced huge concentration of Population in many pockets of Mumbai, We have found around 94 pockets in Mumbai and many bottlenecks where they illegally occupied.

8.2.3 Effect on religious composition

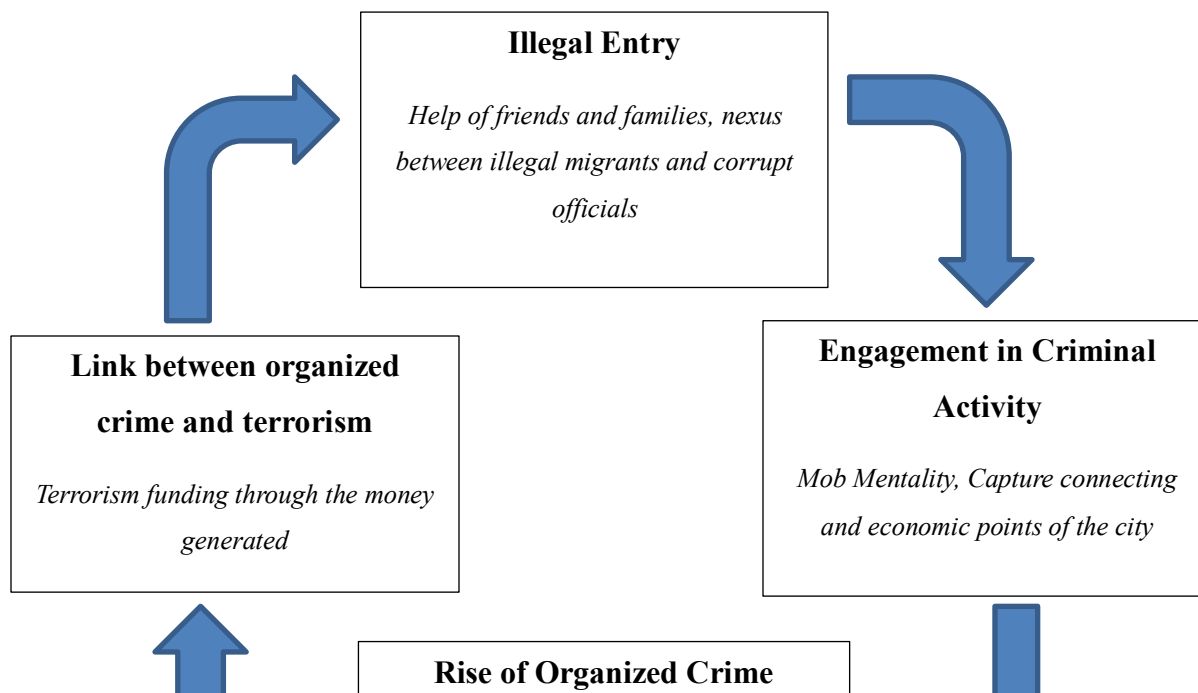
Illegal migration affects the demography of religions in Indian states and cities. Though both Hindu and Muslim migrants come to India from Bangladesh, they have a skewed migration ratio of 1:3 (Nandy, 2005). The 2001 census findings show that between 1981 and 1991, the overall Muslim population growth rate in India was about 52.8%, while in West Bengal, it was significantly higher at approximately 61.05% (Fig 8.2.4). Meanwhile, the Hindu population in Assam declined to 64.9 percent, down from 67.1 percent in 1991 (Singh, 2009, Naik, 2016).

Although the migration pressure is primarily on the border states such as Assam, West Bengal, Meghalaya, and Tripura, many migrants have also moved to major metropolitan areas like Delhi,

Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Jaipur, and various other urban centres (Nandy, 2005). The pattern also holds true in case of Mumbai. The population of Hindu’s have been decreasing over the years whereas the population of Muslims have been on the rise. One of the mains reasons attributing to this increase is the illegal Muslim migrants from Bangladesh. Our KII reveals that the migrant initially enters India and settle in the Eastern states of India. But later migrate to metropolitan cities for better employment, livelihood opportunities. Such migration has attributed to the increase in the population of Muslims in cities like Mumbai apart from other reasons. Disproportionate increase of population in one religion leads to polarisation due to insecurities of the host population. This further leads to conflict between the various religions living in the city.

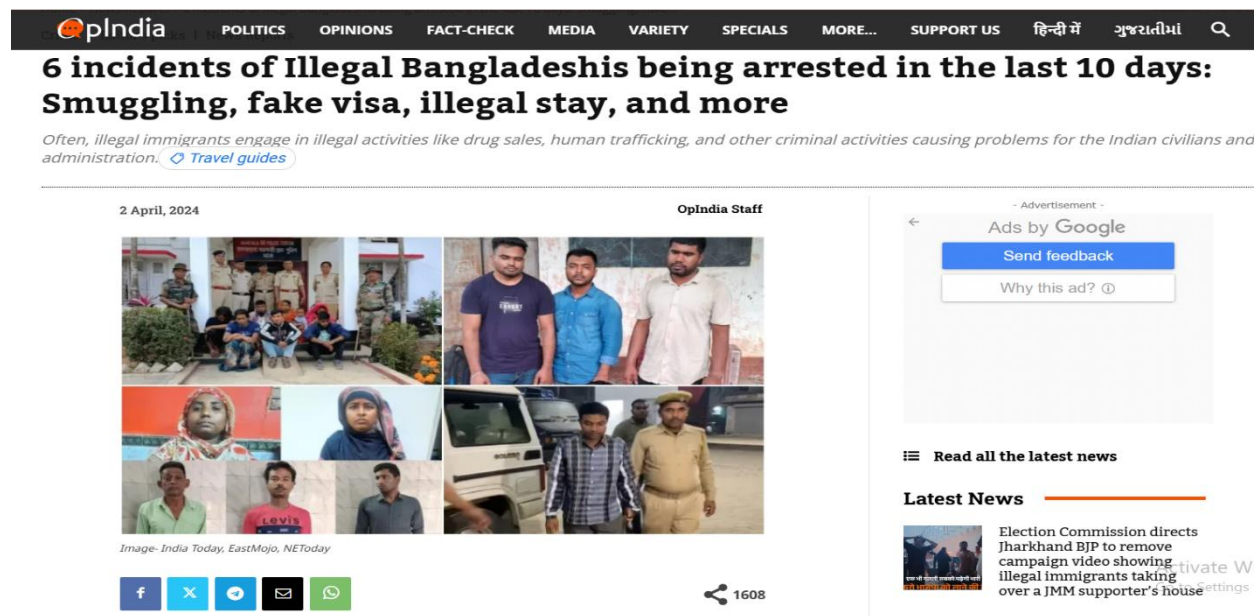
Fig. 8.2.3 explains the vicious cycle of crime carried out by the illegal migrants. As per the KII the illegal migrants tend to have a mob mentality where they get involved in crimes in a group to evade getting caught by the law. They tend to settle in clusters capturing the important trade and connecting areas of the city, thereby establishing their dominance in the city. They become part of organised crimes, launder the money made through illegal ways, thereby affecting the economy and also causing a major threat to the country’s security. The affect the border security of the nation as these illegal migrants are located in the coastal regions which helps them to establish nexus between the border security forces and the corrupt officials in the regions, thereby bringing more migrants into the country. The internal security is at threat as they can fund terrorism activities through the money from the illegal activities. So, collusion exists between the illegal migration, organised crime and terrorism.

Figure 8.2.3 Schematic Diagram of Vicious Cycle of Crime



8.2.4 Crime and safety concerns

The illegal status of migrants heightens their vulnerability to involve in crime and black marketing and trafficking, as they often lack awareness of their duty to the nation, resulting in many cases of crimes going unreported. Our study also found that Migrant Women are frequently involved in dual-income illegal businesses like roadside vendors at the daytime and prostitutes at night time.



The screenshot shows a news article on the OpIndia website. The article title is "6 incidents of Illegal Bangladeshis being arrested in the last 10 days: Smuggling, fake visa, illegal stay, and more". Below the title is a sub-headline: "Often, illegal immigrants engage in illegal activities like drug sales, human trafficking, and other criminal activities causing problems for the Indian civilians and administration." followed by a link to "Travel guides". The article is dated "2 April, 2024" and is by "OpIndia Staff". It features a collage of six images: a group of men in uniform, three men standing together, a woman in a headscarf, a man in a red shirt, a man in a blue shirt, and a man in a yellow uniform. Below the images are social media sharing icons for Facebook, X, WhatsApp, Email, and Telegram, along with a share count of 1608. To the right of the article is an advertisement for "Ads by Google" with a "Send feedback" button and a "Why this ad?" link. Below the ad is a "Latest News" section with a headline: "Election Commission directs Jharkhand BJP to remove campaign video showing illegal immigrants taking over a JMM supporter's house".

Link: <https://www.opindia.com/2024/04/incidents-of-illegal-bangladeshis-being-arrested-in-the-last-10-days-smuggling-fake-visa-illegal-stay-and-more>

8.2.5 Work of Illegal Migrants and Their Impact on the Nation's Social Structure

Despite the hospitality extended to them in the host country, illegal migrants often face no discomfort upon arriving in Mumbai due to the immediate availability of job opportunities and established social circles. Their friends, families, and even corrupt officials help perpetuate this cycle. These migrants become part of the shadow economy. Our study, based on information from key informants (through IDIs and FGDs), revealed that migration decisions are influenced by various socio-economic factors. For those in poverty, the primary motivation is often the search for better livelihood opportunities and slightly higher wages. Studies have shown that the majority of poorer migrants end up in unskilled, casual, and low-paying jobs within the informal sector. However, many also become involved in illegal activities such as smuggling, prostitution, and trafficking of drugs and women. This trend was also confirmed during focus group discussions and in-depth interviews. This process is cyclical; migrants initially come to Mumbai to earn money, often working as laborers in their early days, before being drawn into illicit networks. Once part of the illegal supply chain, they begin to earn money through unlawful means. They are often seen selling drugs and other prohibited items to students and young adults, who are easy targets. According to key informants, these activities are commonly observed under railway bridges, near nightclubs, and pubs late at night—a regular occurrence in Mumbai.

In the daytime, many of these illegal migrants engage in relatively harmless jobs, such as working as shopkeepers or selling vegetables and flowers. However, at night, their activities shift drastically. They become involved in the sale of drugs, smuggling, and other illegal items, targeting vulnerable groups like young adults and students. This dual lifestyle is well known among key informants, who report that these migrants operate in a cycle of legal work by day and criminal activity by night, contributing to the underground economy.

This issue is not only a societal problem but also a direct threat to India's good culture and social values. These illegal activities erode the moral fabric of our society, undermining values such as respect, integrity, and the well-being of individuals. The spread of such activities damages the principles of justice, fairness, and safety that are foundational to our culture. It poses a serious challenge to India's social structure, as it weakens the cultural values that have long been a source of national pride. The very fabric of our society—based on social harmony, mutual respect, and community building—suffers when such illegal activities proliferate. This issue,

deeply embedded in the shadow economy, undermines social cohesion and creates a breeding ground for further criminal behavior. The problem is not just societal; it is generational. The future of the country, especially the young generation, is at stake as these activities promote unhealthy, immoral, and dangerous behaviors that threaten the values on which our nation stands.

HOME / NEWS / CITIES / MUMBAI

Two held with drugs worth ₹4 lakh

Bangladeshi immigrants were trying to sell Ya ba pills

Published - March 05, 2020 12:48 am IST - Navi Mumbai

RAINA ASSAINAR



READ LATER PRINT

The Vashi police have arrested two illegal Bangladeshi immigrants, found to be in possession of Ya ba drug worth ₹4 lakh. The drug, also called Myanmar Rohingya drug, is a mixture of methamphetamine and caffeine and costs ₹2,500 per tablet.

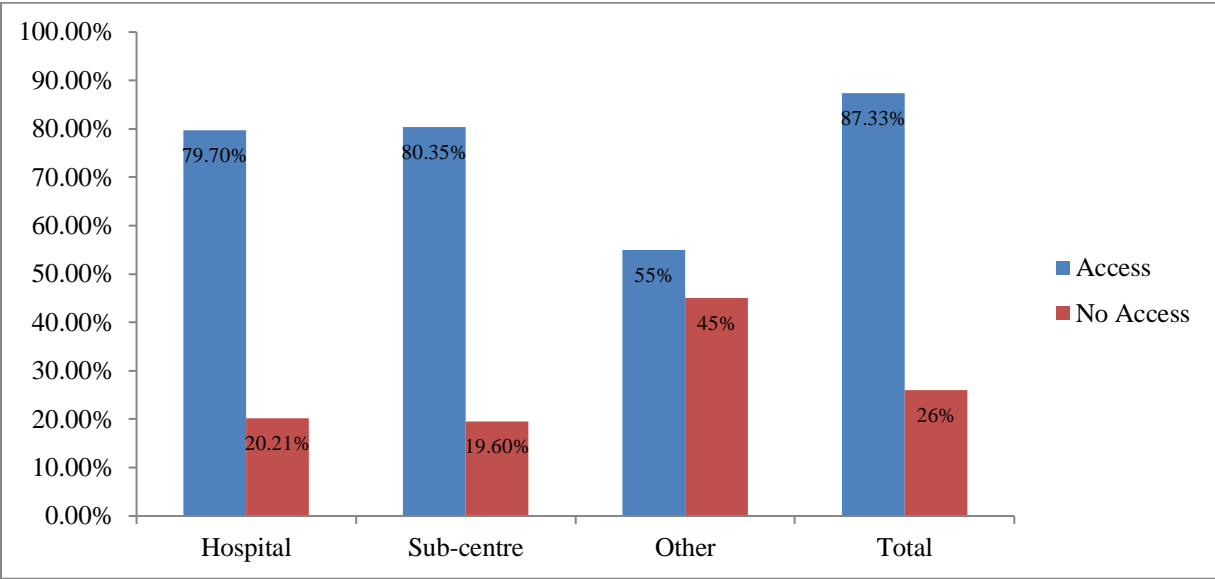
Acting on a tip-off, the police team laid a trap behind Jagruteshwar temple near Vashi village bridge at Sector 7 around 9.30 p.m. on Monday. The team nabbed Mokalesur Rahman alias Jaani Bishwas (36) from Khulna in Bangladesh, who is currently residing in Nerul, and Hilal Sabiuddin Matiur Rehman (26) from Nodail, currently staying in Palaspe village in Panvel.

Link: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/mumbai/two-held-with-drugs-worth-4-lakh/article30985446.ece>

8.2.6 Impact on public health facilities due to excessive stress by illegal immigrants

The public sector health facilities are compromised for the natives of Mumbai as there is pressure on public health facilities. It is evident that most illegal immigrants use public health facilities for their health issues in order to receive government documents and also affordable pricing with better facilities. It is also seen in our study **Fig. 8.2.4** shows that the majority of the immigrants are able to access the healthcare facilities in India. However, few respondents mentioned that they were not able to access the healthcare facilities in India. As can be seen from the graph below, only 20.21% of the respondents mentioned that they weren't able to access hospitals, and Only 19% of the respondents mentioned that they weren't able to access health sub-centres. So, most of them are using the Hospital, it is a burden on our public health sector.

Figure 8.2.4 Access to Health Care Facility Among Immigrants



Source: Compiled by the Author based on primary data

8.3 Summary

Illegal migration is causing significant social impact in Mumbai, altering its demographic, religious, and economic landscape, and placing a heavy burden on resources and governance. The porous borders, along with smuggling networks and corrupt officials, perpetuate the cycle of migration and integration, straining social cohesion and escalating urban tensions. Migrants often replace local workers in the informal sector, leading to economic displacement and social friction. The disproportionate growth of certain religious communities contributes to communal divisions and political friction. Migrants' involvement in illegal activities, such as drug and human trafficking, undermines public safety and weakens law and order. Additionally, their welfare dependency increases the strain on urban infrastructure, negatively impacting native citizens. The sale of drugs to young people is particularly concerning, as the youth are the future of the nation. Addressing these challenges requires innovative policies that balance humanitarian concerns with security. In a diverse city like Mumbai, strategies must promote coexistence, while ensuring safety and long-term development, especially in the wake of COVID-19.

CHAPTER 9 UNDERSTAND THE POLITICAL SUPPORT SYSTEM IN THE HOST COUNTRY FOR ILLEGAL

“Overloaded cities cannot sustain the influx of migrants, which leads to decay instead of progress.” – Jean Raspail

9.1 Introduction

Illegal migration of Bangladeshi and Rohingyas in Mumbai, like in other major urban centres, is a contentious issue with significant political ramifications. The consequences of illegal migration are often viewed through the lenses of national security, cultural cohesion, and economic strain. The key arguments typically raised emphasize sovereignty, law and order, and protecting native citizens’ rights. The danger to national security is among Mumbai's most important political repercussions of illegal migration. Nationalist Political Parties frequently draw attention to the possibility of infiltrators from nearby nations, especially from Bangladesh, who are coming to the nation with malicious intent or turn radical when they get there. The city's closeness to vital infrastructure, like ports, financial institutions, and communication centres, exacerbates these worries and makes any security breach a larger national problem. Illegal immigrants are more likely to be a part of or become victims of criminal networks, drug trafficking, sex rackets, or even terrorist organizations since they may not have the necessary paperwork and background checks.

Threats to the security of the local people and community have led the government to take several policy-related decisions, such as NRC and CAA, 2019.

Some of the major political consequences of infiltration in Mumbai are as follows:

9.2 Erosion of Local Political Voice and Representation

KII respondent stated that one of the key political impacts of illegal immigration is the erosion of local political influence. As immigrants settle in specific areas of Mumbai, demographic shifts affect political representation and electoral outcomes. This has led to resentment among Mumbaikars, who feel their political voice is diminished in favour of non-citizens.

Findings from an FGD are that political parties that support illegal immigrants, often seeking to secure their votes, work to legitimize their presence. This marginalizes native residents, whose interests are overlooked, particularly in municipal policies and welfare distribution. As a result, the social contract in Mumbai is strained, creating a divide between long-standing residents and new arrivals who lack legal rights to participate in the city's political system.

“Centrist and left-leaning parties are often accused of engaging in "vote bank politics" by permitting illegal immigrants to stay in the city” claimed by one key informant. The claim is that the election process is skewed because illegal migrants are implicitly permitted to settle in return for political allegiance. It is said that illegal immigrants are utilized to increase the number of voters, frequently enrolling using forged documentation or as residents of nearby slums where political favours are offered.

There are a total of 36 state legislative seats in Mumbai; out of them, 12 seats are meant for Muslim-dominated seats, including areas like Anushaktinagar, Mankhud-Shivajinagar, Mumbadevi, Mumbai Central, Malad-West, Dharavi etc. Our study reveals that over 70% of illegal Bangladeshi migrants identified are living in specific areas, where they possess documents like Aadhar cards and voter IDs, and are actively participating in elections. Additionally, they are benefiting from various government schemes, including Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna (Urban), Free Ration, Maharashtra Housing and Urban Development, Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna (Ayushman Card), and the recently launched Ladli Bahan Yojna, among others. These migrants have easy access to these services, while native beneficiaries often face long delays. This suggests a deliberate connection between politicians and illegal migrants. Our study also shows that the areas where these migrants reside have adequate public facilities.

9.3 The Political Ramifications of Illegal Migration: A Closer Look at the NRC and National Security Dynamics

The implementation of measures like the National Register of Citizens (NRC) has been initiated to address illegal migration and ensure that only legal residents and citizens benefit from public services and welfare programs. The NRC is seen as a tool to preserve national security, maintain demographic balance, and ensure resource allocation to rightful citizens. Supporters argue that illegal migrants often contribute to crime and other social ills while exploiting public services

without paying taxes. By identifying and removing illegal migrants, right-wing parties believe this will restore fairness and social order (Comprehensive Analysis of CAA and NRC: A research perspective by **Ashish Karki**).

A Newspaper cutting Highlighting the issue of CAA and NRC

OPINION

In The House

Northern Ireland and illegal immigration tackled by government

with **Huw Merriman**
MP for South Lancashire

Last week, the Prime Minister secured an agreement with the EU to swap the Northern Ireland Protocol. Under the protocol, which came into force post-Brexit, checks were introduced on goods travelling from Great Britain to Northern Ireland, adding significant overhead bureaucracy for traders.

The new Windsor Framework agreement concludes months of intensive discussions between the UK and EU and aims to fix the practical problems facing the people and businesses of Northern Ireland. A new Green Lane will introduce meaning that traders moving goods destined for Northern Ireland from Great Britain will be freed from the need to undergo the best opportunity to address the practical challenges that currently exist, provides a route to reaching the Northern Ireland Executive, and offers a new way forward for a prosperous and stable future for Northern Ireland.

The decision has significant implications for the UK citizens, rather than the European Medicines Agency under the old Protocol.

The new 'Shoreline Break' will safeguard the sovereignty of Northern Ireland.

Initial responses from the business community in Northern Ireland is that the deal goes much further in terms of what was expected. Originally, the Democratic Unionist Party insisted they would consider the agreement before reaching a collective decision.

I am confident that it provides the best opportunity to address the practical challenges that currently exist, provides a route to reaching the Northern Ireland Executive, and offers a new way forward for a prosperous and stable future for Northern Ireland.

The agreement also protects Northern Ireland's place in our Union, with members of EU law replaced by UK law. UK tax policy will now apply across the whole of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The same measures will be available to everyone across the entire UK, and we will continue to participate in all international agreements.

The decision has significant implications for the UK citizens, rather than the European Medicines Agency under the old Protocol.

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Perspective

Why NRC is necessary to curb illegal migrants

SUNE GUPTA

Englishmen are believed to be British... The Home Secretary has announced... The NRC is necessary to curb illegal migrants...

The NRC is necessary to curb illegal migrants... The Home Secretary has announced... The NRC is necessary to curb illegal migrants...

Our study found that in Mumbai, illegal immigrants often acquire false documents such as voter IDs, Aadhaar cards, and PAN cards through well-established networks, enabling them to integrate into the local economy and political system. These forged documents allow them not only to secure employment but also to participate in political processes, including voting, which is seen as skewing electoral outcomes. This manipulation is seen by right-wing parties as eroding the integrity of the democratic process, and the resulting political tensions have led to calls for stricter enforcement of immigration laws and more aggressive deportation policies.

Nationalist political parties have made strong public stands against illegal immigration, arguing that it displaces native workers and contributes to the growth of slums, which burden public services like healthcare, education, and housing. (KII finding) These parties have also linked illegal immigration to increased crime rates, further fuelling public resentment. Such rhetoric has become a central plank of nationalist politics in Maharashtra, with leaders calling for stringent actions, such as the construction of detention centres and the implementation of the National Register of Citizens (NRC).

Moreover, there are concerns about national security, as some illegal immigrants have been found to have links to extremist organisation. (IDI-illegal migrant). That has led to heightened surveillance by the Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS).

The influx of illegal immigrants has implications for electoral politics, particularly with accusations of vote-bank politics with Nationalist parties accuse their political rivals of using these illegal migrants as a “vote bank” by granting them illegal voting rights in exchange for electoral support. This undermines the legitimacy of elections and angers local voters who feel disenfranchised. One of the persons said that “Illegal migrants are used to dilute the political power of native citizens, especially in lower-income areas where migrants are concentrated”.

Beyond economic and security concerns, illegal migration is a threat to Mumbai’s cultural identity. Nationalist Political groups argue that the growing presence of illegal immigrants, particularly from Bangladesh, dilutes the city’s Marathi culture and contributes to social tensions. The creation of ethnic ghettos and the perceived refusal of illegal immigrants to assimilate are frequent talking points in Nationalist discourse. This concern over cultural erosion ties into broader nationalist themes, with illegal immigrants seen as a challenge to India's cultural and religious fabric (mid-day, 10 December 2023).

9.4 Security Threats, Communal Tensions, and the Impact on Social Cohesion

Sociologist **Samuel Huntington** in *Who Are We?* (2004) argues that large numbers of culturally distinct, illegal immigrants can lead to social fragmentation, disrupting social unity. Huntington argues that in the U.S., for example, a lack of cultural assimilation among certain immigrant groups has fuelled ethnic tensions and resentment, increasing social divisions and giving rise to nativist sentiments. The phenomenon is similar to Mumbai’s situation, where local communities perceive illegal immigrants as a demographic and cultural threat, exacerbating communal tensions.

Assamese natives viewed the influx of Bangladeshi immigrants as a direct threat to their identity and livelihoods (Das, P. 2016). Security concerns also play a pivotal role in shaping the political response to illegal immigration. Many politicians and citizens alike view undocumented immigrants from Bangladesh as a potential security threat. This perception has only grown stronger in recent years, particularly with incidents of terrorism and communal unrest where immigrants are often involved in riots and clashes. In our study, areas like Navi Mumbai, Nala-Sopara, Kurla, Govandi, Mankhurd, Kamathipura, Bhayandar, Masjid Jogeshwari, Malad,

Dongri, and Ambedkar Nagar have more illegal immigrants from Bangladesh where most of the religious clashes have happened.

9.5 Impact on Municipal Governance and Public Resources

The presence of a substantial undocumented immigrant population strains Mumbai’s public services and governance, and this, too, becomes a potent political issue. Studies frequently point to illegal immigrants as the cause of overcrowded slums, limited healthcare, and poor sanitation, arguing that their presence places an undue burden on the city. In response, people and local parties often rally for stricter immigration control as a solution to Mumbai’s urban issues, claiming that doing so would free up resources for local residents.

Newspaper cutting on NRC and Illegal Migrants from Times News Network



9.6 Summary

The influx of illegal Bangladeshi immigrants has far-reaching political consequences, as highlighted in the study. Evidence suggests that political motivations, such as securing a vote bank, have contributed to this influx, which has been exploited for riots and unrest in Mumbai. The growing Islamization of the city is a serious concern, and the presence of these migrants has significant political, social, and economic impacts. Politically, the unchecked migration strains

local resources, worsens unemployment, and fuels tensions in overcrowded areas, leading to resentment and polarization, which can affect electoral outcomes and shift focus away from crucial development issues. Addressing this issue is vital for protecting national sovereignty, ensuring fair resource distribution, and maintaining public welfare. Measures such as strict border controls, efficient deportation processes, and robust intelligence operations are necessary to safeguard internal harmony. Moreover, engaging in dialogue with neighbouring countries can help tackle the root causes of illegal migration. A firm stance on this issue underscores India's commitment to the rule of law and prioritizing the rights of its citizens.

CHAPTER 10 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The problem of illegal immigration from Bangladesh and Myanmar is a pressing issue for Mumbai, creating numerous socio-economic and political challenges. The city has become a focal point for these challenges as illegal migrants contribute to complex dynamics that affect the local population and governance. Our study reveals that one of the most significant challenges presented by illegal Bangladeshi and Rohingya migrants is socio-economic competition. Migrants come to Mumbai seeking better job opportunities, often taking low-wage jobs in sectors such as construction, domestic work, and informal trade. While their labour is essential to the city's economy, the influx of migrants has intensified competition for already scarce employment opportunities, particularly for low-skilled local workers. This situation creates a dual effect: on one hand, it drives down wages for vulnerable local workers, and on the other, it fosters resentment towards migrant communities. Political entities often exploit these emotions, using religious affiliations as tools for vote banks. This rhetoric fuels social unrest and, in extreme cases, violence against both migrants and natives. The competitive labour dynamic not only destabilizes the economic environment but also exacerbates social challenges within communities.

Furthermore, the cyclic nature of illegal immigration has led to significant changes in religious demographics, particularly in areas with large concentrations of Muslim immigrants from Bangladesh. This demographic shift creates a sense of insecurity among local communities, especially Hindus, who perceive their cultural identity to be under threat. The skewed migration patterns, where Muslim immigrants outnumber Hindu immigrants, have fragmented communities, leading to communal challenges that disrupt social harmony. The resulting tensions undermine stability and contribute to an environment of distrust. Additionally, concerns over illegal immigrants' involvement in rising crime rates have heightened public fears and amplified political discourses. These issues underscore how illegal immigration contributes to broader national challenges surrounding migration, identity, and governance.

Demographic changes, economic vulnerability, and political consequences of illegal migration pose serious obstacles to social cohesion and stability. As communities grapple with these implications, the potential for civil strife, public safety concerns, and political violence becomes an urgent reality. The socio-political complexities arising from illegal migration necessitate multifaceted policies that address strict administration and security concerns while balancing the rights of locals and the needs of immigrant populations.

Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach that considers the socio-economic drivers of migration and develops strategies to mitigate its impacts. Policymakers must rethink immigration policies to ensure the protection of vulnerable populations in India while fostering an inclusive environment that promotes harmony among diverse communities. This includes legal access to resources and employment for local residents to alleviate socio-economic competition and reduce resentment. Ultimately, the goal is to create a cohesive and resilient urban environment where all residents contribute positively to Mumbai's development. By addressing the root causes of illegal immigration, promoting understanding between groups, and strengthening governance, Mumbai can overcome these challenges and emerge as a more unified, secure, and inclusive city.

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