

Housing of Migrant Construction Workers: Seasonal Migration, Translocality and Urban Governance in Ahmedabad

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Beyond “Slums”: Housing Issues of Seasonal Migrant Workers in the City

Spatially lived experiences and practices of seasonal migrants



Research Methodology: analytical lenses

- Translocality

(Lohnert and Steinbrink 2005; Greiner and Sakdapolrak 2013)

- Politics and practice of urban governance vis-a-vis informal housing – and people's experiences and practices in relation to this

Research Methodology: research methods

- Fieldwork between Oct 2016 and June 2017
- Fieldvisits to 14 migrant settlements – informal conversations with individuals/groups
 - 4 homeless settlements
 - 4 squatter settlements
 - 4 rental clusters
 - 1 public housing site
 - 1 temporary settlement of a labour gang, on an open plot provided by contractor/mukkadham
 - (night shelters not covered)
- Semi-structured interviews and informal conversations in 14 migrant households – living across 8 migrant settlements – many interviews carried out in the village
 - 10 migrant families & 4 single male migrants
 - 9 head of households were unskilled workers, 4 were skilled workers, 1 was a mukkadham
- Discussions with municipal officials (esp. ward and zonal offices)

Key findings

1. Labour recruitment and migration pathways play a significant role in shaping migrants' pathways of housing in the city
2. Urban governance with respect to the particular informal housing typology that migrant naka workers come to inhabit play a predominant role in shaping their conditions and everyday experiences and practices around housing
3. The translocal lives of these migrants – forged through translocal livelihoods and translocal households as well as the village being the main venue of social events, networks and obligations – shape their habitations of the city in vital ways.

Interconnected Pathways:

Labour Recruitment, Migration and Housing in the City



Housing of migrant naka workers:

Role of kin and other migration-source-based social networks



Anilbhai, from Dahod district

Migrated with his father

Goes to Akhbarnagar naka

Lives in **Sundervan Basti**
since 12 years

2005



2017

Housing of migrant naka workers:

Role of kin and other migration-source-based social networks



Mukeshbhai, from Dahod district

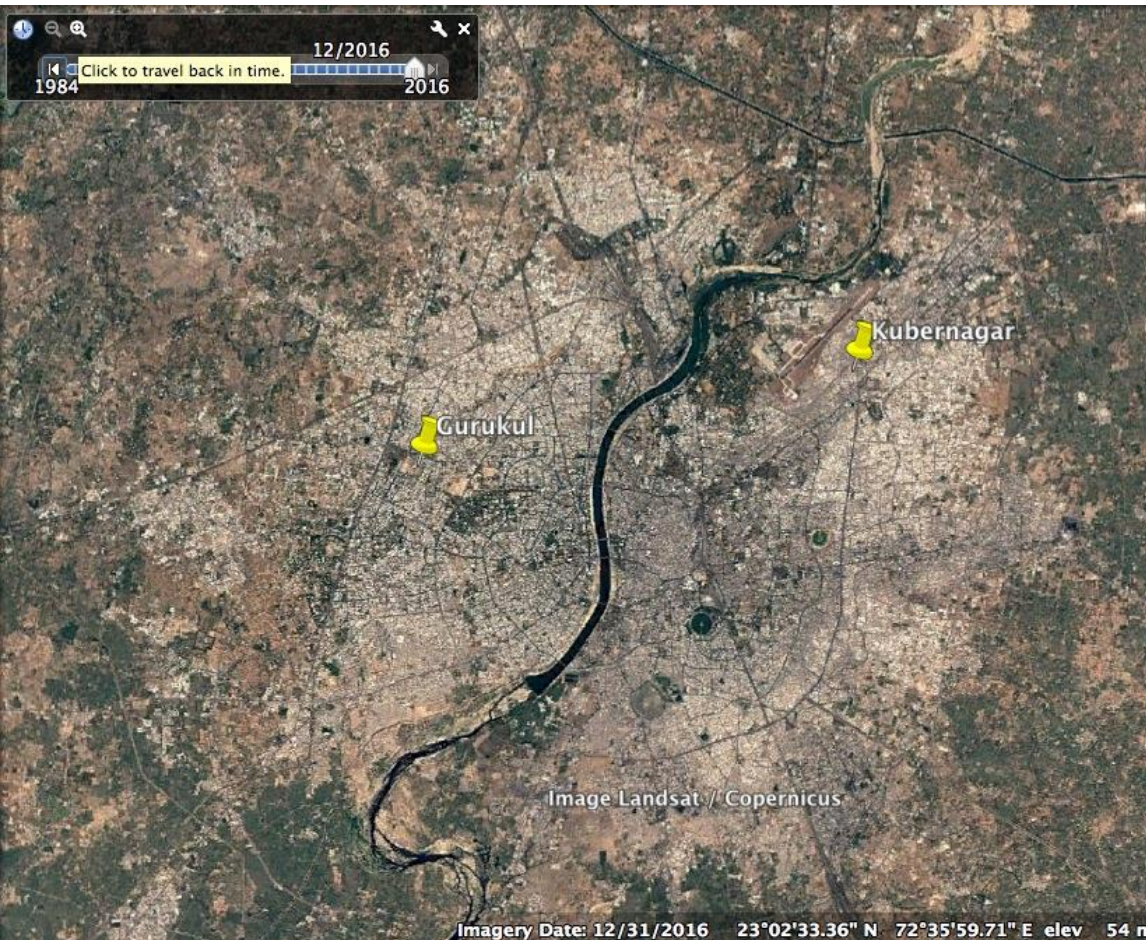
Migrated with his uncle – went to Jivraj naka and lived in a squatter settlement nearby

Later shifted to join wife's relatives to go to Ambawadi naka and live in open near Jivraj railway tracks

Several years ago entire group moved to live **under Jivraj flyover**

Housing of migrant naka workers:

Role of kin and other migration-source-based social networks



Lalitbhai, from Banswara district.

Migrated with brother and lived near him in Kubernagar in a private open plot on rent.

Later shifted to work at Gurukul naka and squat in a nearby open plot.

Manibhai, his younger brother migrated with him several years ago.

Kantaben, his wife started to migrate with him at some point – they started renting a room in the Memnagar area.

Paras, his son, migrates with him or uncle Manibhai.

Housing of migrant naka workers:

Role of kin and other migration-source-based social networks



Vinodbhai, from Dahod district

Sewage Basti

Housing of migrant naka workers:

Role of kin and other migration-source-based social networks



Lalitbhai

Rental rooms in
the Memnagar
area

Housing of Labour gangs:

Role of employers and intermediaries



Gordhanbhai, from Dahod district
living on construction sites or
open plot provided by
contractor/mukkadam

Open plot in Chandkheda

Shifts in pathways of labour recruitment, migration, and housing



Urban Governance and Seasonal Migrant Naka Workers' Housing



Squatter migrants:

Unrecognized slums on public and private plots



Sundervan Basti

Squatter migrants:

Unrecognized slums on public and private plots



Sewage Basti

Squatter migrants:

Unrecognized slums on public and private plots



Sundervan Basti

mobile toilet at one end of the settlement



bathing space near Shankarbhai-Hansaben's shack

Squatter migrants:

Unrecognized slums on public and private plots



“Homeless” migrants:

Settlements on footpaths and streetsides and under flyovers



Parin Basti, along the streetside

“Homeless” migrants:

Settlements on footpaths and streetsides and under flyovers



Under the Shivranjani flyover

Tenant migrants:

Rental housing in squatter settlements and informal subdivisions



Translocal Lives and Migrants' Habitations of the City



Vanbhorī village, Dahod district – Two brothers, both migrate (no adult back in the village who can take care of farming entirely on their own)

Translocal Lives and Migrants' Habitations of the City



**Agricultural fields in Tarvadia Bhau village,
Dahod district**

**Two brothers,
one migrates and one does not**



Translocal Lives and Migrants' Habitations of the City



**Agricultural fields in Bharjodia village,
Banswara district**

**Children of a migrant household
from Bharjodia who do not migrate
to the city – the eldest son (not in
this photo) increasingly takes care
of the farming with his siblings**



Translocal Lives and Migrants' Habitations of the City



**A short-term migrant from Bharjodia village, Banswara district,
who migrates during 1-2 seasons only**

Conclusions

