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## INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ADVANCED RESEARCH (IJAR)

Article DOI:10.21474/IJAR01/12132  
DOI URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21474/IJAR01/12132>



### RESEARCH ARTICLE

#### MIGRATION PATTERN WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO NORTH EASTERN REGION OF INDIA

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#### Manuscript Info

##### Manuscript History

Received: 05 October 2020

Final Accepted: 10 November 2020

Published: December 2020

##### Key words:-

North East, Corridor, Impact, Migration, Mainland

#### Abstract

North East India, popularly Known as 'Seven Sister States', comprising Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and recently including Sikkim can earned a diverse and unique identity within and outside the nation. The Siliguri corridor, which connects mainland India with the rest of the North Eastern states, is regarded as the 'Mongoloid Fringe', from where the land of the Mongoloid races starts. This uncommon area of nations with natural boutiques attracts the migrants from all over the world leading different problems on local people. This paper mainly tries to examine the pattern of migration of North Eastern region by considering impacts of migration on the migrated region.

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#### Introduction:-

'Migration', as defined in the Oxford English Dictionary is, "The movement of a person or people from one country, locality, place of residence etc., to settle in another". From the time immemorial human beings have always moved from one place/locality/region to another; be it, in search of job opportunities, shelter, food and what not! Migration affects the size of population and its demographic character very significantly and hence in recent years it has come to occupy an important place in demographic analysis. Although traditionally international migration has always been in the limelight of late, the focus has been on the causes and consequences of internal migration, especially on rural to urban flows. In the modern history, major demographic transitions have depicted the influx of immigrants to the U.S. from the mid-1800s to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Today, more than 200 million people, most from Latin America, South Asia and Africa are migrants both within and across continents. When we talk about country to country migration, India is no less; with over tens of millions migrated people settled in the early stages in India. At the onset of farming, the population of India changed significantly by the migration of Iranian agriculturalists and the Indo-European, while the migrations of the 'Munda' people and the 'Tibeto-Burmese' speaking people also added new elements to the scene. However, if we start discussing the entire migration pattern across countries then it would be an epic. So, in this paper we are limiting our discussion about migration patterns to the 'North Eastern States' of India only.

#### Objectives:-

The specific objectives of this paper can be summarized as:

1. To throw light on the migration pattern of the 'North Eastern states' of India
2. To discuss the type of Migration (in general) and the causes of migration (especially in the North Eastern states of India).
3. To study the impact of migration on the migrated region.

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4. To highlight the advantages and disadvantages of migration in general.

### **Methodology:-**

To prepare this paper we used analytical method, the study is based on the various observations as well as secondary source of data that has been taken from various journals, research papers, magazines and websites. The paper is discussed on both qualitative and quantitative data is included.

### **Analysis:**

The Northeast India is the easternmost region that represents both a geographic and political administrative division of India. It comprises of eight states viz., Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. The total population of Northeast India is 46 million with 68 percent of that living in Assam. Assam also has a higher population density of 397 persons per km<sup>2</sup> then the national average of 382 persons per km<sup>2</sup>. As per 2011 census, Meghalaya recorded the highest population growth of 27.8 percent among all the states of the region, higher than the national average at 17.64 percent; while Nagaland recorded the lowest in the entire country with a negative 0.5 percent. The present paper alongside showing the migration pattern of these north eastern states also seeks to discuss the types of migration( in general) and the causes of migration (especially in the north eastern states).

### **Types of Migration:**

Before discussing the causes and migration pattern of the north eastern states it is important to know the various types of migration. Thus, migration can be generally of the following types:

1. Immigration and Emigration: When people from one country move permanently to another country, for example, if people from India move to America than for America, it is termed as Immigration, whereas for India it would be termed as Emigration.
2. In-migration and Out –migration: In-migration means migration that occurs within a particular area only, while out-migration means migrating out of that area. Both types of migration are called internal migration occurring within the country. For example, migration from Bihar to Bengal is in-migration for Bengal, while it is out-migration for Bihar.
3. Gross and Net Migration: The total number of person coming in the country and the total number of people going out of the country for residing during any time period is called gross migration. The difference between the total number of persons coming to reside in a country as well as going out of the country for residing during any time period is termed as net migration.
4. Internal Migration and External Migration: Internal migration is the movement of people in different states and regions within the country national border. On the other hand, external or international migration refers to the movement of people from one country to another for permanent settlement.

### **Causes of Migration in the North-Eastern states:**

1. One of the most important factors for migration from time immemorial were both geographical and economical. People from unproductive land would migrate to more favourable place where productivity of the land is high. We can thus say that the density of population is directly linked to the productivity of the land. The Mizos for example constantly moving from one place to another in the past in search of Jhum land for agricultural activities. The Mizos were living a life of semi nomadic life in the past. The life of these nomads were characterized by constant movement in a search of better land for cultivation purposes.
2. In Assam, most of the immigrants are from Bangladesh. People from Bangladesh enter and live in Assam illegally as they own very little or no assets in their home country. Due to severe population pressure in Bangladesh, it is hard to acquire land and other properties. In Assam, however, it is relatively easier to acquire land and maintain a decent living. There are vast public lands available in Assam which are either abandoned or have no owner. Especially, the river banks along the river Brahmaputra and are mostly uninhabited. Also, a large part of the state is covered by forest. Obviously, Bangladesh being a border country finds Assam a suitable place to live in and hence illegally emigrate from their home country.
3. Most of the Immigration are generally unskilled and semi-skilled laborers. In Manipur, there was a large inflow of workers from the mainland helping to meet the demand for jobs that required semi-skilled labourers, such as builders and plumbers. This semi-skilled workers who are fighting for their livelihood is ready to take up any kind of unskilled labour jobs or blue-collar jobs or manual labour jobs which the indigenous peoples do not prefer to do. The indigenous peoples consider themselves dignified and think that such kind of jobs are meant to be done by lower class people and would refuse to work even if they have zero income. Such kind of

mentality makes it easier for immigrant workers to earn income and livelihood in Manipur. As a result, in due course of time, they become far better off than the unemployed and voluntary unemployed indigenous people.

4. In the North Eastern states, political motives and socio-emotional ties generally overlook the economic aspects of migration. After India's independence in 1947, all the migrated Bengali Muslims till that point are considered as legal citizens of India. Since then occurrence of illegal immigration took a great momentum. The Centre, despite repeated promises, failed to send them back to their home countries and delayed to take more stringent measures to prevent the illegal entry of new ones. Because they are more concerned about the vote –bank in politics and both national and state political parties encourage the infiltration of Bangladesh for Muslim votes.
5. The North Eastern states of India touches international boundaries of countries like China, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar and Bangladesh. Hence, these countries are always keeping an eye on the natural boundaries found in the North Eastern states and attracted to it. Also, they find it easier to access the North Eastern states in the context of communication and hence most of the immigrants are from these border countries especially from Bangladesh, Myanmar and Nepal.
6. Migration can be both in the context of 'in' and 'out' migration. Now, the North Eastern states are no less in emigrating from their states to the rest of the states in India. Since, the education and job opportunities in the North Eastern states have not fully bloomed; people especially the youngsters generally tend to move out of their states to the other mega cities of India. Delhi, the capital city of India is an example to which several students tend to migrate for higher studies or in search of employment opportunities and settle there either temporarily or permanently.

#### **Migration trends and pattern of the North Eastern states of India(states wise):**

##### **Assam:**

In Assam, migration has always been a serious and continuous issue. There is a huge lot of inter-state migration into Assam; migrants from Bihar have shown pre-dominance over migrants from other states of India. Besides the Bihari migrants, there are also migrants from West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan into Assam. Business and employment related aspects are the main inducing factors for migration and hence the Rajasthani Marwaris and Bangladeshi labourers from Bangladesh are mostly concentrated in the urban and industrial centers. On the other hand, migrants from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh are mostly unskilled and illiterate and hence are absorbed in the informal sector finding livelihood as washer-men, barbers, sweepers cobblers, porters, construction labourers etc. The service of these migrants are highly demanded across the towns and cities of Assam which are experiencing rapid growth along with the urbanization and industrialization.

From the census data of the year 1991,2001 and 2011 it can be said that the total number of migrants are only increasing decade after decade. In the year 1991, the total migrants of all ages and all duration and by taking the last residence of both the urban and rural sectors is 4,445,943. Of this 177,625 persons have migrated for work and employment related activities, 48570 persons have migrated for educational purposes, 2,133,952 persons as a result of marriage have migrated from one place to another, 1,097,578 have moved with their family and for other reasons, for eg., in search of land, fleeing etc., 628588 of persons have migrated. In 2001, the total number of migrants is 6,792,826 and in 2011 it increased rapidly to 10,155,052 number of migrants. Let us consider the following table to show the migration pattern of Assam for three decades:-

**Table1:-** Migration pattern and reasons for migration in Assam.

Year	Total No. of Migrants	Reasons for Migration( No. of Persons)				
		Work/Employment	Education	Marriage	Moved with household	Other reasons
1991	4,445,943	177,625	48,570	2,133,952	1,097,578	628,588
2001	6,792,826	377,143	47,026	2,478,625	1,024,785	2,602,391
2011	10,155,052	645,868	114,923	5,164,592	1,710,624	1,966,062

**Source:** Census of India

##### **Meghalaya:**

Meghalaya has an area of 22,429 sq km and is one of the smaller states of the India. It shares 423 km border with Bangladesh in the South and the west, and is surrounded by Assam on the northeastern side. The population of the state was 1.775 million according to 1991 census, which became 2.306 million in 2001. As against decadal growth

rate of 21.34 at the national level, the population of the state has grown by 29.94% over the period 1991-2001. A new dimension of migration was added to the already growing complex scenario of Meghalaya. The beautiful location of the state within Northeast India, the relative low population and abundance of economic opportunities are the reasons that the state is made viable to undocumented immigration from across land and the long river borders. It is seen from the various reports and analysis that the majority of the immigrations are from Nepal and Bangladesh. People tend to migrate illegally due to various 'push and pull factors' such as political unrest, famine, poverty, fear of death, environmental degradation, hope for living a better life else where etc.

Another possible reason of migration in Meghalaya is their traditional practice of men being moving into their wives home after marriage. Men in Meghalaya have always been traders and warriors and women have stayed at home. As men were gone away for long periods of time the property of the ancestors have passed down through the female line from mother to daughter.

Let us consider the following table to see the pattern of migration during three decades viz., 1991, 2001 and 2011. It can be seen from table 2 that in 1991 the total number of migrants were very less and stood only at 187 number of persons migrated due to various reasons. Whereas, it took a long jump and the number of migrants increased to 3,79,192. Again in 2011 the total number of migrants have further increased to 7,76,542 of which 59,441 number of persons have moved for work or employment related activities, 33,537 number of persons for educational purposes, 182,279 have moved after marriage, 115,352 have moved with their families and 3,39,456 have migrated due to various other reasons for eg., in search of land, fleeing etc.

**Table 2:-** Migration pattern and reasons for migration in Meghalaya.

Year	Total No. of Migrants	Reasons for Migration( No. of persons)				
		Work/ Employment	Education	Marriage	Moved with household	Other reason
1991	187	39	2	44	77	16
2001	379192	36093	10907	40627	42948	234260
2011	776542	59441	33537	182279	115352	339456

**Source:** Census of India

#### **Nagaland:**

In Nagaland, migration is an important factor in changing the size and structure of the population. The migration process affects the areas to which migrants can moved in and areas from which they moved out. The migrants in Nagaland may be basically classified into following categories: Indigenous or local migrants who migrate to nearby towns from their native villages in the state in search of better livelihoods or for other personal reasons. And, migrants from outside that whose reasons for leaving their native village to come to Nagaland may or may not be same as the local migrants, but they also come for the same avenues as the indigenous migrants. In Nagaland, on the basis of the data on migration in the 1991 census, it can be inferred that the reasons of migration including education, employment, marriage, natural calamities like drought, floods etc have contributed much towards out migration from rural to urban as well as from other states. The intensity of migration from outside the state is fairly high. According to census, there are migrants from Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Madhya Pradesh, Sikkim, Lakshadweep into Nagaland. Besides this inter state population movement, there is also a good number of foreign migrants from other countries outside India, totaling around 4503. There has been a tremendous increase in the influx of Bangladeshi migrants into Nagaland, particularly in commercial hubs like Kohima and Dimapur.

From the census data of the year 1991,2001,ans 2011 it can be said the total number of migrants are only increasing decade after decade. In the year 2011, the total migrants of all ages and all duration and by taking the last residence of both the urban and rural sectors is 560023. Of this 118346 persons have migrated for work and employment related activities. 60919 persons have migrated for educational purposes, 72315 persons as a result of marriage have migrated from one place to another, 153885 have moved with their family and for other reasons, 116881 number of persons have migrated. In 1991, the total number of migrants is 305 and in 2001 it increased rapidly to 380812

number of migrants. Let us consider the following table to show the migration pattern of Nagaland for three decades:

**Table 3:-** Migration pattern and reasons for migration in Nagaland.

Year	Total No. of Migrants	Reasons For Migration(No. of Persons)				
		Work/Employment	Education	Marriage	Moved with household	Other reasons
1991	305	60	2	104	98	34
2001	380812	56442	9013	21441	57424	218105
2011	560023	118346	60919	72315	153885	116881

**Source:** Census of India.

### Manipur:

Manipuri culture was transformed from the Meitei society intermingling with migrant communities. In Manipur, migrants are known as Mayang. According to 1951 census, there were total of 6282 immigrants which constituted 1.09% of the total population of Manipur. According to 1961 census, it was recorded to be 18348 immigrants showing decadal growth of 192.70% between 1951 and 1961. In 1971, there was a total of 37547 immigrants and it was recorded the highest number of immigrants during the 50 years period from 1951-2001. In 1981, the volume of immigrants into Manipur was found to be declining as compared to 1971. It stood at 33463 indicating a negative growth rate of 10.88% during the decade 1971-81.

From the census data of the year 1991,2001 and 2011 it can be said that the total number of migrants are only increasing decade after decade. In the year 2011, the total number of migrants of all ages and all duration and by taking the last residence of both urban and rural sectors is 738992. Of this 32662 persons have migrated for work and employment related activities, 20910 persons have migrated for educational purposes, 278750 persons as result of marriage have migrated from one place to another, 135470 have moved with family and for other reasons ,234901 number of persons have migrated. In 1991, the total number of migrants is 118009 and in 2001 it increased rapidly to 377059 number of migrants. From the following table the migration Manipur can be understand:

**Table 4:-** Migration pattern and reasons for migration in Manipur.

Year	Total No. of Migrants	Reason for Migration( No. of persons)				
		Work/Employment	Education	Marriage	Moved with household	Other reasons
1991	118009	13370	982	44639	36233	17266
2001	377059	13716	3600	95540	41937	216904
2011	738992	32662	20910	278750	135470	234901

**Source:** Census of India.

### Mizoram:

The migration pattern of Mizos are dealt with the movement of different tribes in time and space. These people migrated to their present areas between the period of 1400 A.D. and 1950 A.D. One important thing is to be noted that their present settlement of different tribes are as old as 100 years. However some of the oldest villages are as old as 60 years. Thus, it proved that in search of better jhum field for their livelihood and also the fear of their dominant tribes, internal migration was taking place.

From the census data of the year 1991, 2001, 2011 it can be said that the total number of migrants are increasing decade after decade. The total migrants of all ages and all duration and by taking the last residence of both the urban and rural sector is 1991,2001 and 2011 are 1054,268932.3799968 respectively. In 2011, 68519 people have migrated for work and employment related activities, 18360 people have migrated for education purpose, 39673 people as a result of marriage have migrated from one place to another, 135519 people have moved along with their household and for some other reasons 91830 people have migrated. Let us consider table 5, for better understand:

**Table 5:-** Migration pattern and reasons for migration in Mizoram.

Year	Total No. of Migrants	Reasons for Migration( No. of persons)				
		Work/Employment	Education	Marriage	Moved with household	Other reasons
1991	1054	63	6	159	619	171
2001	268932	49781	10713	21967	107209	69260
2011	379968	68519	18360	39673	135519	91830

**Source:** Census of India.

#### **Tripura:**

Tripura is the third-smallest state in the country, it covers 10,491 km<sup>2</sup> and is bordered by Bangladesh to the north, south, west and the Indian states of Assam and Mizoram to the east. In, 2011 the state had 3,671,032 residents, constituting 0.3% of the country's population. In Tripura, there exists a divergence in the basic identity between the tribal way of life and the non tribal way of life. Post 1971, the Bangladesh immigrants started migrating into the land of Tripura. Almost everything has been snatched from their hands, even political power. India is making a huge blunder by giving citizenship to illegal migrants in a spontaneous manner in almost all the North Eastern states.

From the census data of the year 1991, 2001 and 2011. It is evident that the total number of migrants are only increasing decade after decade in Tripura. In the year 1991 the total number of migrants were only 650 number of persons while in 2001 the number has increased to 9,61,653. Again, in the year 2011, it further has jumped to the number of persons as high as 12,35,683 of which 1,02,202 people have migrated due to work or employment issue, 18,009 have migrated seeking education, 5,42,442 after marriage, 2,83,779 number of persons have moved with household and 248837 due to some other reasons. Let us consider the following table for better understanding migration pattern in Tripura:

**Table 6:-** Migration pattern and reasons for migration in Tripura.

Year	Total No. of Migrants	Reasons for Migration(No. of persons)				
		Work/Employment	Education	Marriage	Moved with household	Other reasons
1991	650	60	4	86	408	60
2001	961653	51773	8810	275949	230664	380002
2011	1235683	102202	18009	542442	283779	248837

**Source:** Census of India.

#### **Arunachal Pradesh:**

Arunachal Pradesh, with an area of 83,743 km<sup>2</sup>, borders the states of Assam and Nagaland to the south and shares international borders with Bhutan in the west, Myanmar in the east and is separated from China in the north by the McMahon Line. Arunachal Pradesh faces an issue of Chakma refugees. The Chakmas are tribal people of former

East Bengal. The British government, during 1960s, recognizing their distinctness from the rest of the population created the Chittagong Hill Tract(CHT) as an autonomous area exclusively for the Chakmas which covering an area of 5,093 square miles. Ethnic riots in 1961 along with the intolerant government policy made some 60,000 Chakmas flee to India and Burma. From this stream of migrants about 20,000 refugees were settled in NEFA(North-East Frontier Agency) by the Indian government in 1964. The influx continued even after 1964 into parts of Tripura, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh.

Let us consider the following table to see the pattern of migration during three decades viz., 1991,2001 and 2011. In the year 1991 the total number of migrants in the state was 2,91,903. Showing an increasing trend the numbers of migrants rose up to 4,11,440 in the year 2001 and depicting further rise in the number the total migrants in 2011 were 6,09,001 persons. The numbers of migrants due to work and employment in the year 2011 was 1,28,657, due to education, it was 45,058 migrants after marriage were as much as 1,13,335 number persons, people that moved with their family were 1,52,978 and 1.29,709 number of persons have migrated for some other reasons as stated above.

**Table 7:-** Migration pattern and reasons for migration in Arunachal Pradesh.

Year	Total No. of Migrants	Reasons for Migration(No. of persons)				
		Work/Employment	Education	Marriage	Moved with household	Other reasons
1991	291903	72931	19075	53769	107205	33334
2001	411440	100464	12995	52272	114285	113964
2011	609001	128657	45058	113335	152978	129706

**Source:** Census of India.

#### **Sikkim:**

Sikkim is a second smallest state of Indian union and its became a 22nd state on 16<sup>th</sup> May 1975, with total population of 607688 as per the census of India 2011. The percentage of migration is very high during 1981 and 1991 census with the growth rate of 50.77% to 28.47% of total population. In-migration in Sikkim becomes more interesting after 1975. In between 1971-1981 Sikkim recorded very high level of in-migration 35%. From 1981-1991 a decline was recorded from 61% in 1981 to 57% in 1991.

From the census data of the year 1991, 2001 and 2011 it can be said that the total number of migrants are only increasing decade after decade. In the year 2011, the total migrants of all ages and all duration and by taking the last residence of both the urban and rural sectors is 609001. Of this 128657 persons have migrated for work and employment related activities,45058 persons have migrated for educational purposes, 113335 persons as a result of marriage have migrated from one place to another, 152978 have moved with their family and for other reasons, 129706 number of persons have migrated. In 1991, the total number of migrants is 291903 and in 2001 it increased rapidly to 411440 number of migrants. Let us consider the following table to show the migration pattern of Sikkim for three decades.

**Table 8:-** Migration pattern and reasons for migration in Sikkim.

Year	Total No of Migrants	Reasons for migration(No. of persons)				
		Work/Employment	Education	Marriage	Moved with household	Other reasons
1991	291903	72931	19075	53769	107205	33334
2001	411440	100464	12995	52272	114285	113964

2011	609001	128657	45058	113335	152978	129706
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Source: Census of India.

### Impacts of Migration:

#### 1. Population Growth:

The very first one is population growth. If we approach the population structure of North East's local residence then we will see the population growth of its local residence is very less in numbers

#### 2. Destroying Job Opportunities:

Unemployment or destroying job opportunities is one of the important impacts in North East India. Illegal immigration is killing highest job quantities for its old residential people. So, this is another impact of high immigration to North East India.

#### 3. Criminal Activities:

Especially the immigrants who are illegally emigrating from neighboring countries is very poor and they are even could be considered as food and shelter seekers. In search of food and shelter, they do some crimes like thieving, decocting and kidnapping etc. So, this is also another impact of immigration in North East India.

#### 4. Cultural Change:

Immigrants are not the same as the other people of North East India; they have too many difference than its old residence. And as we know its residents are very less in number. Therefore, highly immigrating people are influencing its old culture and languages. Even many states its old residence also loses their old cultural identity too.

### Findings:

1. The North East states that has the highest numbers of migrants is Assam, following Tripura which have the second highest number of migrants among these states.
2. All the states have shown an increasing trend, from 1991 to 2011, in the rise of the number of migrants.
3. States like Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram has shown a tremendous increase in the number of migrants from post 1991.
4. The highest influx of immigrants is from the border country Bangladesh especially in Assam.
5. Majority of the migrants have migrated mostly due to reasons like fleeing from their home countries in search of land and for better living in these North East states.
6. The impact of these huge number of immigrants in these states is immense which includes problem like unemployment, scarcity of food and land etc. of the locals.
7. The role of government policies have little or no impact in solving the problem of illegal migrants in these North East states especially where the problem is of acute seriousness i.e., Assam. Policies like issuing the lists of legal citizens in the National Register of Citizens(NRC) of India have been undertaken but it is skeptical to say anything about the fruitfulness of it.

### Conclusion:-

In the North East, the majority of the people live in the hilly areas and they generally live in subsistence level. Therefore, there are urgent need to raise the productive capacity of the economy by income generating activities like horticulture, animal husbandry, soil forestry and tourism etc. In that case, when people from some other country or states tend to occupy their land by illegal migration it becomes near impossible for the indigenous people to live peacefully alongside the migrant lot. Again, there is the problem of out migration of adult males in search of employment outside their home residence which impose a heavy burden on the women and children which further leads to a vicious circle of poverty and misery. Also, large number of people has migrated to cities like Delhi, Bangalore, Mumbai from these North Eastern states in search of employment and education. These have caused a stir in the population pattern of these cities as well as caused a 'brain-drain' in the North Eastern states. There is a persistent interstate migration from other states of India, particularly Bihar, U.P, West Bengal. This leads to unavoidable problem of alarming growth of population in Assam and thus calls for some stringent actions by the government.

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