

Issues of Migration in Nagaland

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Abstract

The movement of people from one place in the world to another for the purpose of taking up permanent or semi-permanent residence, usually across a political boundary is called migration. People can either choose to move which is “voluntary migration” or be forced to move which is “involuntary migration”. A variety of reasons lie behind migration. People may migrate in order to improve their economic situation, or to escape civil strife, persecution, and environmental disasters. The reasons encouraging an individual to migrate were categorized as “push” or “pull” factors. Push factors come in when people are left with no choice but to leave their country of origin. Pull factor happens when people are attracted to move to a particular area or place from their own home. The present state of Nagaland, which has an area of 16, 579 sq. km. with a population density of 119 per sq. km, has been faced with migration issues during the recent years. Thus, taking into account all the push and pull factor of migration, this article tries to explain the reason for the in and out migration in the state of Nagaland.

Keywords: Migration, wage difference, employment, urbanisation, Nagaland

The movement of human populations across the planet has characterized human societies throughout history. The movement of people from one place in the world to another for the purpose of taking up permanent or semi-permanent residence, usually across a political boundary is called migration. People can either choose to move which is “voluntary migration” or be forced to move which is “involuntary migration” (National Geographic Society (2005)). Migrations have occurred throughout human history, beginning with the movements of the first human groups from their origins in East Africa to their current location in the world. A variety of reasons lie behind migration. People may migrate in order to improve their economic situation, or to escape civil strife, persecution, and environmental disasters. Historically, resource

scarcity or depletion has induced this movement (Davis, 1974). The reasons encouraging an individual to migrate were categorized as “push” or “pull” factors (globalization 101, 2015). Push factors come in when people are left with no choice but to leave their country of origin. There are many push factors which drives people to emigrate from their home countries. The push factor includes, Lack of Jobs or abstract Poverty which is the main driving factor behind migration, Civil Strife/War/Political and Religious Persecution in one’s own home/area compel some people to move away from their home and environmental problems and natural disasters which often cause the loss of money, homes, and jobs. Pull factor happens when people are attracted to move to a particular area or place from their own home. The pull factor includes higher standards of living or higher wages which act as the biggest pull factors for potential migrants, Labour Demand by the developed countries and the existence of tolerant government policies with regards to religion, race, political views and so on may make certain countries more attractive to potential migrants. The era of globalisation saw rapid migration around the world over the recent years. Many studies suggest that selected Migration and country’s economic growth are positively related as in the case of U.S where the best brains or skilled persons are given easy access to their country thereby boosting up their economy. But in many cases, the unrestricted flow becomes a problem as natives often losses employment and income.

In India, there has been out migration in search of better employment to other country over the years. This is mainly due to higher wages or incentives other country offers more than their home country. This has lead to a brain drain of the country human resources. In the case of Naga’s, the theories or oral tradition has it that the Naga’s migrated from somewhere in the South-east Asia. This theory has been substantiated by the fact that the Naga’s belonged to Mongolian race. However, no empirical research has yet been done to verify the route or the origin of Naga migration. But it has been assumed that the Naga’s have migrated from some Asian countries till they settled permanently in the present day political areas of North-east India and the northern part of Myanmar. The present state of Nagaland, which was established in 1963 has an area of 16579 sq. Km with a population density of 119 per sq. Km. Presently the total population of the state is 19, 78, 602, out of this total 17, 10, 973 are tribal who are mostly the indigenous people of the state. The rest are mostly migrants who migrated to Nagaland for better lives after 1963. The state which is still in a developing stage has large number of migrant workers both skilled and unskilled in the urban centres as well as in the rural areas but during the recent years it has been faced with the problems of migration. Thus, taking into account all the push and pull factor of migration, this article tries to explain the reason for the in

and out migration in the state. The article concludes with certain policy implication to check migration in the state.

Data Base and Methodology

The study has been conducted based on the perception recorded through primary survey and secondary data. The perception of the residents has been collected through personal interview and secondary data has been collected from different published sources such as Statistical Hand Book published by Government of Nagaland, NSSO etc..

Results and Discussion

Though migration is caused by political, social and economic factors around the globe, migration in the state can be mostly attributed to economic factors. The causes of migration in the state are explained by analysing wage difference, employment, urbanisation and the effectiveness of Inner Line permits.

Wage differences among the labourer of different region and areas are the main contributing factor to migration around the globe. As mentioned earlier people from India migrates to other countries because they get better incentives than their home country. As for the Naga's, before the advent of modernisation and development, the people lived in a somewhat close village economy and there was no question of wage differences. During the pre-modern development period the only work for the Naga people was only agricultural related activities where the works were bartered among the age groups and neighbours. But with the advent of modernisation and development the diversification of work has increased. However, the density of population being low in the state, it has to depend on other people to survive. But what makes migration in the state more rapid during the recent years is because of the wage differences between the local labourer and migrant labourer. To substantiate the aforementioned point, it will be better to look at the wage differences within the state between the migrant casual workers and local casual workers at a close range. It is a fact that to employ a local worker for a piece of work for a day, it will not only cost ₹ 350 per person per day on an average (current labour hiring charge) but will also have to provide lunch and tea to the workers. So if we calculate the whole cost of employing one local worker, it will come to around ₹ 500 per person per day. On the contrary, if one hire's a migrant workers, the cost of labour will be between ₹ 250 to ₹ 300 per person per day (at current rate) and nothing else. Sometimes, the migrant workers can also be paid ₹ 200 per person per day depending on the capability of a person to bargain. Thus, it is for these reasons that the demand for migrant

labour is high in the state. Thus, more and more migrant labours are flocking in the state.

Employment and the availability of employment opportunities have been playing a very important role in human migration for centuries. Unlike other Indian states which are highly populated and the problem of unemployment and income persist, the state is comparatively more advantages than others with varieties of opportunities and many untapped and underdeveloped resources which can accommodate many types of employment. However, the unemployment rate in the state as presented by 66th round of NSSO 2009-10 is high with 106 per thousand for rural areas and 92 per thousand for urban areas. This is mainly because the mindset of the people in defining employment is limited to a narrow field/area. Thus, the definition of employment for the native people differs from the general views of employment. According to National Sample Survey Organisation, India, an employed is defined as a person who is gainfully employed for more than half of the 365 days. However, employment means working or getting a job in public sector units or government jobs for the Naga's. Thus, even though there are enough employment opportunities in the state other than public sector, the number of native people employed in private sector is less owing to their ignorance about other avenues, i.e. private sectors, as well as their unflinching love for government employment. This leads to an increase in labour demand by the private sectors and creates an employment opportunities for the people from outside the state. The end result is that almost all the private sector jobs, both skilled and unskilled workers, from education sector to entrepreneurs are filled by the migrants.

Education which plays a vital role in transforming human civilization evolve from the oral traditional education to modern education with the arrival of Christianity in the state during the late 19th century. However, till the year 2000 A.D, the private education sectors from primary to higher education were being manned mostly by the people from outside the state. But with the rapid rise in population, literacy rate and educational institutions coupled with the growing unemployment problems in government sector, there has been a substantial increase in the number of native employment in this sector over the recent years.

Another job where the native uneducated and unskilled worker has not penetrated much are cobbler, hair cutting, construction work, coolies, etc. The main reason behind this is because many native people mentally distinguish between local work and non-local work for their conveniences. They do not feel that the above mention works are employment or rather down grade jobs, excepting ladies saloon where many Naga Ladies have entered as a growing business. Thus, more than ninety percent of the employees or workers are non-locals. On the other hand, the native

casual workers lands up as drivers, wood cutters, stone cutters and quarrying thereby missing out the art of learning the working technique of those jobs.

Entrepreneurship which is defined as the process of starting a business or other organization is another interesting sector to look at it. The Naga's who lived in a closed village economy before the arrival of Britishers has not yet cultivated the art of doing business. Though the land and buildings belong to the native in the state, almost all (about ninety percent) of the business establishment from grocery shops in all the district headquarters are being run by people from outside. Though the agricultural goods of the state are purely organic and high market values if harness well, the native agricultural business has not flourish much. The native could not reap the fruits from the markets because the native people still practice self-sufficient production coupled with underdeveloped infrastructure in the state. Thus, we find that majority of the dealers in agriculture goods are mostly from the people of other state.

Agriculture was the main stay for Naga economy and they mostly practice jhum and terrace cultivation for centuries in the hills. Apart from the hills the state has a large area on the foothills bordering Assam which are very fertile. The employment of the native people in this sector are mostly found on the hills whereas, most of the workers on the foothill areas are from the migrants. These migrant workers are brought by the native people to work in their field on fifty-fifty sharing basis for their paddy products. Even in other plantation crops the workers or care takers are mostly migrated who were hired by the native people. Thus, the migrant who had stayed there for years has started opening villages with recognition from the neighbouring state and are grabbing those lands which could not be looked after by the native properly. The end result is the border conflicts between the two states because most of the plain areas are on the border.

The out migrations to metro city by the educated natives are mostly because of job satisfaction and job opportunities. Most of the educated natives wants a white collar job in the government sector but the jobs availability are becoming scarce day by day because of an ever increasing graduates year after year. Thus, the educated youth moves out of the state in search of greener pastures. Moreover, the state which has high potentials for tourism and hospitality sector could not tap the resources well. Thus, this sector could not grow well in the state and the educated youth gets involved themselves in other states.

Urbanisation is the process in which the number of people living in cities increases compared with the number of people living in rural areas. Urbanisation means the growth of population in urban areas or comparative growth of urban areas with that of rural areas. The reasons for increase of people living in urban centres year by

year are better health care facility, multiple job opportunities and education. The state since its inception in 1963 has seen an increase of urban population by 11 times as shown in the table below.

Table 1: Population by residence in Nagaland

Year	Population	Urban population	Rural population
1971	516449	51394	465055
1981	774930	120234	654696
1991	1209546	208223	1001323
2001	1990036	342787	1647249
2011	1978502	570966	1407536

Source: Statistical Hand Book of Nagaland 2012

The rapid migration from rural areas to urban centres in search of better jobs other than agricultural activities and better education facilities has lead to decline in work force population in rural areas. What is left of the population in most of the rural areas, excepting those villages within the periphery of the town areas, are the children and aged persons. Thus, there exist shortage of agricultural labourer in most of the rural areas which in turn lead to low agricultural production and the supply side of agriculture goods are met by goods from other state. The reason for low agriculture production and migration from rural areas is because agricultural entrepreneurship has not taken its root among the villagers due to bad and insufficient physical infrastructure as well as inadequate education regarding commercialisation of agriculture products.

The Inner Line Permit system under the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulations was introduced 1873 and is stillin vogue in the state of Mizoram, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh. The aim was to ensure that ethnic tribes of these three states could maintain their distinct identity and at the same time promote their culture and tradition. However, during the recent years there seems to be a lackadaisical implementation on the part of the law enforcing agencies. Thus, the numbers of migrant casual workers entering the state keep rising day by day.

Conclusion

The contribution of migrant workers both skilled and unskilled to development in the state is commendable. The Naga's whose model of development was based on closed village economy could not have fare well in the path of development had it not been for the migrants who left their own home for greener pastures. Their contribution to modern education has an immense impact on the society that the state now has an average literacy rate higher than the national average. With the

rise in education and literacy rate, the state has produced technically skilled persons like doctors, engineers, teachers, etc. Apart from the contribution of the skilled migrants, unskilled migrant's casual workers too have contributed a lot in developing the labour scarce state before. But there are also problems associated with migration like loss of jobs and income for the native people in the state. Thus to checked the unabated flow of migration in the state certain policy implication are laid down here.

1. Selected migration in the state should be adopted as in the case of developed countries. It can be done by selectively issuing Inner Line Permit to migrants wanting to enter the state instead of issuing it randomly.
2. Equal wage rate for the natives and migrants workers (especially casual workers) have to be fixed by the government from time to time. This will reduce the demand for cheaper labourers and will have a great impact on migration in the state.
3. To counter the rising unemployment problem in the state, the native should learn the art of entrepreneurship from the migrants and venture in those areas.
4. The distinction of local job and non-local job has to be erased from the mindset of the native people if they want to sustain themselves without depending on outsiders.
5. To checked rapid urbanisation, agricultural marketing should be emphasised and proper physical infrastructure be developed in the rural areas. This will reduce the rural to urban migration to a great extent.
6. The employment of migrant workers in the farm especially on the foothills should be done on hiring wage basis and not on fifty-fifty basis.

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