

# TRIBAL YOUTH MIGRATION: A SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MANIPUR

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## **Abstract**

Migration is the movement of people from one place to another place in the world to for the purpose of taking up permanent or semi -permanent residence, usually across a political boundary. An example of "semi-permanent residence" would be the seasonal movements of migrant farm labourers. People can either choose to move ("voluntary migration") or be forced to move ("involuntary migration"). 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.

## **Introduction**

Migration occurs at a variety of scale: Inter-continental (between continents), intra continental (between countries on a given continent), and interregional (within countries). One of the most significant migration patterns has been rural to urban migration—the movement of people from the countryside to cities in search of opportunities. Migration is a social, economic and universal phenomenon in modern times, through which human being move from one place to another place in pursuit of certain cherished objectives like avenues of better employment, better wages, better working and living conditions, better quality of life and better livelihood. Migration is an old age phenomenon. It is happening from time immemorial. There are inter and international migration of labour. People migrate from one place to another for the development of their overall living standard and to enhance their social position. Internal migration is now recognized as an important factor in influencing social and economic development, especially in developing countries. Migration has rapidly increased ever since the economic liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation (LPG) particularly among the young and educated people for economic reason among other reasons. Generally, people migrate for employment, education, marriage, security, fear-psychosis, etc. Over the years migration is increasing from all the streams such as rural to rural, rural to urban, urban to rural and also urban to urban areas in order to maximise their economic and social well-being. Employment opportunities are booming in specific regions due to the pouring in of capital markets as the economy becomes stronger and stabilises. The nature, pattern, magnitude, determinants

and consequences of internal migration are changing over time and witnessing rapid transformation in recent times.

### **International Migration**

Globally, there were 232 million international migrants in 2013. Of these, nearly 59 per cent lived in the developed regions, while the developing regions hosted 41 per cent of the world's total. Of the 136 million international migrants living in the North in 2013, 82 million, or 60 per cent, originated from a developing country, while 54 million, or 40 per cent, were born in the North. Further, 82 million or 86 per cent of the 96 million international migrants residing in the developing world in 2013 originated from the South, while 14 million or 14 per cent were born in the North. Between 1990 and 2013, the number of international migrants worldwide rose by over 77 million or by 50 per cent. Much of this growth occurred between 2000 and 2010. During this period, some 4.6 million migrants were added annually, compared to an average of 2 million per annum during the period 1990-2000 and 3.6 million per annum during the period 2010-2013 (table I.1). The developed regions gained 53 million or 69 per cent of the 77 million international migrants added worldwide between 1990 and 2013, whereas the developing regions added 24 million or 31 per cent. While the North gained the largest absolute number of migrants between 1990 and 2013, since 2000 the average in the South outpaced the growth rate in the North. Worldwide, international migrants accounted for a relatively small share of the total population, comprising about 3.2 per cent of the world population in 2013, compared to 2.9 per cent in 1990. In the North, international migrants constituted 10.8 per cent of the total population in 2013 compared to 1.6 per cent in developing regions. Between 1990 and 2013, international migrants as a share of total population grew in the North but remained unchanged in the South.

### **Internal Migration in India**

Internal migration is now recognized as an important factor in influencing social and economic development, especially in developing countries. According to census 2001, the total population of India is 1028 million consisting of 532 million males and 496 million females. India is geographically divided into 29 states and 7 Union Territories. There is a tremendous variation in the aggregate population size across the state. It varies from 0.54 million in Sikkim to 166.2 million in Uttar Pradesh. In 2001, 309 million persons were migrants based on place of last residence, which constitute about 30% of the total population of the country. This figure indicates an increase of around 37 percent from census 1991 which recorded 226 million migrants. The pace and magnitude in which internal migration is taking place in India is unprecedented. Out-migration is taking place from a considerable proportion of households of rural India. According to Jaiswal, migration seems to be a common phenomenon, more so in case of internal migration .there has been an increasing trend of both intra-state and inter-state internal migration

in India, yet intra-state and within it, inter-district dominates the migratory movement. Singh and Singh say that urbanization has become the most important issue in the present era of globalization. The cities of the developing countries are absorbing the major proportion of increase in total population and India is no exception. Gowda et al; in their study have found that there has been rapid increase in the number of migration over a period of time. The percentage of female migrant is quite higher compared to the migration of male.

According to Perumal, migration is the barometer of changing socio-economic and political conditions at the national and international levels. Migration is a form of mobility in which people change their residential location across defined administrative boundaries for a variety of reasons, which may be involuntary or voluntary, or a mixture of both. The decisions on whether to move, how, and where are complex and could involve a variety of actors in different ways. People migrate for various reasons such as seeking employment, pursuing business or study, or because of marriages, etc. While some of the migrations take place for fulfilling aspirations of people with regard to rising education, increased skills and wage differentials between the place of origin and place of destination, some also take place because of lack of employment, prevalence of poverty and increasing distress. On the other hand, migrants do take care of their families at the place of origin by sending remittances. Remittances are spent on mainly immediate consumption needs; however, evidence reveals that with rising incomes, remittances can encourage investment in human capital formation, particularly by enabling increased expenditure on health, but also to some extent for education (Srivastava, year).

### **Rural to urban migration:**

More than half of the world's population lives in urban areas. In India, about one third (31%) of the population lives in urban areas. The urban population was enumerated at 377 million in 2011, which is likely to increase to 600 million by 2030. India has about 8000 cities and towns, but 43 per cent of the urban population lives in only 53 cities that have a population of a million plus. These cities are centres of wealth and economic growth. It is found that not all million-plus cities are equally vibrant, but those with larger share of migrant population have been thriving compared with those with a low share of migrants. Migrants' contribution to the city has always been underestimated in spite of the fact that migrants provide cheap labour to the industrial sector and cheap services to the urban elites.

### **Migration scenario in Manipur:**

Over the years migration is increasing from all the streams such as rural to rural, rural to urban, urban to rural and also urban to urban areas in order to maximise their economic and social well-being. Employment opportunities are booming in specific regions due to the pouring in of capital markets as the

economy becomes stronger and stabilises. In the process the tendency to migrate or transfer labour from the less developed regions such as Manipur increases. LPG benefits for all persons irrespective of the type of labour supply such as skilled, semi-skilled or unskilled. According to the census of India in 1981 as many as little less than 11 thousand people migrated from Manipur to the 'rest of the country (excluding seven North Eastern States)' for various reasons; which has increased to more than two folds at close to 24 thousand in 2001.

About 30 percent of the males migrated for employment, a similar size of them was for education, and the rest 40 percent migrated for other reasons. In case of female migrants from Manipur to the rest of the country about only 4 percent were for employment, 15 percent were for education, and the rest 81 percent migrated for other reasons.

The rural people tend to migrate towards urban areas as the quality of education and its infrastructure, and the job opportunities is much greater in urban areas. And the opening up of new employment opportunities in selected cities particularly in big cities act as the pull factor for migration on other hand. The concentration of the availability of job in such areas helps to benefit mostly to the educated and to those who can afford to reach the destination. In such case, the ability to access such opportunities become void for the countryside and rural labour among the poor. However, in recent years, it is clearly evident that migration is rapidly growing from the remote NE to (for example) Delhi, Mumbai. It seems somehow easy to get a job as most of the NE people learn their education in English medium.

Nevertheless, generally NE people's nature of hospitality or the english accent helps in getting job easily in hotel/shop or in customer care service. It is not surprising that many people from NE including from Manipur are venturing into various types of businesses and self-employed besides creating numerous employment in recent time in the migration destination. In such situation majority of the people still aspire for the so called government job. A traditional mind-set of recognising government job as a real and only job which gives economic security apart from gaining social status persist.

The dependence and rely on government to provide a job should be kept only as an alternative in present real world because in the post LPG the private sector grows rapidly while generation of government employment dwindles at fast rate. As a result contractual and casual work increases without accepting the government sector. In fact, it is not that the government does not create job but the rate of its employment created or available is far less than the tremendously increasing supply of labour. Usually the private sector employees are more efficient and productive than the government counterparts.

The government sector employees are a 'slack' particularly in Manipur. Because of this the state is developing at snail pace thereby employment generation is also slow which rendered people to be unemployed and induces to migrate from the state to search suitable employment corresponding to their

educational qualifications. It is ironic that majority of the organised sector jobs are provided by the government. It is due to the existing political problem where organised private market players investment is hardly visible.

On the aspect of education of the state, the rate of literacy has increased from about 72 percent in 1991 to about 78 percent in the latter decade for males. For females it has increased from 48 to 60 percent in the same period. According to the report of NSS 2004-05, little more than 18 percent of the rural people had completed secondary and above educational level. In urban areas, about 36 percent of the people had completed secondary and above. This shows that majority of the people particularly in rural areas are not educated. This led to a problem of unemployment where 'employability' is a question. The general unemployment rate (usual principal status) was about 2 percent in rural areas and about 6 percent in urban areas. However, for the youth (15-29 years of age)

It stood significantly higher at about 4 percent in rural areas and slightly more than 19 percent in urban areas. Normally, the unemployment rate is higher in urban than rural areas due to higher educational level. Moreover, the rates used to be higher for the youths than the general unemployment rates. It is because that the youth age are at the entry point in the job markets whereas older people than the youths are mostly settled down and raise a family with economic responsibility so most of the older people are workers.

Further, the above explanation indicates that with the rising level of education the problem of unemployment increases due to a higher and better job aspiration particularly in urban areas and among the youth. This acted as the push factor for migration. Concisely, migration from Manipur is rapidly increasing in search of better education and for job in particular in the post Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization (LPG) where jobs are growing in some selected regions. Migration from the state is due to a high unemployment rate particularly for the youth and in urban areas which is a result of slow employment generation by the government and low participation in job creation by the private sector amidst growing educational level.

### **Tribal Youth Migrated To Urban Cities:**

Tribal youth especially Tangkhul and Kuki are increasingly migrating from Ukhrul district of Manipur to urban cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore, Chennai, etc. There is a growing number of educated youth in the district, who constitutes about 30 per cent of district population. Lack of adequate educational infrastructures and problems of growing unemployment at home has driven many to choose urban cities for their career and jobs. To them, Delhi is the centre that facilitates better educational system and employment opportunities. About 96 per cent of the migrants fall in the age group of 15–29 years. They mostly migrated after the completion of matriculate or 10+2 exam. The process of migration was largely a



chain migration because most of them already have their relatives or at least known persons in Delhi who provides basic requirements and facilitates in finding accommodation, admission or even job at the time of migrating to Delhi.

Family members, relatives and friends who have previously migrated may provide information about their present location to persons residing in their former place of residence. Former migrants may also provide temporary food and shelter as well as ease social transition. Most of the new migrants who came for education purpose studied arts followed by science, commerce and vocational subject. Majority of them graduated in degree course in humanities and social sciences that do not give easy placements for jobs. One of their main aspirations is to get government job after degree courses. Therefore, most males after completing their education continue to stay back in Delhi and prepare for civil service and other competitive examinations.

### **Issues of Migration:**

**Global issue:** People emigrate from one country to another for a variety of complex reasons. Some are forced to move, due to conflict or to escape persecution and prejudices, while others may voluntarily emigrate. Although such a move may be necessary, it can be quite traumatic on top of the challenges experienced so far.

From another perspective, immigration can also represent an act of courage. For example,

- Moving to a different country with different culture and norms can be quite daunting;
- The potential loneliness to be suffered is not always easy to overcome;
- There may be the additional pressure to earn enough to live (in a more expensive-to-live-in country) and send back meager savings.

An economic migrant, a person searching for work, or better opportunities, will be stepping into the unknown—an exciting prospect if the person is already well-to-do, or daunting at least, if out of desperation.

As Inter Press Service (IPS) reported, the European Union has recently acknowledged a concern about immigration that has not received much media attention. That is, a large number of people are attempting to leave the devastation of their own country caused by the current form of globalization and other political and economic policies, which, as well as creating winners, is creating a large number of losers, and increasing inequality. Tackling poverty and addressing issues of development and opportunity are important aspects of tackling this type of immigration.

## Problem Encountered by Migrant Workers

Problems encountered by the migrant workers may be examined at two levels. First in relation to recruitment violations and the second in relation to working and living conditions in destination countries. Commonly reported violations are delayed deployment or non-deployment of workers, overcharging or collection of fees far in excess of authorised placement fees and illegal recruitment. Delayed deployments are often caused by factors beyond the control of the recruitment agency, such as visa delays or when the employer requests a postponement. Non-deployment is however a serious case and the magnitude of its implications are amplified if an excessive placement fee is collected from the worker. Overcharging is a serious offence and is prevalent in all labour-sending countries in Asia.

Some major problems encountered by the migrants in their countries of employment include:

- a) Premature termination of job contracts,
- b) Changing the clauses of contract to the disadvantage of the workers,
- c) Delay in payment of salary,
- d) Violation of minimum wage standards,
- e) Freezing of fringe benefits and other perks,
- f) Forced over-time work without returns and
- g) Denial of permission to keep one's own passport.

### Internal Laws and Conventions for Migration:

The international legal framework on the rights of migrant workers and member of their families: The most comprehensive definition of a migrant worker is provided in the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (“the Convention on Migrant Workers”). Article 2.1 of the Convention on Migrant Workers defines a migrant worker: ... as a person who is to be engaged, is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a state of which he or she is not a national. Article 2 also distinguishes between particular categories of migrants. These include “frontier worker”, “seasonal worker”, “project-tied worker”, “itinerant worker”, “seafarer” and “self-employed worker”; categories which have been excluded from other international standards developed in the past, including ILO conventions specific to the rights of migrant workers. Part V of the Convention sets out the rights that apply to these particular categories of migrant workers.

*The international human rights framework:*

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
- International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance

Accordingly, article 2(1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights provides that States must respect and ensure civil and political rights without discrimination on any grounds. The Human Rights Committee has further confirmed that the guarantee of non-discrimination applies to nationals and non-nationals alike.

Article 2(2) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights also prohibits discrimination of any kind, including on the grounds of race, colour, sex, age, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

### **ILO conventions**

In addition to the international human rights treaties, the ILO has established a number of conventions that outline and protect the labour rights of migrant workers. In particular, the ILO has approved two major conventions specifically on the rights of migrant workers:

Migration for Employment Convention, 1949 (C-97), Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (C-143). These conventions are supplemented by two (non-binding) ILO recommendations that provide further guidance on how the rights of migrant workers can be protected in practice: Migration for Employment Recommendation (Revised), 1949 (R-86) and Migrant Workers Recommendation, 1975 (R-151).

### **Government Legislation and Policies:**

#### **Labour laws and policies:**

The Indian Constitution contains basic provisions relating to the conditions of employment, non-discrimination, right to work etc. (e.g., Article 23(1), Article 39, Article 42, Article 43). India is also a member of the ILO and has ratified many of the ILO Conventions. These provisions and commitments, along with pressure from workers organisations, have found expression in labour laws and policies. Migrant labourers face additional problems and constraints as they are both labourers and migrants. Many of the problems faced by migrant labourers are covered by laws and policies in as much as they cover all labourers in a particular sector or industry. These laws include-

- The Minimum Wages Act, 1948;
- The Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970;



- The Equal Remuneration Act,1976;
- The Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service), Act,1996;
- The Workmen's Compensation Act 1923;
- The Payment of Wages Act1936;
- The Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act,1986;
- The Bonded Labour Act, 1976;
- The Employees State Insurance Act, 1952;
- The Employees Provident Fund Act, 1952; and
- The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961.

The last three Acts cover only organised sector workers and thus preclude temporary migrants.

In addition to the above laws, Parliament passed the Inter State Migrant Workmen (Regulation and Conditions of Service) Act 1979 specifically to deal with malpractices associated with the recruitment and employment of workers who migrate across state

Boundaries. The Act followed the recommendations of a committee set up by the Labour Ministers' Conference in 1976. The Act covers only interstate migrants recruited through contractors or middlemen and those establishments that employ five or more such workers on any given day.

## FACTORS OF MIGRATION

People migrate for a number of reasons. These reasons may fall under these four areas: Environmental, Economic, Cultural and Socio-political. Within that, the reasons may also be 'push' or 'pull' factors.

**Push Factors:** Push factors are those that force the individual to move voluntarily, and in many cases, they are forced because the individual risk something if they stay. Push factors may include conflict, drought, famine, or extreme religious activity.

Poor economic activity and lack of job opportunities are also strong push factors for migration. Other strong push factors include race and discriminating cultures, political intolerance and persecution of people who question the status quo.

**Pull Factors:** Pull factors are those factors in the destination country that attract the individual or group to leave their home. Those factors are known as *place utility*, which is the desirability of a place that attracts people. Better economic opportunities, more jobs, and the promise of a better life often pull people into new locations.

Sometimes individuals have ideas and perceptions about places that are not necessarily correct, but are strong pull factors for that individual. As people grow older and retire, many look for places with warm weather, peaceful and comfortable locations to spend their retirement after a lifetime of hard work and

savings. Such ideal places are pull factors too. Very often, people consider and prefer opportunities closer to their location than similar opportunities farther away. In the same vein, people often like to move to places with better cultural, political, climatic and general terrain in closer locations than locations farther away. It is rare to find people move over very long distances to settle in places that they have little knowledge of.

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