

IMPLICATIONS OF RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION ON THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF RURAL MIGRANT HOUSEHOLDS IN NAGALAND

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Abstract

Migration has been identified as a survival strategy utilized by the poor, especially the rural dwellers. The assessment of the effects of migration of rural areas to urban areas will remain relevant since migration acts as a mechanism in the transformation of the migrant households. This paper assesses the implications of rural-urban migration of the Lotha-Nagas of Wokha District in Nagaland, a North-eastern state of India. This study mainly focuses in examining the positive and negative impact of migration on the socio-economic conditions and the general living conditions of the migrant households, and its impact on the urban area of destination.

Keywords: *Rural; Urban; Migration; Impact; Lotha-Naga.*

Introduction:

Rural-Migration reflects the extent of development in a particular village or rural area, and the imbalances between rural and urban areas or between one rural area to another in terms of development and economic opportunities. Rural-Urban Migration has become an important means of securing the basic necessities of life, access to better educational facilities, health centres, employment opportunities etc. Though shifting to urban areas does not give the rural household migrants a permanent solution, it most positively brings much improvement in certain areas of their life.

Rural-urban migration has multi-fold impact on the migrants, the place of origin (the place where they left from), and the place of destination (the place where they left for). Existing literature on the consequences of rural-urban migration or internal migration show that the focus of new study is not confined to the experiences of the migrant households, but also on their place of last residence, and their new place of residence.

Rural-Urban migration creates some problems in the rural and urban areas. In most rural areas, the impact was a rapid deterioration of the rural economy, excessive drain of

youth from the rural populace, thus leaving only the older and aged members to constitute the labour force of the rural area. The Government are not aware of the annual internal migration trend, neither most of them know the factors responsible for the movement of rural people into cities. Because of the movement of people from rural areas, its consequent reduction in population has attracted less attention from the government as some already existing infrastructure facilities may be left non-functional and new ones may not be brought to replace the old ones (Yire & Ojeh, 2016). The effects of rural-urban migration are viewed from two directions. On one hand, migration causes excessive urbanisation, unemployment, income inequalities, and ecological stress. On the other hand, migration is a necessary part of the economic growth, equilibrating tendencies, facilitating industrialisation, improving income distribution and introducing technological change in agriculture, and generalising that migration is the human right ensuring choosing one's destination to improve welfare and economic benefit (Standing, 1984). In general, Rural-Urban migration has a number of economic, social, cultural and demographic impacts to both the place of destination and place of origin.

Rural to Urban Migration is one of the leading factors in the growth of urban population, besides the natural increase of population. Migration changes the characteristics of the population in the regions of out migration and regions of in-migration. It changes the age and sex composition of population with the rate of growth of population. The ratio of population increases in the area of destination and decreases in the area of origin. The changes in the size of population of the 'urban units' where the household migrants from twelve villages of Wokha district covered under study migrates to, can be seen from the following table;

Table 1

Census-wise distribution of Population in respect of Dimapur town, Kohima town and Wokha town

| <i>Urban Units</i> | Population Census | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| | <i>1991</i> | <i>2001</i> | <i>2011</i> |
| Dimapur Town | 57,182 | 98,096 | 122,834 |
| Kohima Town | 51,418 | 77,030 | 99,039 |
| Wokha Town | 14,377 | 37,636 | 35,004 |

Source: Census Handbook, Registrar and Census Commissioner (1991,2001,2011)

Table 1 reveals that the population size of Dimapur town increase by 65,652 persons in the last twenty years (1991-2011) and 24,738 persons in the last ten years (2001-2011). The table also shows that the population size of Kohima town increases by 47,621 persons in the last twenty years from 1991 to 2011, and there is an increase of 22,009 persons in the last ten years from 2001 to 2011. The table also shows an increase in the size of population of Wokha town by 20,627 persons in the last twenty years from 1991 to 2011. However, there is a decline in the size of Wokha town by 2632 persons in the last ten years from 2001-2011. This decline may be attributed to some factors like decrease in birth rate, increase in death rate, migration of households to other urban towns or cities, and job transfer.

Methodology:

The study has been confined mainly to the parameter of Wokha district of Nagaland based on both primary and secondary sources. The sampling technique adopted in this study has been based on simple random sampling. A total of 315 respondents (household) were taken from twelve sample villages namely, *Phiro, Wokha Village, Changus(old), Tsungiki, Lakhuti, Soku, Moilan, Lio-Longidang, Yimpang and Yampha* and three sample urban unit namely; *Kohima, Dimapur and Wokha town* .

Consequences of Rural-Urban Migration

In order to analyse the impact of rural-urban migration on the migrant households, an attempt was made to collect information about the problems and challenges faced by the migrant household and the improvements and changes in the family life after migration.

Table 2
Respondents' opinion on problems and challenges faced in urban areas

| <i>Problems and challenges</i> | <i>N</i> | <i>%</i> |
|---|------------|------------|
| Access to good housing | 21 | 6.7 |
| Inadequacy of social services and amenities | 37 | 11.7 |
| Rising cost of living | 54 | 17.2 |
| Competitive job market/difficulty to find a job | 67 | 21.2 |
| Collections and donations from various unions and organisations | 34 | 10.8 |
| Rising cost of education | 79 | 25.1 |
| Social and religious obligations | 9 | 2.9 |
| No difficulty encountered | 14 | 4.4 |
| Total | 315 | 100 |

Table 2 shows that the main problems and challenges faced by the migrant households in the urban area of destination. Rising cost of education is one of the major problems in the urban area faced by a total of 25.1% of the migrant households. Competitive job market and difficulty to find a job in the urban area is the second major problem faced by 22.1% of the respondents. Other major problems faced by the migrant households in their area of destination are rising cost of education, inadequacy of social services and amenities such as good road and transportation, public health centre, housing and collections and donations from various groups, unions and organizations with 17.2%, 11.7% and 10.8% respectively.

Table 3
Respondents' opinion on urban rapid population growth

| <i>Reasons</i> | <i>N</i> | <i>%</i> |
|--|------------|------------|
| Natural increase of the urban population | 43 | 13.65 |
| Rural-Urban Migration from surrounding areas | 56 | 17.78 |
| Both | 147 | 46.67 |
| Other(specify) | 0 | 0.00 |
| No Response | 69 | 21.9 |
| Total | 315 | 100 |

The above table 3 reveals that out of the total 315 respondents, majority are of the opinion that rapid population growth in urban areas resulted from both the factors i.e., natural increase of the urban natives and rural-urban migration followed by 17.78% on rural-urban migration and 13.65% resulted on natural increase of the urban natives.

Table 4
Respondents' opinions on most relevant types of Problems caused by rural-urban migration

| <i>Problems</i> | <i>N</i> | <i>%</i> |
|---|------------|------------|
| Increase in crime/robbery | 19 | 6.03 |
| Increased of youth unemployment | 101 | 32.06 |
| Increase in urban problems such as prostitution, gambling, alcoholism, street vendors etc | 93 | 29.5 |
| Expansion of squatter settlements | 17 | 5.4 |
| Urban congestion | 70 | 22.2 |
| Housing Problems | 15 | 4.8 |
| Total | 315 | 100 |

Table 4 shows the problems caused by rural-urban migration in the urban area of destination. Out of the total 315 respondents, 32.06 % agreed on the increased of youth

unemployment problems as the major problem caused by rural-urban migration. 29.5% of the respondents agreed that rural-urban migration leads to increase of urban problems such as prostitution, gambling, alcoholism, street vendors etc. 22.2% of the respondents agrees that rural-urban migration also leads to urban congestion. 6.03%, 5.4% and 4.8% of the respondents agrees on factors such as increase in crime and robbery, expansion of squatter settlements and housing problems respectively caused by rural-urban migration.

Table 5
Respondents' opinion on level of facilities and opportunities in urban areas

| <i>Sl no.</i> | <i>Facilities & opportunities</i> | <i>Responses in percentage</i> | | | | |
|---------------|--|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|--------------------|--------------|
| | | <i>Yes</i> | <i>No</i> | <i>Not Sure</i> | <i>No Response</i> | <i>Total</i> |
| 1 | Gainful job | 34.3 | 35.9 | 25.7 | 4.1 | 100 |
| 2 | Employment Opportunities | 52.1 | 26.3 | 18.5 | 3.2 | 100 |
| 3 | Better Educational Facilities | 90.5 | 2.5 | 4.4 | 2.5 | 100 |
| 4 | Good road, transport & communication facilities | 54.9 | 14.9 | 27.3 | 2.1 | 100 |
| 5 | Social services & basic amenities (water, electricity) | 55.9 | 15.6 | 25.4 | 3.2 | 100 |
| 6 | Good Housing | 42.9 | 23.8 | 29.8 | 3.5 | 100 |
| 7 | Good Health Services | 74.3 | 8.3 | 14.0 | 3.5 | 100 |
| 8 | Entertainment & Recreational facilities | 57.8 | 15.6 | 22.9 | 3.8 | 100 |

Table 5 reveals the capability of the urban area in absorbing the rural migrant household in providing facilities such as employment opportunities, better educational facilities, urban social services, good road and transportation, communication facilities, good housing, good health services and entertainment. Out of the 315 respondents, 90.5% agrees that their present town or city is able to provide better educational opportunities to the rural migrant households. On the question of accessibility of good health services and facilities in the urban areas, 74.3% out of the total 315 respondents agrees that good health services and facilities are available in their place of destination, and the migrant households have the access to health services and facilities. 57.8% of the respondent agrees on the availability of entertainment and recreational facilities in urban area, followed by 55.9% on the accessibility of urban social services and basic amenities and 54.9% on the availability of good road, transportation and communication facilities.

Table 6:
Positive consequences status on the migrant's family

| <i>Response</i> | <i>N</i> | <i>%</i> |
|-----------------|------------|--------------|
| Yes | 259 | 82.2 |
| No | 45 | 14.3 |
| No Response | 11 | 3.5 |
| Total | 315 | 100.0 |

Out of the total 315 respondents, 259 respondents accounting for 82.2% are of the opinion that rural-urban migration had brought many improvements and positive consequences on the family status of the rural migrants while only 45 respondents accounting for 14.3% opines that rural-urban migration do not bring any positive consequences or impact on the family status of the migrants. Table 6 reveals that, there is a positive correlation between positive consequences on family status of the migrants and rural-urban migration.

The respondents have pointed out some important positive consequences of rural – urban migration. These are improvements in the standard and quality of education of their children, access to better educational system and facilities, better option to choose the best institution for children's education and career, improvements in the socio-economic status of the family, family income and earnings, improved lifestyles, availability of job opportunities, secured jobs and the overall living standard of the family, improvement in private business venture, entrepreneurship, good business scope and opportunity, access to modern amenities and facilities like proper electricity, water, housing, health services, transport system and access to uninterrupted internet services, mass media, information and technology.

Table 7
Comparison study of pre and post impact of rural-urban migration

| <i>Variables</i> | <i>Improved</i> | | <i>Worsened</i> | | <i>Same</i> | | <i>No response</i> | | <i>Total</i> |
|--|-----------------|------|-----------------|-----|-------------|------|--------------------|-----|--------------|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | |
| Occupation | 272 | 86.3 | 1 | 0.3 | 36 | 11.4 | 6 | 1.9 | 100 |
| Income | 292 | 92.7 | 1 | 0.3 | 14 | 4.4 | 8 | 2.5 | 100 |
| Access to housing | 227 | 72.1 | 12 | 3.8 | 68 | 21.6 | 8 | 2.5 | 100 |
| Access to urban transportation & communication | 273 | 86.7 | 3 | 1 | 33 | 10.5 | 6 | 1.9 | 100 |
| Access to health care | 295 | 93.7 | 1 | 0.3 | 14 | 4.4 | 5 | 1.6 | 100 |
| Access to education | 301 | 95.6 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 2.5 | 6 | 1.9 | 100 |
| General living conditions | 285 | 90.5 | 2 | 0.6 | 21 | 6.7 | 7 | 2.2 | 100 |

For the impact of rural-urban migration, an analysis on pre and post migration situation has also been taken. As shown in table 7, the findings reveal a positive impact of rural-urban migration. Significant improvement was found in the access to education, access to health care and services, income and earnings of the family and general living conditions. The total number of respondents in each of the variables is out of 315. 95.6% of the respondents stated improvements in access to education, 93.7% stated improvements in access to health care, 92.7% stated improvements in income and earnings of the family, 90.5% stated improvements in general living conditions of the family, 86.7% agreed on improvements in access to urban transportation and communication, 86.3% stated improvements in occupation and employment, and 72.1% agreed on improvements in access to housing.

Thus, to conclude, migration from rural to urban areas has many implications especially on the socio-economic status of the migrant families. Rural-urban migration can have both positive and negative consequences. This study reveals that rural-urban migration has brought many positive consequences and improvements on the socio-economic status of the migrant households. Firstly, rural-urban migration has brought improvements and changes in the standard and quality of education of their children, access to better educational system and facilities, and a better option to choose the best institution for children's education and career. Secondly, it has brought improvements in the socio-economic status of the family, family income and earnings, improved lifestyles, availability of job opportunities, secured jobs and the overall living standard of the family. The third area of improvement is private business venture, entrepreneurship, good business scope and opportunity. Another area of improvement is access to modern amenities and facilities like proper electricity, water, housing, health services, transport system and access to uninterrupted internet services, mass media, information and technology. The fifth area of improvement is living a comfortable, easier and convenient life and better social environment.

This study also reveals that Rural-urban migration besides its positive implications; it has some negative implications on the migrant households too. Some negative implications of rural-urban migration are difficulties to get a job, high competition for employment, rising cost of education, rising cost of living in urban area and collections and donations from various unions, associations and organisation.

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