

Inter-District Rural-Rural migration: A Study of the War migrants Community in Ri Bhoi District Meghalaya

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Abstract: Migration is a form of spatial mobility of population between one geographical unit and another involving a permanent change of residence (UN, 1958). Rural to rural migration According to (Safa,1978), "Migration is normally viewed as an economic phenomenon through non-economic factors obviously has some bearing (Singh, 1989). Migration is a natural process that often happens depending on the socio-economic, demographic, cultural, political and environmental factors related to the migrant people. Migration is not a mere shift of people from one place of residence to another. It is most fundamental to the understanding of continuously changing space content and space relationships of areas (Gosal, 1961). The World Bank's 2008 World Development Report on agriculture focuses on the importance of livelihoods, characterized by different strategies—based on farming (market-oriented and subsistence), labour, migration and diversification—and three different types of economy: agriculture-based, transforming and urbanized (World Bank 2007, 76, c.f. Scoones, 2009, p.184). The purpose of this paper is to explore the relationship between the war migrant's community with the host community and social adjustment of the migrated people with special reference to the 'war' community of Meghalaya. The study reveals that the war community people who migrated from their native places (rural areas) to rural areas (Ri Bhoi District), usually bounds, have a better economic condition, friendly relationship to adjust with the local people and the surroundings. Their livelihood and economic patterns have changed after they have migrated to the rural areas. They still practice the same cultivation even after shifting to other settlement areas. Here, their income levels have also increased along with expenditure because of the good productivity of their cultivation like betel nut and betel leaves. They live in small houses constructed with bamboo and they are group conservative society. Their standard of living and social change have developed as compared what they did not expected before their decision to migrate. Education level for children has increased they started to get adequate facilities to enroll in the good schools unlike before now they have opportunities for higher education and youth started to get job in Government service. Thus the study found that the migration decision for the war community have bring positive impact to the host society.

Key Words: Rural-Rural Migration; Inter-District Migration; Community; Mobility.

1. INTRODUCTON:

According to Castles and Miller (1993), migration has been described as an extremely varied and complex manifestation and component of equally complex economic, social, cultural, demographic and political processes operating at local, regional, national, and international levels. Ravenstein was the first to provide a theoretical basis to human migration (Bouge 1969). Todaro's (1969) postulates that migration occurs in response to (a) rural-urban differences in expected rather than actual earning and (b) the probability of getting work at the destination. Simultaneously, social and cultural factors entering the migration decision did receive some attention.

The process, patterns, volume, trends and determinants of migration have contributed significantly to the other processes of industrialisation, urbanisation, economic development, cultural diffusion and social integration. (Singh J.P. : 1980)¹. The neo-classical model (Lewis: 1954; Fei and Ranis: 1961; Todaro: 1969; Harris and Todaro: 1970)² was developed primarily to explain the patterns of migration in the process of economic development (Massey et al : 1993)³. The study of migration has also acquired special significance in the context of commercialization and modernization of agriculture (Oberai and Singh : 1981). Moreover, migration has notable feed back effects on the place of origin as the migrants maintain different kinds and degrees of contact (Rao: 1981).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

The basic cause of voluntary migration is to achieve maximum individual satisfaction through obtaining better employment or wage or security or environment (Santhapparaj, 1996). Indeed people tend to migrate to maximise their welfare (Faggian and McCann, 2006). In India, recent migrants do have a strong tendency to migrate to localities which had previously attracted natives of their region (Greenwood, 1973). It indicates that Indian

migration process is largely a type of chain migration. MacDonald and MacDonald (1964:82) defined chain migration as “that movement in which prospective migrants learn of opportunities, are provided with transportation, and have initial accommodation and employment arranged by means of primary social relationships with previous migrants.” Past migrant flows can be expected to influence current migration for several important reasons. Family and friends who have previously migrated from one region to another 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 (Levy and Wadycki, 1973).

Knowledge of the relationship between environmental change and migration is limited, a point recognized by almost all researchers working on this topic (Döös 1997). This is in part because of the complexity of issues that fall under the broad heading of ‘environmental migration’. Migration in which environmental change may be factor can be in response to various kinds of sudden onset disasters or slow onset changes (indeed usually a combination of both), and it may comprise movements over short distances or long distances, and for short periods or very long periods. The causes and consequences of migration are also highly dependent on the social and ecological contexts from which people move and to which they move (Locke et al. 2000).

Environmental changes caused by migration it is widely assumed that influxes of migrants into rural areas result in increases in environmental damage. Yet as many authors observe, this is more asserted than proven (Black and Sessay 1997, Black and Sessay 1998, Jacobsen 2002, Kibreab 1997). Refugee camps can have deleterious impacts on local environmental conditions (Biswas and Tortajada-Quiroz 1996, Jacobsen 1997). However, many of these impacts dissipate over time as refugees integrate with host populations and seek to establish sustainable livelihoods (Jacobsen 2002). They can also be avoided through careful siting of camps, policies to enable refugees to pursue their livelihoods without recourse to excessive use of local natural capital, and measures to enable displaced populations to disperse. Many migrants avoid camps and choose to locate themselves, without assistance, in nearby settlements, and families inside camps tend to place members outside camps in nearby towns so that sources of income and goods are diversified (Bascom 1998, Horst 2006, Jacobsen 1997).

Land tenure and other property systems are important determinants of the environmental outcomes of influxes of migrants. Where local landowners have some security of tenure and are able to develop systems that allow migrants access to it, land can be shared, and migrants tend to use it sustainably (Black 1994, Black and Sessay 1998, Kibreab 1997, Unruh 2004). Much also depends on the reception of host communities, and the ways in which planners and donors include host communities in responses. Where efforts aimed to help migrants settle include local communities as well as migrants, and promote sustainable resource management, the combined effects of additional labor and money can enhance sustainability.

In situations where governments promote labor migration as a strategy for rural development, such as with Indonesia’s transmigration program, it is often intended that migrants will exploit reserves of natural capital to establish new livelihood systems. Such movements therefore have environmental impacts, as well as create conflicts between local people with customary rights and state-supported migrants who assert claims to resources (Fearnside 1997).

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

Ri Bhoi District rank third as the largest highest population in Meghalaya and predominated by diversity of geographical, socio-economic characters. It has been witnessed with diverse groups of migrant’s communities who residing in the district, one among the highest population of migrants community coming from different district of Meghalaya known as the War community were the largest groups of migrants who migrated and presently settle in Ri Bhoi District. Due to this diversity it is important to study the migration pattern of this particular community. Inter-district migration relates to those migrants who move from one district to another district of the state. This movement is accelerated due to socio-economic factors like growth of industry, agricultural development and urbanization. However the migration stream is much stronger among the neighboring districts and becomes insignificant with the increase in distance. Dasgupta (1984) has developed an approach with a historical basis and broader socio-economic perspective in explaining the population movements towards Calcutta. His study reveals that migration in the context of Calcutta fails to bring about uniformity in earnings and other opportunities between the origin and the destination, and to be true, widens the disparity overtime. The correct approach to solve the problem associated with migration will be according to him to develop a pattern of urbanization in which the smaller towns will be the focal point of rural development in the respective region and also to make extensive agricultural development Ghosh (2002) has made a comprehensive empirical analysis of migration in West Bengal during 1872-1991. She has analyzed the trend different components, characteristics and reasons of the important from different parts of India to West Bengal and has analyzed the pattern of inter-district migration within West Bengal Bhattacharya (1996) observed the relation between inter-regional disparities in human development and migration. With support to this findings it has also been found that migration decision of the war community on inter-district migration how it has lead to human development and to their particular community a social recognition from the other society.

4. INTRODUCTION OF THE WAR COMMUNITY:

In Ri bhoi district the settlement of the war migrants community it have been found in all the different parts of the region. They constituted 10% of the total population in Ri Bhoi District. The dominant area which being occupied by this group of migrants are Shangbangla, Pahamrioh, Umtasor, Byrnihat, killing, Umtyrnga, umsiang, umdoh. It has been observed that this group of community they prefare to settle in isolated area in which only their community settle. Also their population keep on increasing from year to year since the migration flow to this area is taking place regularly coming from their native place from different district with in Meghalaya ie Jaintia Hills and West Khasi Hills from rural and remote place. One important factor is the role of information about possible destination studied by Yeshwant (1962), McEvoy (1971), Findlay (1977), Hugo (1978, 1981), Hull (1980), and Goodman (1981). They have researched the impact of information on migration. They observed that migrants of the common place of origin tend to head for common destination; partly because of the information and help they get out of the ties of kinship and friendship and partly because of the natural attachment with the friends. With support to this findings the same case taken place with the war migrants the reason for they migrated to the new place. The new migrants who came and settle into this district are mostly they are relative to the migrants who already came and settle before over a last few years. Thus relative bonding plays a significant role for migrants from other district to shift into the other district.

5. RURAL TO RURAL MIGRATIONS:

The war migrants who migrated to Ri bhoi they belong from rural areas of Jaintia Hills and West Khasi Hills. Generally, such a migration originates from crowded areas of low agricultural productivity and is directed towards sparsely populated areas experiencing large scale developmental activities. The motive behind is to gain economic. Such migration may take place even for longer distances and is often permanent in which the war migrant's majority of them who settle in Ri Bhoi District they take a decision of staying permanently into this place. The main reason is that they can earn and live for their livelihood unlike into their native place where many problems in which they are facing. However, focusing on poverty, the livelihood framework suggests that it is not only a product of material deprivation but of a set of interlocking factors, including physical weakness, social isolation, vulnerability and powerlessness (Hossain, 2005).

6. REASON FOR MIGRATION:

There are many reasons for rural to rural migration, first One being weather, should a drought occur an crops die, then the people will move to where they can sustain a crop to support themselves and their family. For that they have to take migration decision where they can earn they livelihood. The native place where this war migrant's community is suffering in the unfertile soil and environment degradation since most of them depends on agriculture sectors. Second reason is insufficient land to work Economic motives constituting the most vital determinants of population movement. The war migrants found that in their origin place majority of the people works as agricultural and they depend on the quality of the soil and environment. The climate and the fertile soils which is prevails in Ri Bhoi district is much suitable for their agricultural productivity as compared to their origin place. Parganiha et.al; (2009) pointed that out-migration is greater in the poorly developed agricultural areas and particularly high among the landless farmers. This was the main reason which has made the war community to take decision for migration. With the thought of staying permanently into this place and bring their agriculture occupation by planting betle nut and betle leaves this will increased their economic income and change their life standard. Conditions reflecting the economic prosperity offer greater employment potential and attract in-migrants from different place especially to the war community to come and settle into this place. Hence they move on to other farming land where they can raise the family, or some move to urban areas in hopes of finding employment and housing.

7. SOCIAL RELATIONSHIP:

Livelihoods and Social capital Like other types of assets, social capital can be used to maintain and improve livelihoods. Social capital refers broadly to investments in social relations amongst kin, patron or wider community, or as Bourdieu, (1993:32) postulated, what 'ordinary language calls connections'. Social capital can also be defined as the features of social organization, such as trust, norms and networks that can improve efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions (Putnam, 1993). The war migrants have a good social relationship with one another they help each other when it come during time of emergency. They have a very strong social bonding among them. And also it can be seen that the community have grow up into a welfare society.

8. CONCLUSION:

In many poor countries rural-rural migration still dominates with labourers from poorer regions travelling to the agriculturally prosperous areas. In India, rural-rural migration accounted for about 62 percent of all movements in 1999-2000 according to National sample survey (NSS) data (Srivatstava and Bhattacharyya 2003). Workers from backward states, routinely travel to the improved states. Rural-rural migration is typically under taken by poorer

groups with no education and other assets as it requires lower investment due to the scatter nature of the destinations and remoteness of origin areas. This is the least regulated of all kinds of migration. Migration of the war community to the host society have bring many changes to the host community presently the native people they started to followed the agriculture style of which the war migrants are working not only that but also bring agriculture development and changes to the host community who depends on agriculture. They have started to take the ideas of this migrants people to follow their agriculture way of living. Cultivation of betel nut and leaves it has helps in preserving and maintaining the environment which we can observed that the greenery of the forest and their waste land how useful it have been utilize presently. Thus, the war migrant's community has bought a positive impact to the host community as well by cited example to the other community about their preservative community, social bounding and hard work human beings that they are. Only through agriculture sector they have brings changes to their living conditions and mould their present society in a prosperous way.

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