

## ***Extended Abstract***

### **Introduction:**

Migration of college students in northeast of India takes place on account of plethora of reasons. Unlike mainland India, where interstate migration college students primarily take place because of lack of educational infrastructure; in north east India, besides this reason, migration of college students to Shillong also occur because of spiraling violence in many adjoining states which have been ravaged by decades of insurgency and political turmoil. Moreover, proximity of Shillong to many neighboring states and its reputation as an educational hub in the region also attracts college migrants. The city also offers educational facilities at a relatively cheaper price and it is also a preferred destination for students whose ultimate goal is to migrate to bigger cities in mainland India for higher/further studies. Besides being an available and a suitable destination, the other attraction of Shillong is the presence of friends, relatives or family members. In fact, the availability of Shillong as a possible place to study to a certain extent also depends upon having someone already living there who could serve as a sponsor. Thus a great majority of the movements can be described as either family reunion or chain migration, with most migrating under the auspices of kinship and sponsored by friends, relatives or family members. Migration of College Students in India has been a relatively neglected area of research. Most of the migration studies have tended to focus on permanent migration, but a lot of migration flows are temporary - for example, a large number of students migrate for higher studies. In our country, studies on migration have been confined hugely on migrant laborers, followed by returned migration, refugees and other displaced people, but comprehensive studies on migrant college students, especially in the north east of India, have been few and far between. This paper examines the context and future intentions of the migrant college students and discusses the consequences of this migration for the north-eastern region and their respective states. Based on these findings, policy options for respective states are discussed.

### **Methodology:**

Study Area: Shillong, which is the capital of Meghalaya, has been selected as the study area for this survey, as it has been relatively peaceful city in the north east. Shillong, which was earlier the capital of the erstwhile undivided state of Assam, was chosen by the Britishers as an ideal place for education of their children, because of its similarity, especially in the climate and topography with

the British Isles. In fact, the early missionaries who came in here from England, Wales and Scotland found the similarity so striking that they nicknamed Shillong “Scotland of the East”. So, from the latter half of the 19th century educational institutions run by missionaries, from Britain and Ireland, were established which, more than hundreds years later, stands like a beacon. Thus, no city in the north east can claim to have so many schools and colleges where students from other states flock to get admitted each year. Since the headquarters of the North Eastern Hill University (NEHU) is also located in Shillong, those pursuing their post graduate studies, from neighboring states, also find the city a convenient place to come to.

### **Samples:**

556 college going students belonging to bachelor’s degree (three years integrated course), irrespective of arts, science and commerce stream and 12 samples for an In-depth Interview.

### **Sampling:**

Out of 26 colleges in Shillong and its suburbs affiliated to NEHU, I have chosen 20 colleges (both single sex and co-educational colleges) depending on the strength of migrants students from all the streams targeted specifically students coming from the states of Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram. All of these 20 colleges impart three years bachelor degree courses in Shillong and are situated within the city limits. In these 20 colleges, I have distributed the questionnaire to first year, second year and third year degree students who were present on that particular day.

### **Tools and Techniques:**

Both Quantitative and Qualitative technique were used. In quantitative technique, the tools such as questionnaire was used and in qualitative technique, in-depth interview was conducted. In quantitative method, initially, questionnaire were prepared and handed over to some respondents to get the feed-back. After receiving the feed backs with suggestions if any, the questionnaire was modified incorporating the valuable suggestions. This modified questionnaire was sent again to a new set of respondents to elicit their views. On receipt of questionnaire from the second set of respondents, the final questionnaire was prepared with modifications. These final sets of questionnaires were distributed among the selected samples. Once the filled questionnaires were

received from the selected samples, the same have read thoroughly and collated and those found to be interesting cases were interviewed subsequently. About 12 in-depth interviews were conducted.

### **Results:**

Majority of the migrant college students were from the state of Nagaland followed by those from Mizoram and Manipur. The age group of the students ranged from 18 to 21 years. Female students outnumbered the male students from Nagaland, while the scenario was reverse in the case of students from the states of Mizoram and Manipur. For pursuing further studies on completion of their education in Shillong, Delhi was the most favored destination for the students followed by Bangalore. A small minority of students, however, desired to stay back in Shillong for furtherance of their academic careers. As regards the choice of subjects, Political Science and History were the most preferred.

### **Discussions:**

On statistical analysis, it was found that although Shillong is the first destination of choice, for most students it is a launching pad for further studies. Their ultimate aim is to head for bigger cities in mainland India such as Delhi and Bangalore which has a better educational infrastructure and also offer a wide range of career choices. It was observed from the study that this migration is not just confined for educational purposes, a large majority of respondents don't want to come back to their small hometowns even after completion of their studies. They rather prefer to continue further studies in mainland India and also look for prospective jobs in their relevant area of specialization. Although migration of students to Shillong for further studies does not directly help the small towns and villages they migrate from in terms of getting empowered - by benefitting from the knowledge that the migrant students have acquired over the years - because most of them prefer not to come back. There is, however, an indirect economic benefit: these outstation students by dint of getting a part time/full time jobs manage to send a certain amount of money back home to their family, which in most cases are not financially very well to do. This greatly increases the chances of their siblings to get better education and also significantly contributes to the improvement of the quality of life for their family.