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Student Migration from North-East India: Level, Trend, Pattern and Challenges

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Abstract: A total of 10.3 million during the 1991-2011 Census, 3.4 million per intercensal period, are accounted internal migrants for education. Around 5.5 million students reported as internal migrants in 2011, whereas overseas Indian student migrants were estimated at 0.38 million in 2019. Instead of large volume and immense significance in socioeconomic, political and social wellbeing perspectives, internal student migration does not get as much attention as international student migration. The present study provides insight into the level, trend, pattern, and stream of internal student migration during the 1991-2011 Census. North-East Indian states witnessed a high level of student migration to mainland Indian States/UTs- are given special attention and examined the budget expenditure on education, education development over the periods and its associated challenges. North-East states expense a comparatively higher share of SGDP on education than other States/UTs. The number of higher education institutions, college density and Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) have increased. But these have not matched with the high level of inter-state student migration. The quality of education in the North-East is wide concerned. Prolonged ethnic-based armed insurgency and AFSPA, extortion and mass corruption have jeopardised the educational environment and quality processes. The presumption of a linear relation between student migration and numeric progression of conventional system inputs, such as no of institutions, institutional density, offered courses, GER, etc., in the North-East is deluded. Non-quantity aspects like educational environment, supervision and support, quality resources, and quality teachers and students need to be examined along a spectrum of socio-economic, political and demographic aspects at various levels.

Keywords: Internal Student Migration, Inter-state Migration, North-East India, Ethnopolitical Turmoil, Higher Education, Budget Expenditure on Education

Introduction

According to the Global Flow of Tertiary Students estimation in 2019, around 0.38 million students migrated from India, and India received 47,424 students (UNESCO, 2019). India is the second-largest source country for international student migration after China (King and Sondhi, 2018). Extensive studies on international student migration, whether India is a source (Pande and Yan, 2018; Zong and Batalova, 2017; Butsch, 2017; Varma, 2011; Graf and Khoo, 2004) or a host (Pande, 2019; Bashyal; 2016, Bhattrai, 2007), have been carried on. In comparison, internal student migration gets petite attention.

India is one of the world's largest higher education systems, comprising more than 1,027 universities, including 54 Central, 444 State, 126 Deemed and 403 Private Universities (UGC, 2021) and 42,343 colleges (MoE, 2020). About 38.5 million students enrolled in higher education in the 2019-20 academic session (MoE, 2020). In the 42nd amendment Act 1976, education was placed on Concurrent List (List-III), where both the Central and States Governments are conferred power to regulate the education system. Higher education institutions in India are under the supervision of different centralised apex bodies, namely UGC, AICTE, ICSSR, CSIR, ICMR, etc., as per their

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specialisation. However, most of the higher education institutions are state-funded. The State education policies and budgetary allocation are crucial factors.

There is a sheer distinction among the higher education institutions across the nation in terms of providing quality of education, research and national importance, assessed by the Ministry of Education (MoE) and its the autonomous bodies- UGC, the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF), and others. Until now, the Ministry of Education (2022) recognised 12 institutes as Institution of Eminence (IOE), 135 Institution of National Importance (INI), 15 University with Potential for Excellence (UPE), 12 Centre with Potential for Excellence in Particular Area (CPEPA), and 314 Colleges with Potential for Excellence (CPE) across India. These premier institutions are unevenly distributed all over India, located in recognised parts or states of India. The backward regions like Central and North-East India hardly get the locational advances of reputed national institutions. For instance, out of 74 universities in eight North-East states[3], no one ranks within the top 40, and no college, out of the total 943 colleges, ranks within 100 in respective categories in NIRF, 2021. There is no IOE in North-East; only one UPE, North Eastern Hill University (NEHU) in Meghalaya. The concern in higher education in India is the quality rather than the availability, and the New Education Policy of 2020 provides a clear direction for improving education quality (Gupta, 2021).

According to the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) of 2019-20, the number of universities and similar institutions have increased from 799 in 2015-16 to 1043 in 2019-20, increasing by 30.5 per cent (MoE, 2020). Colleges have increased from 39,071 in 2015-16 to 42,343 in 2019-20 by about 8.4 per cent (MoE, 2020). College density, colleges per lakh population (18-23 years), has increased to 30 colleges in 2019-20 from 23 colleges in 2010-11 (MoE, 2020; MHRD, 2013). Discussion on the quality of education is often centred on system inputs, such as the number of higher education institutions, gross enrolment ratio (GER), pupil-teacher ratio (PTR), and the number of offered courses (UNICEF, 2000). But it is half of a story. Other components, viz., quality of resources (stimulating ICT classrooms and adequate teaching-learning materials), quality of teachers and curriculum, quality learners, quality learning environments and quality leadership, are equally important (Thinley, 2021; UNICEF, 2000). Studies (King and Sondhi, 2018; Yang, 2003) reveal that when the local (educational system) fails to cater to the students' needs, either there is sheer competition due to the limited institutions, or the desired programmes of study are inadequate, and the quality is ascribed to degrees from a certain place and from particular colleges or universities perceived to be insufficient or lacks up to the mark, students seek higher education in a broader geographical field- elsewhere within the country or abroad.

[3] North East India was politically recognised in 1972 when North East Council (NEC) was formed by an Act of Parliament. It comprises eight sister states, namely Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, and Sikkim. Sikkim was added later to the North East Council in the year 2002.

In the 2011 Census of India, 5.5 million students reported as internal migrants, of which 0.74 million, with a decadal growth rate of 23.0 per cent, were interstate migrants. In contrast, overseas Indian students were estimated at 0.38 million in 2019 (UNESCO, 2019). States, especially North-East states, Jammu and Kashmir and Kerala, witness higher levels of student migration. North-East was recorded respectively 6.1, 5.8 and 6.9 per cent interstate student migrants in the 1991, 2001 and 2011 Census, whereas India averages were 3.5, 2.6 and 2.5 per cent. Four out of eight North-East states, namely Manipur, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim, witnessed the double digits of interstate student migration (Census, 2001 and 2011).

One of the essential factors for faster economic growth in India is the cheap labour force, where interstate labour migration balances demand and supply. The student is the sub-set of the future labour force— skilled and innovative human resources are built up by students' proper education and training. There is a wide disparity- students in different parts of India do not get equal education facilities, and quality varies. Student migration is associated with the educational system at both origin and destination (Jayadeva, 2016) and infers the standard of the educational system (Wadhwa et al., 2007) in both the places. There is a plethora of studies on the level, trends, patterns, and streams of internal labour migration (Srivastava, 2021; 2011), temporary or seasonal labour migration (Keshri and Bhagat, 2013; 2012), urbanisation and economic growth (Kundu and Saraswati, 2012; Kundu, 2003) and poverty elevation (Deshingkar, 2010; de Haan, 1997), and so on. There is also a comprehensive discussion (Pande and Yan, 2018; Zong and Batalova, 2017; Butsch, 2017; Varma, 2011; Graf and Khoo, 2004) on Indian students abroad. International student migration comprises a meagre fraction of students, 0.38 million (UNESCO, 2019). But, a comparatively large volume, more than 5.5 million internal student migrants, the future makers of the '*Atmanirbhar Bharat'*, gets petite attention in the development study.

The present study is an attempt to provide insight into the level, trend, pattern, and stream of internal student migration from the 1991 to 2011 Census. North-East India, which witnessed a high level of student migration to mainland Indian States/UTs, is provided special attention. The study also examines budget expenditure on education in North-East states, higher education development over time, and its associated ethnopolitical and demographic factors.

Methods and Data Sources

Various measures of migration, descriptive statistics, and cartographic techniques are incorporated to analyse and represent the data sets. The Reference Table D-2 & D-3 from 1991, 2001 and 2011 Census by the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India (RG & CCI) under the Ministry of Home Affairs are consulted to discuss the three-decades-long 1990s to 2010s student migration scenario. The information related to education is compiled from 10 rounds of 'All India Survey on Higher Education' (AISHE) conducted by the Department of Higher Education (DoHE)

under the Ministry of Education (MoE) [formerly the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD)], from 2010-11 to 2019-20. Apart from AISHEs, 'Higher Education Profile, 2019-20' by DoHE, MoE, and two rounds of 'Statistics of Higher and Technical Education', 2007-08 and 2008-09 conducted by the Bureau of Planning, Monitoring and Statistics under erstwhile MRHD are also consulted. The expenditure on education by states and central governments is accumulated from the reports on 'Analysis of Budgeted Expenditure on Education' from 1999-2002 to 2017-2020 published by MoE, Government of India (GoI). Per Capita Net State Domestic Product (NSDP) data is compiled from 'Data-book Compiled for use of Planning Commission' (Databook for PC) published in 2014 by erstwhile Planning Commission of India, and 'Handbook of Statistics on Indian States' by Reserve Bank of India.

Operation definition

The Census of India collects information on migration based on two aspects- migration by 'place of birth' (PoB) and 'place of last residence' (PoLR). When a person is enumerated in a census outside of her/his place of birth, she/he will be considered a migrant by PoB. A person would be regarded as a migrant by PoLR if she/he had last resided at a place other than her/his place of enumeration. Migration by POLR during 1991-2011 is considered in the present study. Census of India has produced the data (table D-3) on migration by POLR into certain 'fixed-term' or 'period migration' based on duration of stay in village/town since migration, such as duration less than 01 year, 1-4 years, 5 -9 years, 10 -19 years, 20 years and above, and duration not stated. Migrants who had migrated within 0–9 years are called 'intercensal migrants' (Mistri, 2021; Lusome and Bhagat, 2006). In the present study, intercensal migration[4] (0-9 years) is computed by adding up- less than 01 year, 1-4 years and 5-9 years duration of staying. On the other hand, "data based on place of last residence that lack a definite time reference" is defined as 'lifetime migration' (UNO, 1970, p2). Simply, migrants of all durations are defined as lifetime migrants as the time of their migration is not known (Mistri, 2021; Lusome and Bhagat, 2006). 'Student migrant' is defined as those who migrated reasons for education.

The article is divided into three sections. First section deals with the processes of Internal student migration, where special attention is provided to North-East states. The second section is related to expenditure on education and higher education development in North-East states. The third section is the critical discussion on the result portrayed in the first and second sections, and finally, a conclusion is made.

[4] *Intercensal migration (0-9 years) by PoLR = less than 01 year + 1-4 years + 5-9 years durations of stay in village/town since migration.*

Processes of Student Migration

A migration process comprises different aspects, such as the magnitude or level of migration, trend, migrating out and in and its balance over the periods, changing patterns, reasons for migration, etc. The detailed process of internal student migration is discussed below.

The stock of Internal Student Migrants

According to the 2011 Census, out of India's 455.8 million lifetime migrants, 5.5 million or 1.2 per cent, were reported migrants for education (Table 1). In the 1991 and 2001 Census, it was accounted 4.5 million or 1.9 per cent and 3.4 million or 1.1 per cent, respectively. Drawing from the intercensal (0-9 years) migration, a total of 10.3 million migrated for education during the 1991-2011 Census; on average, 3.4 million migration per intercensal period. The share of intercensal migrants declined from 4.2 per cent in the 1991 Census to around 3.0 per cent, which stagnated in the 2001 and 2011 Census. The growth of student migration declined to 15.6 per cent from 1991 to 2001 and again bounced back to 35.1 per cent during 2001-11. Student migration in India is mostly limited to the state boundary. In the 2011 Census, 3.4 million out of 3.9 million students reported as intercensal intra-state migrants (including intra-district and inter-districts), and the rests, 0.54 million, were interstate migrants (Table 1).

Table 1: Internal Student Migration in India, 1991-2011

Lifetime Migrants									
Census	Total Migrants	Student Migrants							
		Total	Inter-state	Inter-district	Intra-district	Hosted*	Unclassified	Total** (%)	Total Growth Rate (%)
1991	232,112,973	4,484,877	578,057	1,398,957	2,443,004	58,828	6,031	1.9	
2001	314,541,350	3,360,135	549,372	1,127,218	1,641,586	41,944	15	1.1	-25.1
2011	455,787,621	5,457,556	744,015	1,749,840	2,908,383	48,981	6,337	1.2	62.4
Intercensal (0-9 yrs.) Migrants									
Census	Total Migrants	Student Migrants							
		Total	Inter-state	Inter-district	Intra-district	Hosted*	Unclassified	Total** (%)	Total Growth Rate (%)
1991	82,107,175	3,453,065	388,118	1,037,387	2,001,351	21,735	4,474	4.2	
2001	98,301,342	2,915,189	442,206	946,591	1,502,974	23,405	13	3.0	-15.6
2011	141,908,270	3,937,006	544,041	1,282,143	2,075,517	30,969	4,336	2.8	35.1

Note: *whose last residence was outside of India & migrated into. ** percentage to the Total Migrants in India.
Source: Computed from Census, 1991, 2001 and 2011

In proportional, total (intercensal) intra-state migrants were estimated at 85.3 per cent, including 52.7 per cent intra-district and 32.6 per cent inter-district, and 13.8 per cent were inter-state migrants in 2011 (Table 2). Grossly, inter-state student migrants hovered around half of a million in each intercensal period (Table 1), sharing 11-15 per cent during 1991-11 (Table 2). In contrast, the share of intra-state migrants had 84.0 to 85.0 per cent during that period. The growth of inter-state

student migration gradually increased over the intercensal periods– from 13.9 per cent during 1991-01 to 23.0 per cent during 2001-11 (Table 2).

Table 2: Share of Inter-state and Intra-state Student Migration in India, 1991-2011

Census	Lifetime Migrants							
	Student Migrants* (%)					Growth Rate** (%)		
	Interstate	Inter-district	Intra-district	Hosted	Unclassified	Inter-state	Inter-district	Intra-district
1991	12.9	31.2	54.5	0.03	0.13			
2001	16.3	33.5	48.9	0.01	0.00	-5.0	-19.4	-32.8
2011	13.6	32.1	53.3	0.01	0.12	35.4	55.2	77.2
	Intercensal (0-9 yrs.) Migrants							
Census	Student Migrants* (%)					Growth Rate** (%)		
	Interstate	Inter-district	Intra-district	Hosted	Unclassified	Inter-state	Inter-district	Intra-district
1991	11.2	30.0	58.0	0.03	0.13			
2001	15.2	32.5	51.6	0.02	0.00	13.9	-8.8	-24.9
2011	13.8	32.6	52.7	0.02	0.11	23.0	35.4	38.1

Note: *Percentage to the Total Student Migrants, ** between two successive censuses
Source: Computed from Table D2 & D3, 1991, 2001 and 2011 Census

Gender difference in Student Migration:

The total sex ratio (TSR) in student migration is less than 700 females/1000 males - 656 females/1000 males for lifetime and 692 females/1000 males for intercensal migrants in 2011 (Table 3). During the census periods, the sex ratio in student migration has increased. A slight improvement in the (intercensal) sex ratio, 430 females/1000 males, had observed in 2001 from 415 females/1000 males in 1991, and next made a long leap to 692 females/1000 males in 2011.

Gender differences in student migrants widely vary among the subcategories of migration types. In 2011, the intra-district sex ratio was 793, and the inter-district was 642, whereas the inter-state sex ratio was 486. In long-distance migration, especially inter-state, the gender difference is noticeable. Though the inter-state sex ratio has improved from 1991 to 2011, female student migrants are still half of the males.

Table 3: Sex Ratio of Student Migrants in India, 1991, 2001 and 2011

Census	Lifetime Student Migrants (females/1000 males)					
	Inter-state	Inter-district	Intra-district	Hosted	Unclassified	Total
1991	398	429	457	562	350	442
2001	344	390	458	296	154	413
2011	471	597	754	506	573	656
Census	Intercensal (0-9 years) Student Migrants (females/1000 males)					
	Inter-state	Inter-district	Intra-district	Hosted	Unclassified	Total
1991	383	416	421	512	301	415
2001	361	416	462	351	182	430
2011	486	642	793	580	526	692

Source: Computed from Table D3, 1991, 2001, 2011 Census

Streams of Student Migration

In India, around half of the total migration occurs from rural to rural areas. R-R migration was reported at 47.3 and 56.4 per cent in 2001 and 2011, respectively (Table 4). Unlike overall migration, student migration occurs mostly towards urban centres. Around 58 per cent of students migrated to

urban centres, of which 33-36 per cent migrated R-U, and 22-25 per cent migrated U-U (Table 4). In absolute terms, 2.3 million students migrated R-U, and 1.6 million students migrated U-U during the 1991-2011 Census. There is a wide variation in the magnitude of streams with migration distance. R-R stream is predominated within the district (intra-district), R-U stream is prevailed in inter-district, and U-U movement is dominated in Inter-state student migration.

Table-4: Streams of Intercensal (0-9 yrs.) Student Migration in the 2001 & 2011 Census

2011 Census										
Streams	Total Migrants	Total Migrants (%)	Student Migrants				Student Migrants (%)			
			Total	Inter-state	Inter-district	Intra-district	Total	Inter-state	Inter-district	Intra-district
R-R	63,612,338	47.3	1,294,463	48,978	260,541	984,944	34.3	9.2	21.0	49.3
R-U	29,923,562	22.2	1,251,419	156,599	428,071	666,749	33.2	29.6	34.4	33.4
U-U	29,600,754	22.0	950,161	279,799	421,799	248,563	25.2	52.8	33.9	12.4
U-R	11,477,156	8.5	275,002	44,335	132,478	98,189	7.3	8.4	10.7	4.9
Total	134,613,810	100.0	3,771,045	529,711	1,242,889	1,998,445	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
2001 Census										
Streams	Total Migrants	Total Migrants (%)	Student Migrants				Student Migrants (%)			
			Total	Inter-state	Inter-district	Intra-district	Total	Inter-state	Inter-district	Intra-district
R-R	53,354,376	56.4	1,001,753	41,904	187,929	771,920	35.5	9.7	20.3	52.6
R-U	20,595,231	21.8	1,023,591	132,975	367,965	522,651	36.3	30.8	39.8	35.6
U-U	14,388,774	15.2	609,120	219,964	288,724	100,432	21.6	51.0	31.3	6.8
U-R	6,266,503	6.6	187,768	36,554	79,061	72,153	6.7	8.5	8.6	4.9
Total	94,604,884	100.0	2,822,232	431,397	923,679	1,467,156	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Computed from Table D2 & D3, 2001 & 2011 Census

Inter-State Migration Flow

Out of India's 141.9 million intercensal migrants, 21.9 million were inter-state migrants, of which 0.54 million or 2.5 per cent reported as students in the 2011 Census. The share of intercensal inter-state student migrants declined from 3.5 per cent in 1991 to 2.6 per cent in 2001 and, finally, to 2.5 per cent in 2011 (Table 5). Though the proportion of inter-state student migrants in India is a meagre fraction, some States/UTs witnessed double digits of the same. In the 2011 Census, the highest proportion (19.2 per cent) of students migrated out from Manipur, followed by Mizoram (16.3 per cent), Arunachal Pradesh (15.1 per cent), Sikkim (12.9 per cent), Nagaland (9.9 per cent) and Kerala (9.7 per cent). Among the UTs, Lakshadweep (15.3 per cent) was reported to have the highest share, followed by Anadama and Nicobar Island (7.6 per cent). The top five states in inter-state student migration are comprised of North-East Indian states. The top 10 states include all the North-East states (except Assam), Kerala from South India, Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh from North India. If it is considered the hitherto backwards or Empowered Action Group (EAG) states, namely Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh are Uttarakhand, are close to all India average.

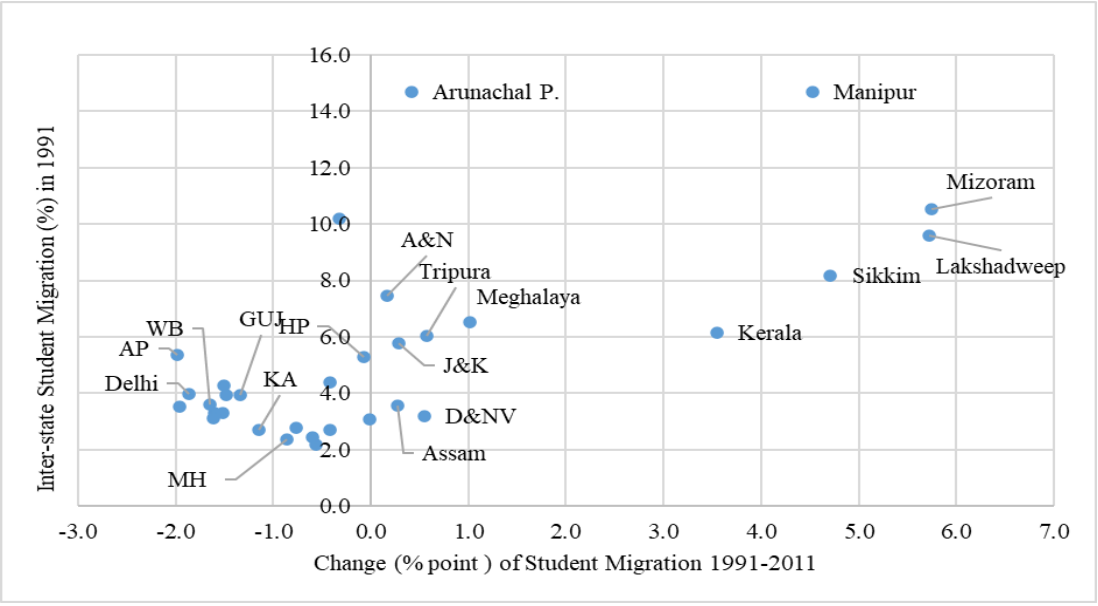
Table 5: Inter-state intercensal Migration (%) for Education in 1991, 2001 and 2011 Census

States/UTs	Census			States/UTs	Census		
	1991	2001	2011		1991	2001	2011
Manipur	14.7	24.1	19.2	Bihar	4.3	2.9	2.8
Mizoram	10.5	4.7	16.3	Gujarat	3.9	2.8	2.6
Lakshadweep	9.6	32.1	15.3	Uttaranchal		3.0	2.6
Arunachal Pradesh	14.7	15.3	15.1	Daman & Diu	3.9	3.3	2.4
Sikkim	8.2	12.3	12.9	Haryana	2.7	2.3	2.3
Nagaland	10.2	5.5	9.9	Chhattisgarh		2.1	2.3
Kerala	6.2	8.7	9.7	Delhi	4.0	3.2	2.1
A & N Islands	7.5	7.3	7.6	Tamil Nadu	2.8	2.3	2.0
Meghalaya	6.5	7.6	7.5	West Bengal	3.6	2.8	1.9
Tripura	6.1	8.0	6.6	Madhya Pradesh	2.4	1.9	1.8
Jammu & Kashmir	5.8	6.5	6.0	Uttar Pradesh	3.3	1.8	1.8
Himachal Pradesh	5.3	5.0	5.2	Pondicherry	3.3	2.9	1.7
Goa	4.4	5.0	4.0	Rajasthan	2.2	1.7	1.6
Assam	3.6	3.1	3.8	Orissa	3.5	2.0	1.6
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	3.2	3.1	3.7	Karnataka	2.7	1.4	1.5
Jharkhand		3.4	3.4	Chandigarh	3.1	2.8	1.5
Andhra Pradesh	5.4	3.8	3.4	Maharashtra	2.4	1.6	1.5
Punjab	3.1	2.6	3.1				
India	**3.5**	**2.6**	**2.5**				

Source: Computed from Table D3, 1991, 2001 & 2011 Census

Figure-1 shows the percentage point change of intercensal inter-state student migration from 1991 to 2011. Three North-eastern states, namely Mizoram, Sikkim, and Manipur, and UT, Lakshadweep, witnessed more than 4.5 per cent point growth of interstate student migration from 1991 to 2011. Kerala and Meghalaya recorded 3.6 and 1.0 per cent point growth, respectively. On the other hand, states like Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, West Bengal, Karnataka, and Gujarat recorded a 1-2 per cent point decline of interstate migration for education.

Figure 1: Change (percentage point) of Intercensal (0-9 yrs.) Inter-state Student Migration from 1991 to 2011

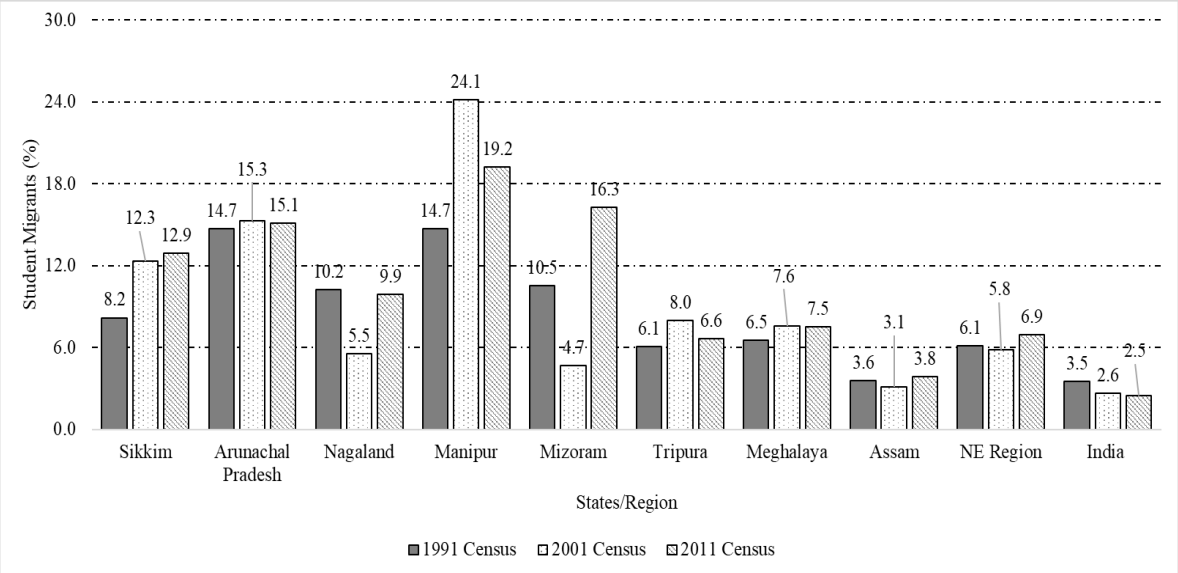


Source: Computed from Table D3, 2001 & 2011 Census

Migration from the North-East States for Education

The North-East region witnessed 6.1, 5.8 and 6.9 per cent interstate student migration in the 1991, 2001 and 2011 Census (Figure 2). The state-wise figure widely varies. Assam always witnessed below the four per cent of inter-state student migration, whereas Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh reported more than 10 per cent since 1991. Manipur ranked top, 24.1 and 19.2 per cent in 2001 and 2011, respectively, among the Indian States/UTs. Student migration from Arunachal hovered around 15 per cent during 1991-2011. Sikkim's student migration gradually increased from 8.2 per cent in 1991 to 12.3 per cent in 2001 and 12.9 per cent in 2011. Student migration from Nagaland and Mizoram fluctuated over the census period- migration had sharply declined to around 5.0 per cent each in 2001 from 10.0 per cent in 1991, but again jumped to 10.0 and 16.0 per cent for Nagaland and Mizoram, respectively, in 2011. Student migration from Tripura and Meghalaya varied between 6.0 to 8.0 per cent in the last three censuses. Except for Nagaland, all the North-East states are estimated to have a positive (per cent point) growth of inter-state student migration during 1991-2011 (Fig 1). Mizoram, Sikkim and Manipur show the highest per cent point change, 5.7, 4.7 and 4.5 respectively, all over India (Fig 1).

Figure 2: Intercensal (0-9 yrs.) Inter-state Migration for Education from the North-East States, 1991, 2001 and 2011



Source: Computed from Table D3, 1991, 2001 & 2011 Census

Destinations for North-East Students

In the 2011 Census, a total of 32,737 students, of which 24,298 students or around 74 per cent, preferred to go to mainland Indian States/UTs, and only 8,439, or nearly 26 per cent, preferred to stick to North-East (Table 6). The share (around 74 per cent) remained the same in the last two censuses, 2001 and 2011. Student migration from the five North-east states, except Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh and Tripura, to the mainland slightly declined in 2011 from 2001 (Table 6).

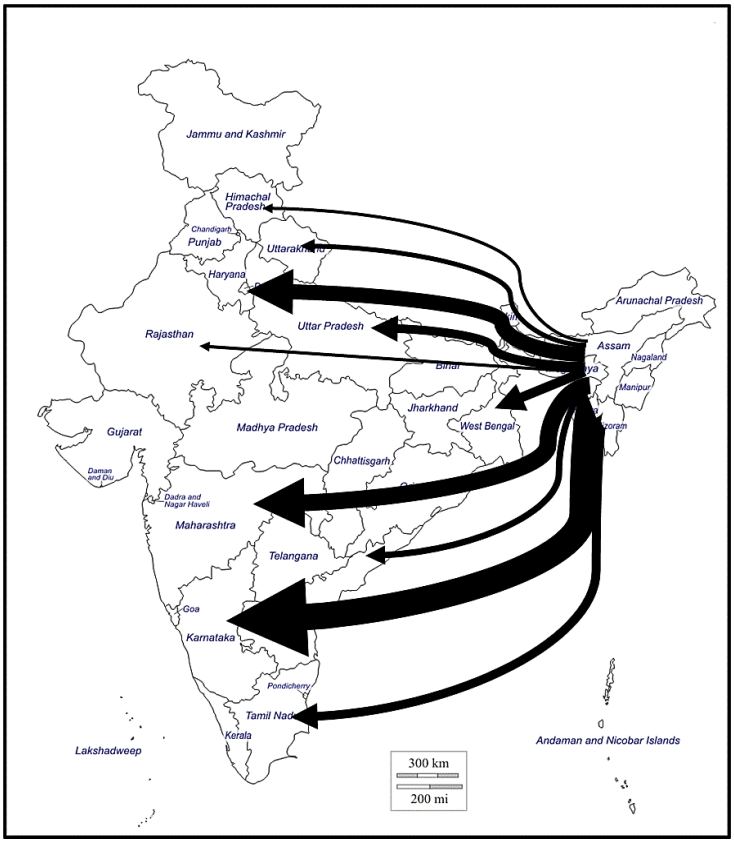
Table 6: Intercensal (0-9 years) Inter-state Migration for Education from the North-East States in 2001 and 2011

Place of Destination	Place of Origin																	
	Sikkim		Arunachal Pradesh		Nagaland		Manipur		Mizoram		Tripura		Meghalaya		Assam		NE	
	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001	2011
Himachal P.	1.0	11.1	3.3	11.8	0.5	0.7	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.3	1.9	1.0	0.4	0.6	0.6	2.1
Chandigarh	1.0	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.4	0.5	5.4	3.1	1.1	1.5	0.7	0.7	0.1	0.4	0.7	0.4	1.9	1.1
Uttaranchal	4.0	9.0	1.6	5.2	4.2	2.5	1.4	2.0	0.9	1.8	0.5	3.0	1.7	2.6	2.1	2.6	1.9	3.0
Delhi	11.4	4.1	5.7	4.5	13.5	9.5	20.1	14.8	12.0	5.9	3.5	3.5	9.3	5.5	12.9	9.6	13.5	9.3
Rajasthan	2.6	2.1	1.0	0.8	0.7	1.6	1.9	0.7	0.6	2.6	1.5	3.1	2.0	0.9	2.3	2.5	1.8	1.7
UP	4.2	2.4	2.6	1.5	1.9	2.5	3.9	4.6	0.9	1.1	3.1	1.4	1.9	3.8	13.2	9.1	6.3	5.2
Bihar	0.5	0.1	1.0	0.3	13.9	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.9	0.1	0.6	0.4	1.4	0.2	3.9	0.4	3.1	0.3
Sikkim	0.0	0.0	0.7	4.1	0.1	0.5	0.1	0.8	0.2	1.1	0.3	1.4	1.0	1.9	0.4	0.7	0.3	1.2
Arunachal P.	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.6	1.0	0.4	0.5	1.3	0.5	1.5	1.0	1.0	1.3	4.5	4.3	1.9	1.9
Nagaland	0.1	0.1	1.5	5.0	0.0	0.0	3.4	9.6	2.0	4.1	0.5	1.7	1.9	9.2	1.9	3.4	1.9	5.1
Manipur	0.0	0.1	1.5	0.1	1.2	3.3	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.2	5.4	0.2	0.8	0.4	0.9
Mizoram	0.3	0.4	1.9	0.3	1.2	0.5	3.8	2.1	0.0	0.0	8.1	3.9	4.1	2.9	1.2	0.8	2.6	1.3
Tripura	0.0	0.1	0.6	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.1	0.1	4.6	2.4	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.5	0.7	0.9	0.6	0.6
Meghalaya	0.7	0.7	3.1	6.7	20.7	18.8	15.0	14.4	21.4	25.6	14.2	5.0	0.0	0.0	5.6	6.2	10.7	9.4
Assam	1.3	0.9	29.7	15.9	12.7	16.8	6.5	3.7	7.4	7.1	13.1	7.9	21.1	11.9	0.0	0.0	7.9	5.4
WB	18.9	25.5	2.9	2.5	2.5	3.0	2.7	0.9	3.8	4.5	25.6	14.7	8.2	4.3	11.0	7.0	7.9	5.6
MP	1.6	2.2	1.4	0.7	0.7	1.2	2.3	0.9	1.4	0.9	1.1	1.0	2.5	0.9	1.7	2.0	1.7	1.3
Gujarat	0.5	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.5	3.5	1.3	0.3	0.1	3.2	0.3	0.3	0.4	1.9	0.9	2.0	0.8
Maharashtra	9.6	3.2	5.5	4.6	9.8	10.0	10.6	6.9	23.7	9.8	5.4	7.1	18.6	8.4	15.9	15.7	12.7	10.1
Andhra Pradesh	2.0	2.2	0.5	0.5	1.5	2.5	1.8	7.6	1.0	7.8	0.2	1.6	1.0	1.8	1.0	3.2	1.2	3.9
Karnataka	31.6	26.1	25.7	26.1	7.8	13.9	10.3	17.6	7.9	12.6	9.9	27.2	12.5	24.0	9.5	16.8	11.5	19.1
Tamil Nadu	1.4	5.1	3.7	5.3	1.1	3.9	1.9	5.2	3.7	5.9	0.7	6.7	1.0	8.1	1.4	4.8	1.7	5.3
Other States/UTs	7.0	4.0	5.2	3.4	4.6	6.4	4.6	3.1	4.0	3.4	5.8	8.4	7.2	4.7	7.5	7.2	5.9	5.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
to Mainland Indian States/UTs	97.4	97.4	60.8	67.8	63.4	58.8	70.7	68.8	62.5	58.6	61.9	79.1	69.8	66.9	85.4	82.8	73.7	74.2
Among NE States	2.6	2.6	39.2	32.2	36.6	41.2	29.3	31.2	37.5	41.4	38.1	20.9	30.2	33.1	14.6	17.2	26.3	25.8

Source: Computed from Table D3, 2001 and 2011 Census

While nearly three-fourths of students migrate to mainland India, mapping out where they are going is essential. Almost 65 per cent of North-East students migrated to ten mainland States/UTs in the 2011 Census (Map 1). Karnataka (19.1 per cent) is the best-preferred place of destination for education. It is followed by Maharashtra (10.1 per cent), Delhi (9.3 per cent), West Bengal (5.6 per cent), Tamil Nadu (5.3 per cent), Uttar Pradesh (5.2 per cent), Andhra Pradesh (3.9 per cent), Uttaranchal (3.0 per cent), Himachal Pradesh (2.1 per cent) and Rajasthan (1.7 per cent). North-East student migrants in Delhi, Bihar, Maharashtra and West Bengal conspicuously dropped during the intercensal periods. Delhi was accounted for 13.5 per cent of North-East students in 2001, but it drastically reduced to 9.3 per cent in 2011, around 4.2 per cent point downfall. Likewise, Bihar and Maharashtra witnessed about 3.0 per cent point downfall each, and West Bengal recorded nearly 2.0 per cent point decline during 2001-11.

Map 1: Flow of Students from North-East to the Mainland India, 2011 Census



Source: Computed from Table D3, 2011 Census

In addition to that, Uttar Pradesh, where many North-East students migrate, also recorded a declining trend. On the contrary, three South Indian States, namely Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, faster gained the ground of North-East migrants for education during that period. North-East students in Karnataka increased to 19.1 per cent in 2011 from 11.5 per cent in 2001. Overall, a changing pattern of student flow to the mainland states is observed- while North-East students in the North, West and East Indian States/UTs have declined during 2001-2011, the Southern states have witnessed increasing of the same. Inter-state student migration among the states of North-East, Assam and Meghalaya most preferred destinations.

Section- II

Expenditure on Education and Development

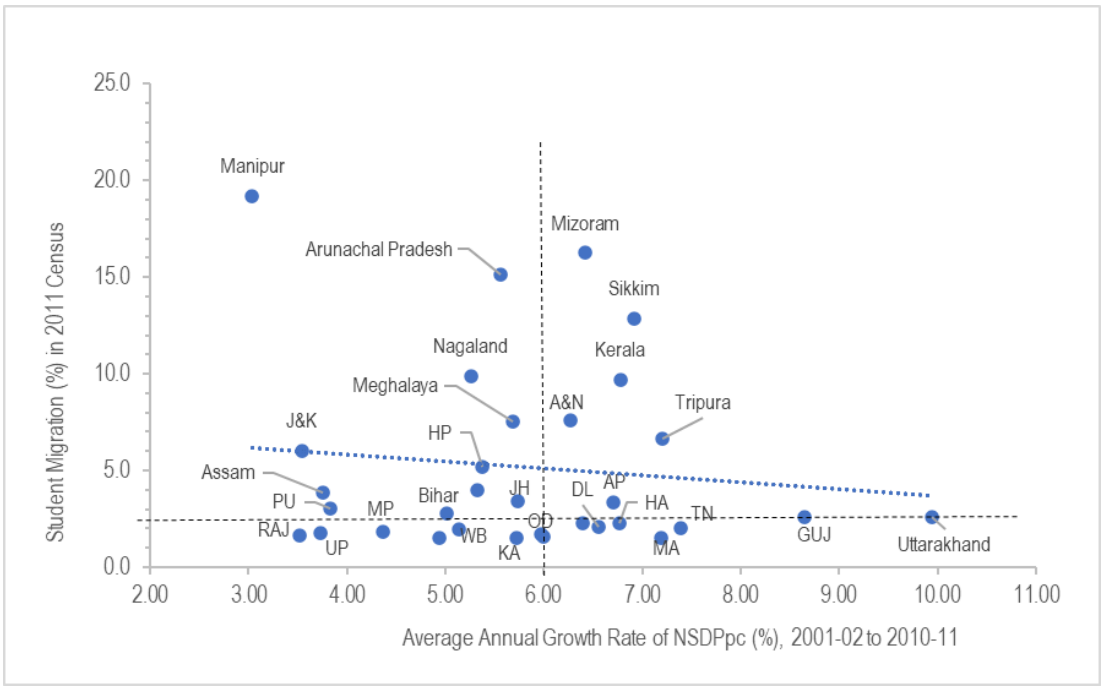
Infrastructure and facilities, and adequate teaching-learning resources are the crucial system inputs in education, and these are integral parts of the quality teaching-learning processes (UNICEF, 2000). These incur huge monetary expenses and need budget allocations. According to the report on Analysis of Budgeted Expenditure on Education, 2017-18 to 2019-20, about 77 per cent of the total revenue expenditure on education in the 2019-20 budget estimate (BE) is contributed by States/UTs, where the centre contributes about 23 per cent (MoE, 2022). The share of expenditure on education

and training by education and other departments to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) witnessed an increasing trend from 3.84 per cent in 2013-14 to 4.39 per cent in 2019-20 (MoE, 2022). If the share of expenditure to the GDP for Centre and States separately is observed, the centre is recorded an increasing trend. It increased from 0.51 per cent in 2000-01 to 1.11 per cent in 2010-11 and, after a slight dip in two years, again revived to 1.12 per cent in 2019-20 (MoE, 2022). At the same time, the state share to State Gross Domestic Product (SGDP) declined to 3.27 per cent in 2019-20 from 3.63 per cent in 2000-01 (MoE, 2022). However, state's income growth and budget expenditure on education are good proxies for examining the infrastructure development and provisions for physical learning environments.

Income Growth, Budget Expenditure and Student Migration

Figure 3 plots the interstate student migration against the Average Annual Growth Rate of per capita Net State Domestic Product (NSDPpc) of Indian States/UTs. The scatter plot shows a very week correlation (*r = -0.114, N= 32 States/UTs*) between income growth (during 2001-11) and student migration (in 2011 Census), and it is not statistically (*p= 0.540)* significant. Four north-east states, namely Manipur, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Assam, recorded lower income growth, and the rests were higher than the Indian average (6.0 per cent) during 2001-11. But both the groups witnessed a high level of student migration. Income growth is beneficial for educational development when it is directed through budget expenditure on education. Economic growth has to be inclusive- it is distributed fairly across society and allocated for public expenses.

Figure 3: Inter-state Student Migration against per capita NSDP, 2001-2011

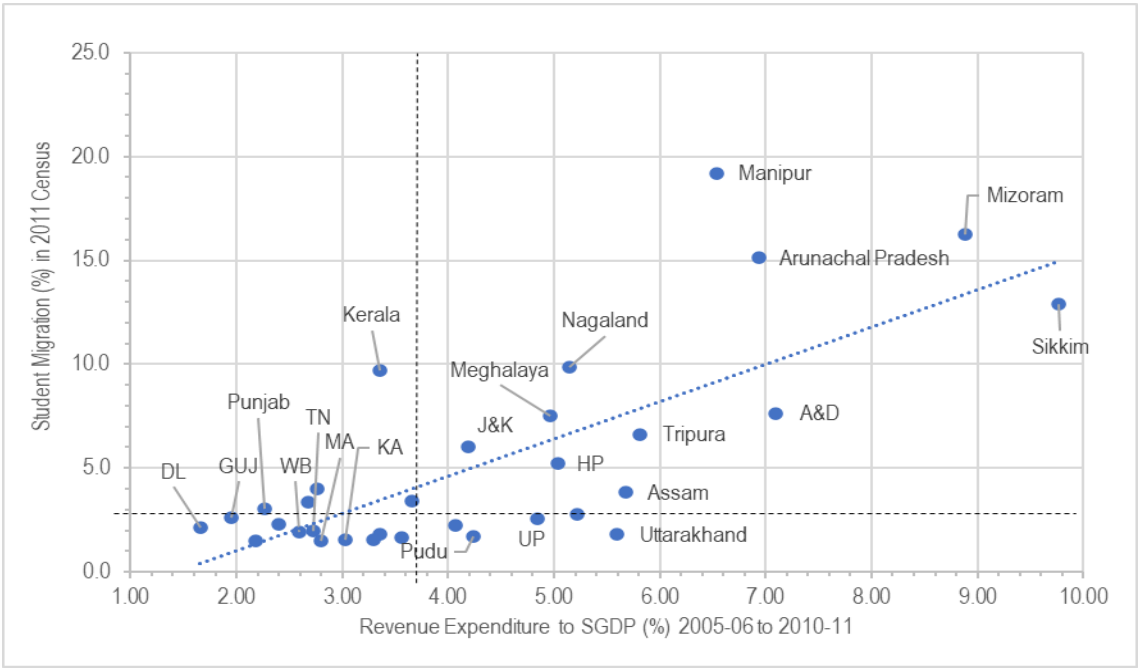


Source: Computed from Table-D3, 2011 Census, & Databook for PC, 2014 by erstwhile the Planning Commission of India

The scatter plot, figure 4, depicts the inter-state student migration against the share of revenue expenditure on education and training by education and other departments to SGDP. The scatter diagram shows a strong positive (*r= 0.742, N= 32 States/UTs*) and significant (*p=0.00*) correlation between the two. The positive direction of the relationship is headed by states from North-East India. North-East states' both the budget allocation for education and student migration are comparatively higher. During 2005-06 to 2010-11, revenue budget expenditure for North-East states had more than 5.50 per cent to the SGDP, whereas all India average was 3.73 per cent. On the contrary, the SGDP share of budget expenses on education by destination states (Delhi, WB, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu) for North-East students was lower than the Indian average.

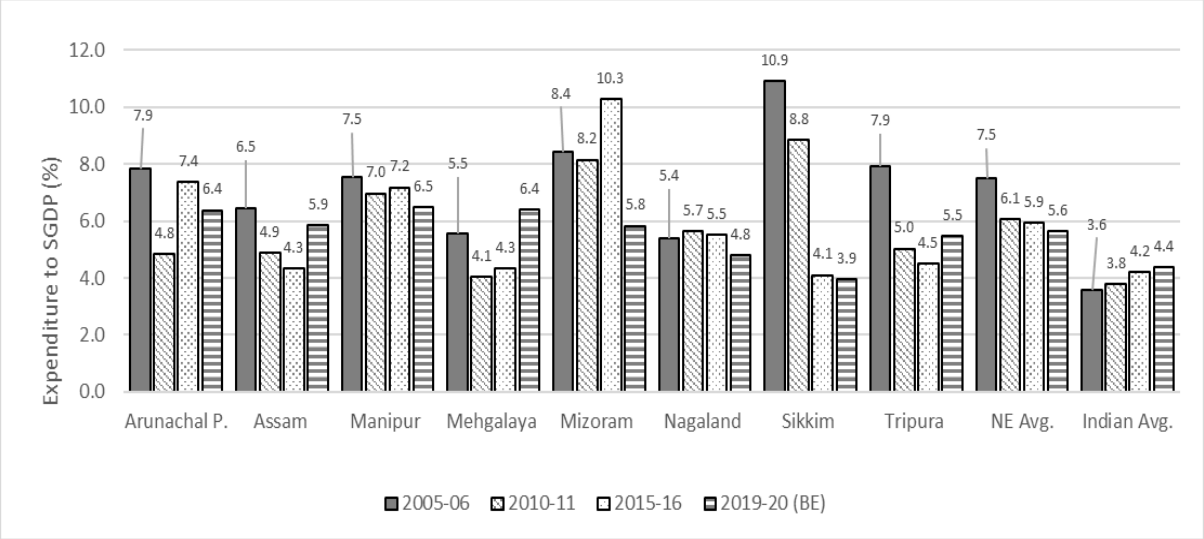
North-East states' budget expenditure on education has always been higher than other States/UTs, thought, over the years, it has been declined from 7.5 per cent in 2005-06 to 6.1 per cent in 2010-12, to 59 per cent in 2015-16, and finally to 5.6 in 2019-20 budget estimate (Figure 5). Sikkim recorded a drastic downfall to 3.9 per cent in 2019-20 from 10.9 per cent in 2005-06.

Figure 4: Student Migration against Revenue Expenditure on Education and Training by Education and Other Department.



Source: Computed from Table-D3, 2011 Census, & Analysis of Budgeted Expenditure on Education, 2005-06 to 2010-11 by erstwhile MHRD, 2007-2012

Figure 5: Share of Revenue Expenditure on Education and Training by Education and Other Dept. to SGDP in the North-East



Source: Compiled from 'Analysis of Budgeted Expenditure on Education' from 2005-06 to 2019-20 by MoE (erstwhile MHRD) from 2007 to 2022

Educational Development

The number of higher education institutions, including universities, deemed universities, similar institutions and colleges, in the North-East increased from 740 in 2006-07 to 811 in 2010-11 to 1,118 in 2015-16 and finally to 1,228 in 2019-20 (Table 7); increased by almost 66.0 per cent during 2006-07 to 2019-20. In 2006-07, the North-East region had only 17 universities; it increased to 40 in 2010-11 to 61 in 2015-16, and finally, 74 universities in 2019-20 (Table 7). Manipur gets the highest number of Central Universities (03), followed by Assam (02), and the rests have one Central University each (MoE, 2020). Assam among the Northeast possesses the highest number of institutions (676), including 26 universities and 558 colleges as of AISHE, 2019-20 (MoE, 2020). Assam is followed by Manipur (139), Meghalaya (98) and Nagaland (92).

Table 7: Number of Universities and All Institutions in the North-East States, 2006-07 to 2019-20

States	2006-07		2010-11		2015-16		2019-20	
	Univ.	All Institutions	Univ.	All Institutions	Univ.	All Institutions	Univ.	All Institutions
Arunachal P.	2	17	3	22	9	49	10	62
Assam	7	443	9	494	21	646	26	676
Manipur	2	75	3	81	4	107	8	139
Meghalaya	1	66	9	70	10	95	10	98
Mizoram	1	28	3	32	3	47	3	54
Nagaland	1	73	4	56	4	80	5	92
Sikkim	1	13	6	17	7	28	8	38
Tripura	2	25	3	39	3	66	4	69
NE Region	17	740	40	811	61	1,118	74	1,228
India	371	21,108	621	33,616	799	51,739	1,043	55,165

Source: Selected Educational Statistics, 2006-07 by erstwhile MHRD, 2007 & All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE), 2010-11, 2015-16 & 2019-20 by MoE (erstwhile MHRD) 2013, 2016 & MoE, 2020.

College density, college per lakh 18-23 years population, has increased from 16 colleges in 2010-11 to 20 colleges in 2015-16, and 24 colleges in 2019-20 (MoE, 2020; MHRD, 2016; 2013). The highest college density is recorded in Manipur (31), followed by Tripura (29), Mizoram and Nagaland (28 each), and Arunachal Pradesh (25), whereas all India average is 30 in 2019-20 (MoE, 2020). In addition, the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in the North-East (32.2) is higher than all India average (27.1) and has increased over the years (MoE, 2020; MHRD, 2016; 2013). Highest GER is observed in Sikkim (75.8), followed by Manipur (38.3) and Arunachal Pradesh (35.4) in 2019-20 (MoE, 2020). In contrast, the pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) in regular mode in higher education in North-East has remained constant, PTR-20, since 2011-12, whereas PTR for India increased from 21 in 2011-12 to 23 in 2019-20 (MoE, 2020; MHRD, 2014). The number of adequate teachers with quality is the root of quality education (Josephine and Amukowa, 2013).

Table 8: Number of Premier Institutions in Northeast

States	IOE	INI	UPE	CPEPA	CPE	NIRF-2021: Top 100 University	NIRF-2021: Top 100 Engineering	NIRF-2021: Top 100 Colleges
Arunachal P.	0	1	0	0	1	0		0
Assam	0	4	0	0	4	**03**: [Gauhati Univ. (R-45), Tezpur Univ. (R-46) & Assam Univ. (R-93)]	**02**: [IIT, Guwahati (R-07) & NIT, Silchar (R-48)]	0
Manipur	0	2	0	0	3	0		0
Meghalaya	0	2	1	0	1	**01**: [NEHU (R-59)]	**01**: [NIT (R-59)]	0
Mizoram	0	1	0	0	1	0		0
Nagaland	0	1	0	0	1	0		0
Sikkim	0	1	0	0	0	0		0
Tripura	0	1	0	0	0	0	**01**: [NIT (R-92)]	0
NE Region	0	13	1	0	11	4	4	0
India	12	135	15	12	314			

Note: Abbreviations: IOE- Institutes as Institution of Eminence, INI-Institution of National Importance, UPE-University with Potential for Excellence, CPEPA-Centre with Potential for Excellence in Particular Area, CPE-Colleges with Potential for Excellence, NIRF-National Institutional Ranking Framework

Source: MoE, 2021; UGC, 2021; All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE), 2019-20 & National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF), 2021

If it is considered the number of premier higher education institutions, which embody the quality of education and research, the Northeast lacks behind on that ground (Table 8). There is no institution designated as an Institution of Eminence (IOE) and Centre with Potential for Excellence in Particular Area (CPEPA), and only one, North-Eastern Hill University (NEHU) in Meghalaya, as University with Potential for Excellence (UPE) (Table 8). Only 11 out of 934 colleges in the North-East are recognised as Colleges with Potential for Excellence (CPE). A total of 13 institutions are designated as the Institution of National Importance (INI). According to the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF)-2021, only 02 universities ranked within the top 50, and 04 universities ranked within the top 100, but no university is in the top 40 (Table 8). Likewise, only 04 engineering

institutions ranked within the top 100. No colleges get placed within the top 100 colleges. Overall, the highest number of premier institutions are located in Assam.

Section- III

Discussion

In the last three Census, 1991, 2001 and 2011, a total of 10.3 million, that is 3.4 million per intercensal period, migrated for education. Though student migration is a meagre fraction of total internal migration in India, it has broad social, economic, and political implications. Internal student migration is male-dominated. The sex ratio is inversely related to the distance of migration. In long-distance, especially inter-state migration, the gender difference is very conspicuous. Patriarchal society in India is still not so liberal, allowing females long distances for education.

Student migration in India is mainly urban-centric. It implies two aspects- first, the urban-centric location of higher educational institutions, and second, the level of educational attainment by the student. In India, 421 universities out of 621 in 2010-11 and 623 universities out of 1,043 in 2019-20 were located in urban areas (MoE, 2020; MHRD, 2013). Roughly more than 60 per cent of universities in India are situated in urban areas. After secondary education, most of the students move to urban-centric colleges and universities for higher education, either from rural to urban or from urban to more urbanised areas. This phenomenon can be attributed to the predominance of the R-U and U-U streams in inter-district and inter-state migration. They have often involved step-migration. Rural students leave the villages/districts for higher education, settle in the urban centres within the state, and move to more urban areas in other states for further higher education.

The decision of the family plays a crucial role in student migration. Students are dependent on their parents. The household, especially the parents or the head of the family, decides the migration of dependent members (Raghuram, 2013; Massey, 1990). The family decision for the migration of their children is influenced by different sets of socioeconomic and political factors. However, the detailed empirical study only can explore the variation in the magnitude of migration streams with the distance.

Although the total share of inter-state student migrants is a tiny fraction, States like Manipur, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Nagaland and Kerala, and UTs like Lakshadweep were recorded in double digits in 2011. A clear pattern of inter-state student migration is observed- a group of states, namely eight Northeast states, Kerala and Jammu and Kashmir, are the origins or senders of students. In contrast, the recipients or destinations are the urban centres or metro cities in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal and Himachal Pradesh, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh. These ten recipient states include reputed educational institutions or hubs since the colonial era or developed more recently due to the commodification of tertiary education resulting

from globalisation. Marketplaces have emerged to sell education where students from distant places are customers. For instance, Delhi and Kota are the famous marketplaces for preparing for the Civil Services Examination and pre-medical entrance test, NEET, respectively; Bengaluru is for nursing training. Likewise, various large and small educational marketplaces are emerged across multiple scales and are controlled by both the public and private players.

Students are considered a sub-set of the skilled labour force (Verma, 2011). The perception of educational elitism is envisaged while studying in nationally reputed or world-class universities (Findlay et al., 2012). Likewise, in India, the premier universities in the State/UTs mentioned above, namely Jawaharlal Nehru University, Banaras Hindu University, Delhi University, Aligarh Muslim University, Jadavpur University, etc., IITs- Mumbai, Kharagpur, Delhi and Roorkee, IISC-Bengaluru, IISER- Pune, Mohali and Kolkata, AIIMS-Delhi, IIM- Ahmedabad and Kolkata, and so on, are the symbol of national education excellence in different fields. Brand tags are attached herewith, which can be deployed adventurously in their career trajectory.

The socio-political issues induce student migration (Butsch, 2017; Graf and Khoo, 2004), but no study is traced to the Indian context. It is pertinent to be aware that North-East states and Jammu and Kashmir had been considered 'Disturbed Area' under the Disturbed Areas (Special Courts) Act of 1976, and corollary to put under Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) of 1958 witnessed a very high level of student migration. A populist political aspiration, 'self-determination' induces the ethnopolitical turmoil in the North-East (Shimray, 2004). The demand for '*Nagalim*' or Greater Nagaland (along with a separate constitution and flag) consolidation of the Naga-inhabited areas of neighbouring Assam, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and border areas of Myanmar creates widespread discontent among the North-East states. Each North-East state is embraced with specific ethnopolitical issues. Manipur is often disturbed by the ethnic conflicts between two major hilly ethnic groups, Nagas and Kukis, and secessionist movements by different outfits. Indeed, the ethnopolitical issue in North-East is an internal security concern; hence, introduced AFSPA since 1958. Excessive campaign of Indian army and stringent regulations of AFSPA subordinate to human rights and freedom of living. A socio-politically gloomy atmosphere has been created where people witness the undermining of their culture and basic fundamental rights. Young generations are frustrated and depressed, which led to a large volume of out-migrants in the 1990s and 2010s. Where political unrest is rampant, parents try hard to send their children to study outside for security concerns, actively avoiding participation in insurgent groups.

With the slow economic growth, unemployment in North-East is very high, 10.5 and 7.9 per cent in 2017-18 for urban and rural respectively, and gradually growing up (MoSPI, 2019). Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura have already touched a double-digit unemployment rate in the 2010s (MoSPI, 2019; 2014). Increasing unemployment rate raises mass anxiety among the educated youth in the North-East. They have found attachment with underground factions a lubricative way of

sustaining (Upadhyay, 2006). More than 60 years of implementation of AFSPA have failed to tackle the problem (Yumnam, 2018). North-East India has remained a territory of socio-political unrest (Shimray, 2004). Studies (Aisen and Veiga, 2013; Fosu, 2001; Feng, 1997; Alesina et al., 1996) suggest that economic development and social wellbeing are embedded in a peaceful environment. A sound education system is one of the products of inclusive economic growth and a sign of social wellbeing. Prolonged ethnic-based armed insurgency and AFSPA in North-East states have jeopardised the educational environment.

North-East states allocate a comparatively higher proportion of SGDP on education. The number of institutions, college density and GER have increased a lot over the years. But these are not matched with the high level of inter-state student migration. System inputs centric approach of development, such as higher share of budget expenses, increasing number of institutions and courses, and curricular content, sometimes misleads to assess the quality of education. In North-East, where political corruptions are rampant (Muhindro, 2016), extortion from individuals and institutions is the leading source of the militant economy (Sharma, 2016); how much budget allocation is utilised in a productive and balanced manner is worrisome. The number of institutions in the North-East has increased over the years; whether these are equipped with modern classrooms, adequate teaching-learning resources and other facilities, and recruiting a sufficient number of high-quality teachers are great concerns. Construction work like erecting institutional builds is highly profitable when corruption is involved (Matthews, 2016; CVC, 2002). But procuring teaching materials and instruments is not profitable as these go under e-tender and rigorous official bureaucracy. However, without quality resources, quality learning is incomplete.

Nearly three-fourths of North-East student migrants preferred to go to mainland Indian States/UTs rather than neighbouring sister states in 2011. Even within the states, the flow of human resources is wide contentious. Hostility between two hilly tribal groups, Nagas and Kukis, in Manipur date back to colonial times (Haokip, 2015). There is a sharp physiological division between the plane and hilly communities. Moreover, it is pertinent to be aware that in-migration or immigration to the North-East region is perceived to threaten the native socio-cultural systems and economic and natural resources. The fear of assimilation and diffusion begets the syndrome of xenophobia among the indigenous population in the North-East (Shimray, 2004). Free flow of human resources, especially highly qualified teachers and heterogeneous students, enhances teaching and learning quality. Among the northeast states, Assam has experienced a comparatively lower level of student migration. Highest number of educational institutions with excellency are located here. Assam, especially Guwahati, is educationally and culturally endowed dated back to the colonial period. Post-independent period, many central and state-funded universities, IIT, NIT and research institutions have been set up; these helps to retain the students and attract from neighbouring states.

A contrasting pattern of student flow to the mainland Indian States/UTs from the North-East was observed in the 2001 and 2011 Census. North-East students in the North, West and East Indian States/UTs have declined, whereas the South Indian States have witnessed an increasing trend. There is a significant drop of students entering Delhi from the North-East from the 2001 to 2011 Census. Fewer students are making Delhi their destination for education and, in contrast, moving South. This phenomenon could be attributed to the sporadic racial violence against North-East people in mainland India (McDuie-Ra, 2012). In Delhi and its surroundings, UP and Bihar, violence against north-easterners are rampant.

Conclusion

In developing countries like India, children are the one kind of investment of parents. Parents try heart and soul to educate their children. But where the education quality is not up to the mark, there is a lack of institutions and desired courses, and the students, who belong to backward social classes and regions, have nothing to do; they have to continue studying with compromise. Students belonging to higher social classes are more privileged to choose destinations and institutions (Findlay et al., 2012; Findlay, 2010). There is a wide inequality associated with internal student migration in India. Internal student migration has multifaceted significance. It reflects the quality of the education system, both the origin and destination states. A vibrant education system is an indicator of social wellbeing. As students are the subset of the future labour force, better management of student migration can create skilled human resources that ultimately lead to economic development. Despite immense significance, internal student migration in India does not get as much attention in the development study as international student migration gets.

Work/employment[5] is the main reason for migration from North-East. The unemployment rate in North-East is very high and has gradually become severe. Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura have witnessed double-digit unemployment rates. Furthermore, the pandemic Covid-19 hard-hit the economic growth and employment in the recent time. In the forthcoming Census, there is no hope of reducing North-Eastern labour migrants to mainland India. But there is a fair expectation declining of student migration in the 2010s. Because of the many centrally funding educational institutions, research centres, tribal universities, and sports and cultural universities have been set up and upgraded to the existing ones. States governments have also taken initiatives. Nowadays, there is a broad scope of studying and pursuing research within the North-East region. The most important aspect, at this juncture, is- accentuating on quality of education. Quality education has five elements- quality learning environment, quality processes, quality content, quality learners and quality outcomes (UNESCO, 2000). Achieving a quality environment and processes are daunting challenges in the North-East.

[5] Around 28 per cent North-Easterns migrated to other states for work/employment during 2001-11; it was recorded 21.3 per cent during 1991-01 (Census, 2001 and 2011).

Now, North-East is relatively peaceful; no massive demonstrations have been witnessed in the 2010s. The demand for '*Nagalim*' and state-specific ethnopolitical aspiration for 'self-determination' is still alive and a matter of great apprehension, which often busts up as ethnic hostility, creates political unrest and jeopardises the educational environment. Finally, a presumption of a linear relation between student migration and numeric figures of conventional system inputs, such as institutions, institutional density, offred courses, GER, gender parity and so on in the North-East, will be misled. Non-quantity aspects like educational environment, supervision and support, quality resources, and quality teachers and students need to be examined along a spectrum of socio-economic, political and demographic aspects at various levels. Within the limited data sets, migration for education, in the Census of India, and discussing the level, trend, and pattern of internal student migration are not enough to attribute the aforementioned aspects. A state-specific extensive survey on student migration is essential.

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