Post-Pandemic Socio-Economic Dynamics of Migrants in Guwahati City: A Contemporary Empirical Exploration

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Abstract

This empirical analysis delves into the evolving socio-economic landscape of migrants within Guwahati City post-pandemic. Amidst the changing economic and social structures, this study aims to examine the status, challenges, and opportunities faced by migrants in Guwahati. Through a combination of quantitative surveys and qualitative assessments, it seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the socio-economic profile of migrants, shedding light on their integration, economic contributions, challenges, and aspirations within the urban fabric.

Key words-Migration, Socio- Economic Status and Demography

I.   Introduction

Elaborate further on historical migration patterns. You could mention notable examples throughout history, showcasing how migration has shaped cultures, societies, and economies. Discuss ancient civilizations, trade routes, and movements that influenced demographics and regional development.Provide a more detailed insight into present-day reasons for migration. Discuss the complexities of migration in the modern world, such as economic factors, globalization, conflicts, environmental changes, and policy influences. Highlight the various forms of migration (internal, international, forced, voluntary) and how they contribute to social and economic dynamics.Consider discussing the impact of migration on both the origin and destination areas. Explore how migration contributes to cultural diversity, economic growth, and labor markets. Address the challenges and opportunities that arise from migration, including cultural integration, social cohesion, labor dynamics, and infrastructure demands.

Emphasize the diversity of motives for migration. Beyond job opportunities and overpopulation, mention factors like education, family reunification, seeking asylum, or even lifestyle choices. Highlight how these diverse motives contribute to the complexity and richness of migration patterns. The significance of both temporary and permanent migration. Elucidate on how temporary migration, like seasonal labor migration, impacts societies differently compared to permanent settlement, which involves more profound socio-cultural integration. This excerpt provides a compelling snapshot of the evolving urban landscape in Asia, highlighting the significant shift in population dynamics from rural to urban areas.

The influx of people from rural to urban areas impacts the socio-economic fabric of cities and the countryside. Highlight challenges related to infrastructure development, housing, employment, and social services in burgeoning urban centres. The role of urban planning and governance in managing this transition. Address the need for effective policies to accommodate the influx of migrants into cities, ensuring sustainable development, equitable access to resources, and social integration. The environmental implications of rapid urbanization. Address concerns about increased pollution, strain on natural resources, and challenges related to urban sustainability. Highlight initiatives or strategies implemented to mitigate these environmental impacts. Observations to broader global urbanization trends. This passage provides a clear depiction of the urbanization process in Assam, specifically focusing on the remarkable growth of Guwahati City and the

substantial contribution of migrants to its population.

Methodology and Data Source
Period of study
The magnitude of rural urban migration into Guwahati city is examined on the basis of Primary data enumerated for migrants for three decades (1991to 2011).

Study Area
The study makes an attempt to explore the extent of migration into the informal sector in Guwahati city. Guwahati city in Kamrup district has been selected for the study because Guwahati is the most urbanized city and it can be considered as the lone class-1 city with a remarkably high trend of urbanization. Migration is thus a formidable and grim issue here. Guwahati, the capital city of the state, is the largest urban centre in Assam with 23.89 percent of the total urban population of the state. Guwahati has been the capital of the reorganized state of Assam since 1972.The population of Guwahati metropolitan area has grown almost 6.5 times between 1971 and 2001. The municipal limit of the city increased from 7.68 sq. km. in 1951 to 14 sq. km. in 1961, which further increased to 43.82 sq. km. in 1971and 216.79 sq. km. in 1991. The city achieved its municipal corporation status in 1974. Interestingly for the last ten years, Guwahati city has experienced drastic change in its land use and land cover. Guwahati has been able to attract migrants from all parts of the state as well as other states of the country. As compared to the other towns and cities of the state Guwahati attracts maximum number of migrants from within the state and different parts the country. This has led to a rise in the population in the informal sector in the city. The percentage of informal sector employment to total employment was 87 percent in 2001 (Chakravarty, 2008).Guwahati is also the state capital which gives it an opportunity to host a large number of State Government, Central Government and Semi- Government offices.

Data source
The study is based purely on primary data. For collecting primary data, interview schedules were used to gather relevant information related to the migrant's socio-economic status. After pre-testing certain modifications were made and the final questionnaire was put to use. The variables considered in the questionnaire are: (a) Demographic variables like; age, sex, marital status, community, literacy level, original settlement (whether a migrant or not) (b) Living condition variables like; housing and health facilities, accessibility to basic needs, difference in the living conditions at the place of destination and place of origin (c) work related variables like; working condition, working hours, training acquired, job satisfaction, desire to go back to the place of destination etc. The questionnaire is framed to cover all possible data required for the study.

Statistical Analysis of data Set
A data set of 384 respondents (who migrated to Guwahati city were collected and tabulated. After tabulation the data was put to analysis. The primary data was first analyzed in terms of frequencies, percentage and cross tabulation to interpret the socio-economic profile of the sample in terms of various economic and non economic parameters. They were used for interpreting the findings pertaining to a migrant's behavior. Various tools like contingency tables, graphic visualization etc are used as aids to understand the objectives of the study. Both qualitative and quantitative statistical tools have been used. Regression analysis has also been put to use.

Table No-1: Migration to Guwahati City from other districts of Assam and other states of India

	Frequency	Percent
Other Districts of Assam	305	79.4
Bihar	39	10.2
W. Bengal	13	3.4
Rajasthan	15	3.9
Meghalaya	12	3.1
Total	384	100.0

Migrants by Educational Qualification

The prevalence of primary education among migrants signifies the impact of government policies aimed at providing free primary education to rural populations. This availability likely encourages individuals from economically challenged backgrounds to access basic education. However, the trend of discontinuation in education among higher sections of society due to poverty suggests the persisting obstacle of financial constraints hindering the continuation of education beyond primary levels.The emphasis on free primary education by the government has encouraged rural migrants to attain basic education. This serves as a stepping stone for individuals from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, enabling them to access educational opportunities that might not have been available otherwise.

Socio-Economic Challenges Limiting Higher Education

Despite the availability of primary education, financial limitations persist as a barrier to pursuing higher education. For individuals facing poverty, especially in the upper sections of society, continuing education beyond the primary level remains a challenge. This obstacle contributes to educational discontinuation and possibly propels migration seeking alternative livelihood opportunities. The distribution of migrants by the ownership of residence highlights compelling insights about their living arrangements within Guwahati City. The substantial presence of migrants residing in rented accommodations, exceeding 80%, signifies the accessibility of rental housing within the city. This suggests a conducive environment for migrants seeking temporary or affordable housing options, potentially aiding their initial settlement.

Housing Type and Living Conditions

The prevalence of migrants living in Kutcha houses, representing over 80% of the population, signals the dominance of inexpensive rentals with substandard living conditions. This underscores the trade-off between affordability and living standards, as Kutcha houses typically indicate dwellings with basic or inadequate infrastructure. The high percentage of migrants in rented and Kutcha houses highlights the compromise migrants make between affordable housing and compromised living conditions. This poses challenges regarding the quality and adequacy of shelter available to them. The prevalence of migrants in Kutcha houses points to the urgent need for interventions to improve housing conditions, ensuring that migrants have access to safe, adequate, and affordable housing options within the city.

II. Conclusion

Migration has been a very contentious issue in the state of Assam and Guwahati city in particular. This has led to manifold increase in the issues of migration like; creation of slum pockets, increasing density of population, a formidable growth ofthe informal sector, poor living conditions etc. Therefore, care should be taken to control this un-stoppable gush of migrants to the city. Policies should be framed in favour of the rural areas so that the people do not feel a need to move out to a new place. Employment opportunities should be created in the villages

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