

# FEMALE MIGRATION IN NORTH EAST STATES: EVIDENCE FROM CENSUS 2001 AND 2011

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## Abstract

The paper examines the trend of female migration of North Eastern states of India, using the Census 2001 and 2011. Marriage and movement with households mainly contribute female migration. The paper shows in-migration rate and out-migration rate of female for North East India states. The female out-migration rate is more than their in-migration rate for Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura (Census, 2001). The female out-migration rate is more than their in-migration rate for Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura, except Assam and Manipur (Census, 2011).

**Keywords:** Internal migration, inter-state migration, female in-migration, female out-migration, Census

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Female internal migration influences the socio-economic development of the country. It has a great potential for reduction of poverty indicating improvement in social parameters. According to Census 2011, 20.58 crore women migrate due to marriage and out of 46% of the total migrants that moved because of marriage, 97% were women. It also reveals that 29.3 crore comprises of total population of married women implying 70% of married women migrate to another location. At recent times, we also see an increasing proportion of women moving towards cities, mostly the big ones for reasons except marriage. However, female migration is predominantly of rural-rural migration stream. Studies of (Bose, 1973; Premi, 1979; Nangia et al, 1990; Rele, 1969) revealed that marriage has been a major reason for female migration. Female mobility in last decades implies greater movement over geographical distances for jobs and long distance marriages are seen due to improvement in transport and communication (Skeldon, 1986; Jones 2008).

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Ravenstein's laws of migration (1985) assert that there has been more female mobility than male, mostly over shorter distances than long distance. The representation of female migration is mainly seen among intra-district than inter-district and inter-state migration. In the study by Kulkarni (1985) stated that most of the migrants are females due to marriage in terms of volume. Das and Saha (2013) in their study found that work/employment is the reason for migration for the males (37%), whereas, for females (65%), marriage is observed as the main

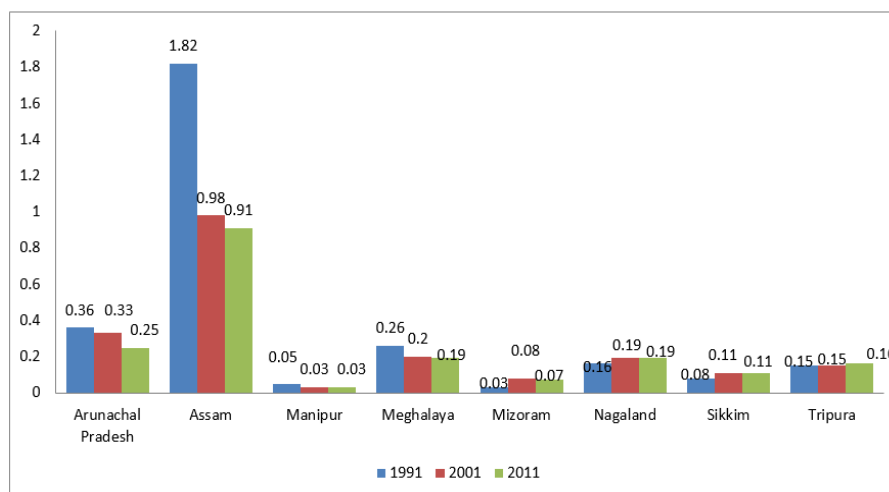
reason for migration. In addition, the reasons such as “moved with households” and “moved after birth” are considered the next important ones after “marriage.” They also found the sex-wise variation of in-migration and out-migration of the census 1991 and 2001. The total increase of migration is 52%, of which 62% are of males and 42% are of females. The study conducted by Mahapatro (2010), explores the determinants of female migration in India, using Census data and OLS regression method. The study concentrated on how the factors like average land holding, percentage of net irrigated area under cultivation, female unemployment rate, female work participation rate, male in-migration rate, female literacy rate, proportion of ST/SC population to total female population, child-women ratio, etc. influence the female in-migration rate in India. The significance of economic variable is examined by using 0-4 year of duration of residence. The author also stated that the magnitude of female migration has increased over a period. The studies of (Sundari, 2004; Arya et al, 2005) asserted that there are several factors responsible for increasing the growth of females migration such as globalization, emergence of gender specific labour market, extreme poverty, mechanization of agriculture, environmental degradation, etc. In fact, there are less number of studies that reveals that female migration also happen due to economic reasons. The study of (Lingam, 1998) stated that migration pattern sometimes attributed to patrilocal marriage practices and village exogamy; thereby women migrate for seeking work between rural areas or rural-rural migration.

### **3. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY**

The paper analyses the in-migration rate and out-migration rate of female of the North East states of India. The paper also addresses the reasons of migration with special focus on female population. The paper is based on secondary sources and uses census data of the years 2001, and 2011.

### **4. MIGRATION IN NORTHEAST REGION OF INDIA**

The Northeast region is abundant in its natural resources, but at the same time, human resources need to be uplifted. The region is mainly characterized by high unemployment, with many youth resorting to self-employment. The constant interruptions such as insurgency, political uncertainties, lack of industrial growth and economic backwardness has affected the employment scenario of the region. A major push factor resulting migration of North East people is due to lack of educational infrastructure with limited choice of education (Lalrampuii, 2016). It is quite evident that there has been a rise in the share of self-employment and corresponding fall in casual and regular salaried employment. At the same time, the no. for casual wage earners is more than self-employed workers.



**Figure 1: Share of North east states (in %)**

The census data 2011 exhibited that Arunachal Pradesh accounts for 0.25% of India's total 5.43 crore interstate migrants which was more in 2001 (0.33%) & 1991 (0.36%) of the total interstate migrants. Again for Assam, in 1991 census, it accounted for 1.82% which fell down to 0.98% in 2001 census and about 0.91% in 2011 census of India's total interstate migrants of respective censuses. Manipur accounted for 0.05% of India's total 2.73 crore interstate migrants in 1991 census, 0.03% of India's total 4.23 crore interstate migrants of 2001 census, 0.03% of India's total 5.43 crore interstate migrants. Similarly, for other states, the share of interstate migrants to India's total interstate migrants has remained stagnant in 2001 and 2011 censuses. For Tripura, it was same for 1991 and 2001 census but increased to only 0.16% in 2011 census.

## 5. FEMALE MIGRATION OF NORTH EAST REGION

The North East India comprising of eight states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim, bordered with countries like Bhutan, China, Bangladesh and Myanmar. It has found that there has been a substantial in-migration in northeastern states. According to Census 2001, about 95.7 lakh migrants are in northeast, constituting about 25 percent of the total population in the region. There has been an increase of about 24 lakh migrants from Census 1991. As stated earlier, female migrants dominate the moves within the same district, while inter-state and international migration mainly consists of males. Assam, Manipur, and Tripura have a higher proportion of female migrants as compared to male migrants. The Northeast region has 71 male migrants per 100 female migrants (Lusome and Bhagat, 2010).

**Table 1: Reasons for inter-state migration, total (%), 2001**

States	Work/ Employment	Business	Education	Marriage	Moved after birth	Moved with households	Others
<b>Arunachal Pradesh</b>	35.3	6.2	0.74	10.12	1.4	28.2	17.8
<b>Assam</b>	16.05	14.19	1.05	22.3	1.4	24.3	20.5
<b>Manipur</b>	12.7	8.5	1.12	15.73	0.36	24.6	36.8
<b>Meghalaya</b>	22.29	5.4	4.7	19.35	1.4	19.5	27.01
<b>Mizoram</b>	36.3	2.8	2.5	5.5	0.82	33.6	18.26
<b>Nagaland</b>	28.6	11.74	1.18	10.04	1.4	19.5	27.3
<b>Sikkim</b>	33.1	5.16	1.6	21.8	1.68	17.61	18.91
<b>Tripura</b>	11.98	1.5	0.56	15.8	0.51	23.9	45.5
<b>India</b>	26.3	1.9	1.3	29.7	3.8	23.5	13.11

Source: Compiled from D-3 series census data on migration

**Table 2: Reasons for inter-state migration, total (%), 2011**

States	Work/ Employment	Business	Education	Marriage	Moved after birth	Moved with households	Others
<b>Arunachal Pradesh</b>	36.29	7.14	1.12	14.17	1.49	25.3	14.44
<b>Assam</b>	16.45	10.5	0.99	32.6	1.8	21.2	16.3
<b>Manipur</b>	11.05	10.28	4.18	27.67	1.3	25.03	20.4
<b>Meghalaya</b>	18.9	4.4	4.5	27.6	2.09	24.8	17.4
<b>Mizoram</b>	28.3	2.9	1.9	7.1	0.97	40.15	18.5
<b>Nagaland</b>	30.5	10.1	2.6	14.6	1.14	24.06	16.8
<b>Sikkim</b>	31.9	4.6	2.6	24.6	1.9	16.4	17.6
<b>Tripura</b>	25.9	1.2	0.49	20.6	20.03	23.17	27.7
<b>India</b>	23.13	1.59	1.37	31.13	4.62	24.05	14.08

Source: Compiled from D-3 series census data on migration

**Table 3: Reasons for inter-state migration, male, 2001(%)**

	Work/ employment	Business	Education	Marriage	Moved after birth	Moved with household	Others
<b>States</b>	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male
<b>Arunachal Pradesh</b>	<b>51.1</b>	9.93	<b>0.78</b>	<b>0.21</b>	1.29	17.18	19.48
<b>Assam</b>	26.88	<b>24.89</b>	1.33	1.17	<b>1.59</b>	19.69	24.41
<b>Manipur</b>	<b>19.9</b>	13.23	1.51	1.25	<b>0.44</b>	21.3	42.35
<b>Meghalaya</b>	36.17	9.25	<b>5.48</b>	<b>4.23</b>	1.52	13.82	29.49
<b>Mizoram</b>	50.04	3.81	2.04	1.23	0.63	<b>24.05</b>	<b>18.16</b>
<b>Nagaland</b>	41.08	17.6	1.23	0.27	1.27	<b>11.16</b>	27.35
<b>Sikkim</b>	<b>51.52</b>	8.63	1.95	0.67	1.8	13.17	22.22
<b>Tripura</b>	20.72	<b>2.92</b>	0.85	0.87	0.57	21.75	<b>52.3</b>
<b>India</b>	<b>52.24</b>	<b>3.87</b>	<b>2.14</b>	<b>0.92</b>	<b>4.86</b>	<b>19.89</b>	<b>16.04</b>

Source: Compiled from D-3 series of census data on migration

**Table 4: Reasons for inter-state migration, male, 2011 (%)**

	Work/ employment	Business	Education	Marriage	Moved after birth	Moved with household	Others
<b>States</b>	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male
<b>Arunachal Pradesh</b>	<b>54.16</b>	11.34	<b>1.22</b>	<b>0.42</b>	1.48	15.93	<b>15.42</b>
<b>Assam</b>	31.43	<b>20.85</b>	1.28	2.3	<b>2.26</b>	20.77	20.98
<b>Manipur</b>	<b>19.54</b>	19.5	<b>5.63</b>	2	1.63	26.19	25.48
<b>Meghalaya</b>	33.76	8.39	<b>5.76</b>	<b>8.41</b>	<b>2.29</b>	21.69	19.66
<b>Mizoram</b>	41.08	4.18	1.84	1.75	<b>0.83</b>	<b>31.98</b>	18.3
<b>Nagaland</b>	46.31	16.2	2.89	0.76	1.08	14.94	17.79
<b>Sikkim</b>	53.17	8.22	2.9	1.03	1.98	<b>12.51</b>	20.16
<b>Tripura</b>	39.02	<b>2.34</b>	0.69	1.41	<b>0.82</b>	22.82	<b>32.86</b>
<b>India</b>	<b>47.16</b>	<b>2.99</b>	<b>2.11</b>	<b>1.83</b>	<b>6.18</b>	<b>21.86</b>	<b>17.84</b>

Source: Compiled from D-3 series of census data on migration

**Table 5: Reasons for inter-state migration, female, 2001(%)**

	Work/ employment	Business	Education	Marriage	Moved after birth	Moved with household	Others
<b>States</b>	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female
<b>Arunachal Pradesh</b>	<b>12.36</b>	0.88	0.68	24.55	1.64	44.32	15.54
<b>Assam</b>	<b>2.78</b>	1.09	0.7	<b>48.23</b>	1.26	30.05	15.85
<b>Manipur</b>	3.67	2.61	0.63	34.14	<b>0.26</b>	28.9	29.76
<b>Meghalaya</b>	5.11	0.76	<b>3.87</b>	38.09	1.46	26.75	23.94
<b>Mizoram</b>	10.99	1.02	3.47	<b>13.57</b>	1.17	<b>51.29</b>	18.45
<b>Nagaland</b>	7.9	<b>1.92</b>	1.09	26.42	<b>1.74</b>	33.65	27.23
<b>Sikkim</b>	10.06	0.82	1.32	<b>48.31</b>	1.53	<b>23.16</b>	<b>14.77</b>
<b>Tripura</b>	3.96	<b>0.23</b>	<b>0.3</b>	29.61	0.46	25.99	<b>39.42</b>
<b>India</b>	<b>4.01</b>	<b>0.34</b>	<b>0.63</b>	<b>54.63</b>	<b>3.01</b>	<b>26.77</b>	<b>10.57</b>

Source: Compiled from D-3 series of census data on migration

**Table 6: Reasons for inter-state migration, female, 2011 (%)**

	Work/ employment	Business	Education	Marriage	Moved after birth	Moved with household	Others
States	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female
<b>Arunachal Pradesh</b>	13.74	1.83	0.99	31.54	1.51	37.16	13.19
<b>Assam</b>	<b>2.58</b>	0.92	0.71	<b>60.68</b>	1.38	21.59	<b>12.12</b>
<b>Manipur</b>	3.85	<b>2.45</b>	2.95	49.48	1.03	24.06	16.14
<b>Meghalaya</b>	4.91	0.72	<b>3.38</b>	45.95	<b>1.89</b>	27.81	15.29
<b>Mizoram</b>	10.41	1.21	2.09	<b>14.62</b>	1.16	<b>51.6</b>	18.88
<b>Nagaland</b>	9.53	1.98	2.38	33.03	1.22	36.21	15.62
<b>Sikkim</b>	8.91	0.87	2.37	50.33	<b>1.83</b>	<b>20.68</b>	14.97
<b>Tripura</b>	<b>14.56</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.31</b>	37.51	<b>0.48</b>	23.47	<b>23.33</b>
<b>India</b>	<b>4.26</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.78</b>	<b>54.14</b>	<b>3.39</b>	<b>25.77</b>	<b>11.13</b>

Source: Compiled from D-3 series of census data on migration

The male migrants of the NE, work/employment is the most common reason for migration and constitutes a greater proportion than it does at the all India level (Sarkar, 2020). The recent studies based on Census 2011 (Sarkar, 2019) found that the male population from states like Bihar and Uttar Pradesh has been migrating more about 50% for “work/employment” which is much higher than that of the NE states. Regarding out-migration for education has been more in the states, Meghalaya and Manipur. The outmigration for education from the NE states is almost double the national average at 5.72% (Sarkar, 2020). In the last two decades, the flow of students from the NE states to the major metropolitan cities has increased (Shimray and Ushadevi, 2009).

The female migrants from the NE states has been migrating for the economic reasons, work/employment and business which is more than double the all-India average (Sarkar, 2020). Among all the states of NE, Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh holds the highest female migration for the reason “work/employment” and lower for Assam in 2011 census. The female migrants of Arunachal Pradesh are more than India’s total female population. Another dominant migration reason is “marriage” and “moved with household” for female migration among these states, of which Assam accounts for 60.68 percent and 21.59 percent respectively. Mizoram has the highest family migration among all other NE states. In addition, the propensity to migrate for educational reasons among male migrants from the NE states is more than the female migrants are. Such observations therefore provide the inequalities in the education with respect to educational infrastructure and exposures.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The female migration rate is closely inter-connected to male migration rate indicating as associational migrants. It is very evident that for most of the states of Northeast, the female out-migration is more than their in-migration rate. There have been many interpretations on female migration mostly on non-economic reasons, but in recent times, there is growing

significance for some economic reasons in influencing female migration. Therefore, studies must concern on the determinants of female migration. The role of literacy rate, labour force participation rate, etc. must be undertaken to understand female migration

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