

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND ADAPTATION OF
MIGRANT LABOURERS FROM THE PLAINS TO SIKKIM'S
INFORMAL SECTOR: STUDIES ON SINGTAM AND
RANGPO TOWNS**

**A THESIS RE-SUBMITTED FOR THE AWARD OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN GEOGRAPHY**

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I certify that the dissertation entitled **"SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND ADAPTATION OF MIGRANT LABOURERS FROM THE PLAINS TO SIKKIM'S INFORMAL SECTOR: STUDIES ON SINGTAM AND RANGPO TOWNS"** submitted by Smt. Soumya Mitra in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the University of North Bengal has not been published previously, nor submitted for any degree of this University or any other University. She has fulfilled all the requirements of Ph.D regulation of this University for the submission of this dissertation. The paper is a product of the candidate's own investigation. She has completed the work under my guidance and supervision.

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND OF MIGRANT LABOURERS FROM THE PLAINS TO SIKKIM'S INFORMAL SECTOR: STUDIES ON SINGTAM AND RANGPO TOWNS has been prepared by me under the guidance of Dr. Maitreyee Choudhury, Professor, Centre for Himalayan Studies, North Bengal University. No part of this thesis has formed the basis for the award of any degree or fellowship previously.

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ABSTRACT

TITLE: SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND OF MIGRANT LABOURERS FROM THE PLAINS TO SIKKIM'S INFORMAL SECTOR: STUDIES ON SINGTAM AND RANGPO TOWNS.

Historical-structuralist paradigm signified migration as remedial process to fight from the misery – caused by the global capitalist expansion and it “is therefore inherently unable to resolve the structural conditions that cause migration” (Hass, 2010: 233). Migration is multidimensional phenomenon with its own complex and unique characteristics. Prime purpose of migration, observed by the NSSO and Indian Census is the economic dualism among the states and also has been influenced by the labour market of the nation. Labour migration defines the mobility of persons from home to destination state for the purpose of employment (Library of congress - Federal Research Division, 2007). There have indeed emerged important critical social and economic issues in the era of globalisation, controlled by ‘push’ and ‘pull’ pressures (ILO 2004) and present in wide geographical contexts.

Internal migration is often believed to be a gradual transfer from rural labour force to utilise its potential in joining the movement of cheaper manpower to fuel a growing post-modern industrial multifaceted economy (Todaro, 1980). This human resources transfer seems to be economically beneficial (Kuznets 1964;1971) by virtue of overcoming incessant crisis to fulfil daily needs in the places of origin in order to maintain reasonably better livelihood which rapidly grows as a result of ‘capital accumulation’ in the new capitalist - liberalised sojourn.

The seed of this episodic movement is bloomed in the eventual event of internal migration. Numerous studies have often documented the fact that throughout the developing world, rates of rural-urban migration continue to run unabated to generate incipient form of blue collar job with wide openings in city’s nook and corner, where this labour is likely to be absorbed (as in Sikkim). Rapid and steady migration serves as the protracted contributing factor to the ubiquitous phenomenon of urban labor as an answer to the infrastructural development projects and ancillary businesses in Sikkim. Internal migration also increases the growth rate of the growing ancillary business as a by-product of development projects that leads to swell the apparent growth of labor supply from the neighbouring plain areas. The key purpose of this dissertation is to highlight the motivations to take migration decision toward different physical setting and also find out the

magnitude of problems faced by the migrants in Sikkim's informal job market.

First chapter of my dissertation is the compilation of back ground study of my research work along with detail discussion of applied research methodologies. This chapter deals with various literatures based on migration studies to identify research gap, objective of this study and also research questions.

It should be borne in mind that migration and job opportunities are inextricably intertwined. It is supposed to be the symptom vis-à-vis a factor contributing to the developing world of global South in particular, and involves the reciprocity between migration and geographic population distribution that facilitates in identifying the pattern of increasing urban marginalism in interstitial spaces. My second chapter describes geographical and over all demographic characteristics to assess the possibilities and job opportunities of migrant labourers from the plains in the host region. The chronological demographic changes ensure the participation rate of migrant labourers from adjacent plain regions. As we know, cartography-based evocative work on the spatial structure of migration represents maximum possibilities to interpretation of various patterns of migration with the help of statistical analysis of the data. In this regard, to get empirical knowledge I have used stratified random sampling method and collected three hundred fifty individual samples from Rangpo and Singtam (one hundred seventy-five from each town).

Migration study has created its own space. It impacts all areas of life – which makes it important to analyse the migration decisions, and knowing theoretical background has become extremely relevant to identify the fundamental reasons behind migration. Different theoretical paradigms have been followed to explore the actual concept of labour migration in Sikkim's informal sector. My third chapter deals with different theoretical discourses to distinguish between labour migrations at various levels of analysis. Important theories on migration and genesis of labour migration have been critically discussed. It has been observed that different proposed theories from different streams are closely linked with each other (geographical, sociological, economics and anthropological) and argue on various perceptions of migration literatures to establish the real reason for labour migration. It has been observed that the core of different theories is not isolated from each other. Migration of labour is an important livelihood approach in India. There are very significant migration flows, in some regions with considerable impacts primarily on individuals, followed by households and regions. The aim of the fourth chapter is to synthesis existing macro (India) views of contemporary migration with its microcosm aspect in Sikkim,

especially in Rangpo and Singtam town and its relationship to development strategies, spatial transformations and other transitional aspects.

Migration has its impacts on every part of life - political, social, or economic, which make the study of migration extraordinary pertinent as well as complex. Globalisation promotes migration as a process of poverty reduction. It has become very essential to discuss about the socio-economic transformation after migration. The fifth chapter explores the socio-economic situation in the host areas. The objective of this chapter is to highlight migration-development nexus under the shade of neo-liberal socio-economic structure. Different hypothesis and their outcomes helped me to understand the real situations of migrant informal labourers in Sikkim. Market-oriented or labour intensive capitalism act as a quasi-forced motivational factor to migrate from rural to urban areas even within the state boundary, but in case of Sikkim, the accumulation of migrant labour is not the dispossession and rehabilitation due the state policy (1961 Act). This study noticed a significant economic differences between pre and post migration situation. Other livelihood parameters are also being studied, though there are various challenges to make a credible assessment of the seasonal, irregular and precarious informal labourers.

The perception that migration is a “problem” to which policies need to provide “solutions” is so deeply entrenched in the prevailing policy language that it is easy to miss the extent to which it is demonstrably inaccurate. The sixth chapter tries to investigate the relation between the work environment of informal migrant labour under the actual or utopian existence of neoliberalism through the prism of structural and policy connections in Sikkim. This chapter also acknowledges the process of internal migration to elaborate the Sustainable Development Goals and the discussions on right-based approach to create the interlink between migrant labour and decent work parameters. This study unfolds a truth, that the control of state on the migrant labour space is always high. Migrant labourer’s collective rights are overlooked by the state of Sikkim. There is a provision for exclusive privilege to the Sikkimese in every spheres of social, economic and political on the basis of Sikkim Subject/Residential Certificate for Sikkimese (SS/COI), provided by the government of Sikkim. Plainsmen informal labourers are treated like foreigners in terms of enjoying the logistical benefits introduced by the government of Sikkim. Vulnerable migrant workers are beneficiaries of the minimum wage implemented by the Sikkim government, but nothing else. There is a necessity for bringing different categories of informal sector under one roof to implements any policy and provide right- based approach.

Neoliberal globalised economy encouraged the migration process (unproductive farmers) from low structural opportunity based areas to urban 'factory gate'. Restricted public policies try to curb these migrants as a part of host's indigenous society which gives effect to achieve migrant's ultimate desire and leads to increase the social inclusion process. Chapter seven focuses on the environmental and socio-cultural processes of adaptation practiced by migrant labourers in Sikkim. Different levels and ostensible strategies are important to understand the social space of migrant labourer in the host state. In Sikkim, some specific difference (SS/COI Certificate for Sikkimese) endorses residual differences as a prominent state strategy which affects their adaptation level, and migrants themselves also identify the extents of assimilation. Entire adaptation process by migrant can be possible when socio-cultural structure of the host region is not rigid and conceived as a two-way process. It has been noticed that migrant labourers are integrating in low-road economy market but inclusion is prohibited in political and civil society.

No single literature might be sufficient to apprehend or decode the complexities related with internal migration and the labour migrants. This dissertation is an attempt to forward the reasons of migration and the inclusive experiences of marginalisation process while crossing the state boundaries.

PREFACE

As a valuable and feasible outcome of economic transformation, the migration issue has become universal phenomenon. Seven out of eight South Asian Countries (Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Bhutan, India, Nepal are acknowledging as both migrant sending and receiving countries. History has witnessed that no society can claim to exist as an isolated social hole that defies flows of people from the outside. Migration is becoming a great 'global drama' in this contemporary time along with its various empirical realities. Structural and sectoral transformation and related courses of events in political economy increased the spatial mobility of individuals and group of people in relation to the demand and supply for labour in any fledging economy. In Indian economy, informal sector has occupied a pivotal part in terms of number of labourers and enterprises also. The matter of concern is that the discourses of informal economy and informality underscore the imbrications between 'everyday life' and 'way of life' for the unfortunate people being deported from the other sector of economy or as a first entry in this informal economy.

In case of Sikkim, migration seems to have been of crucial importance to secure state's informal sector workforce. Economic transformation that took place in the entire labour market of Sikkim's economy responded to the embedded pluralistic social fabric of migrant labour towards the ever expanding informal sector. This economic segment has inherent vulnerabilities and reliable data are needed for decision making and addressing the problem related in this sector. This thesis tries to develop informal sector statistics (micro level) to standardise different concepts and definitions, relation with migration and development processes with coverage and comparability over space and time. The labour space in India has experienced various changes succeeding to reforms in labour market policies in general and deregulation policies of labour market in particular. Over the years, Sikkim showed a precedence of integrating migrant labour over the local labour into the state's low road economy (i.e. the unorganised/ informal sector).

The purpose of this dissertation is to focus on the contemporary (post-merger) trends and patterns of labour migration in Sikkim to compare the conditions in informal labour market in East district as well as to understand the changing structural factors that have been caused for migration. It tries to better understand the nature of work environment and related vulnerabilities in this labour market and also associated causes for functional alternative livelihood changes. The movement of 'free proletariat' takes place mostly from rural areas to urban areas in high magnitudes with the

functional and structural development of urban space, as exemplified by Rangpo and Singtam town. It has gained further prominence after the adoption of neo-liberal urbanity in policy insights of the state (even in small new born small towns like Rangpo and Singtam) as a whole. Internal migration is often believed to be a gradual transfer of rural labour force to utilise their potentialities (especially brawn power) as a cheaper manpower in a growing modern capital economy. This human resource transfer seems to be economically beneficial and a process to overcome incessant crisis to fulfill daily needs and better livelihood options which are rapidly growing as a result of 'capital accumulation' in the new industrial sojourn. This thesis tries to examine the socio-economic structure of the respondents to comprehend the reality of migration and developmental nexus in micro level.

The thesis seeks to examine the migrant labour-space of urban informal sector with the help of various prospects and variabilities related with work environment in the host area. It investigates the relationship between informalised migrant labour in the light of actual existence of neoliberalism and work environment through the prism of locational and specific influences. It would be interesting to note migration has been highly politicised issues in Sikkim due to its special status in relation to the Union of India [Art. 371F and 371 F (κ)]. Within this special status 'non-Sikkimese' labour category has always been at the helm of a discriminatory politics played out against the large section of migrant labour who actually feed the burgeoning need of rapidly developing townships and city spaces of Sikkim. The thesis argues that policy regimes in Sikkim advocate various security options for the informal sector labour but in reality the efficacy of such measures is cut down to size by state endorsed market fundamentalism.

To overcome the unemployment and poverty in the native place and also to have better quality of life, non-Sikkimese migrants need to make certain compromise and most of the time these are related with their adaptation processes. This thesis also tries to focus on the processes of adaptation/adjustment in the new physical and socio-economic environment by the migrant labour. Different social encounters try to enrich the migrants about the similarities and discrepancies of their own culture (culture of native place) and with the host area. There is a continuous strategy building process to overcome 'cultural shock' and to survive in the host area. Ethnoscapes, technoscapes, ideascapes etc. are the production of the global migration circulation which are embedded in the acculturation studies and this study reveals the fact that Sikkimese are not xenophobic in nature but while talking about the inclusion process there is always one invisible

line based on geo-political space – migrants would not be allowed to cross the line. So, migrant labourers are more likely to adjust with the host area to economically survive rather than assimilate in the new society. The state of Sikkim wants to attract or retain investors from the neighbouring areas to be a part of cross state competition. Herein, Sikkim has to weaken the existing labour laws and this propensity may lead to fail in offering every labour rights, individual working conditions to the migrant low road labourers. Through a close observation of the spatio-temporal lattice of informal sector in Sikkim, this study reveals the fact that these economic sectors are fragile, with its maximum migrant human resource value chain by the state's policies. Absence of social protection and job security in Sikkim also witnessed that wage workers' informal micro employers live on a blur line between survival and failure. The upshot of this study is that migrant informal labourers are in critical situation to maintain their fundamental rights (security, union right, sustainable work environment etc.) and quality of life in the host area. These migrant labourers are always stigmatised and frequently invisible in policy decisions of the state Sikkim. It is the time Sikkim should reform labour policy, taking migrants as a part of it and assert the vibrancy of pluralistic and multicultural Sikkim in parity with other states of Indian territory.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APL	Above poverty level
BPL	Below poverty level
CITU	Centre of Indian Trade Union
CMM	Cohort-based Migration
COI	Certificate of Identification
CT	Census Town
CTUOs	Central Trade Union Organisations
CV	Coefficient of Variance
DRAIPL	Dinesh Chandra R Agarwal Infracon Pvt. Ltd.
EPF	Employee Provident Fund
EPLex	Employment Protection Legislation Summary Indicators in the Area of Terminating Regular Contracts, Individual Dismissal.
ESI	Employee State Insurance
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GCIM	Global Commission on International Migration
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSDP	Gross State Domestic Product
HDI	Human Development Index
IFI	International Financial Institutes
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOM	International organisation of Migration
JNNURM	Jawaharlal Nehru National Direct Investment
LPG	Liquefied Petroleum Gas
M.C1	Municipal Council

M.Cor	Municipal Corporation
MPCE	Monthly Per Capita Consumer Expenditure
NCDs	Non-Communicable Diseases
NCEUS	National Commission for Enterprises in The Unorganised Sector
NEC	North Eastern Council
NERUDP	North East Regional Urban Development Project
NFLMW	National Floor Level of Minimum Wage
NGO	Non- Governmental Organisation
NHIDCL	National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation
NP	Nagar Panchayet
NSDP	Net State Domestic Product
NSSO	National Sample Survey Office
OBC	Other Backward Caste
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PCP	Petty Commodity Production
RGI	Register General of India
RSE scheme	Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme
SC	Scheduled Caste
SD	Standard Deviation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEWA	Self Employed Women's Association
SIDICO	Sikkim Industrial Development and Investment Corporation Limited
SSEC	Sikkim Socio-Economic Census
ST	Scheduled Tribe
TUCC	Trade Union Coordination Centre
UDP	Urban Development Project

UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UPR	Usual Place of Residence
USD	United States Dollar
UTUC(LS)	United Trade Union Congress (Lenin Sarani)
WB	World Bank
WTO	World Trade Organisation.

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Introduction

“Because the human being is the connecting creature who must always separate and cannot connect without separating—that is why we must first conceive intellectually of the merely indifferent existence of two river banks as something separated in order to connect them by means of a bridge. And the human being is likewise the bordering creature who has no border. The enclose of his or her domestic being by the door means, to be sure, that they have separated out a piece from the uninterrupted unity of natural being. But just as the formless limitation takes on a shape, its limitedness finds its significance and dignity only in that which the mobility of the door illustrates: in the possibility at any moment of stepping out of this limitation into freedom”.

George Simmel, German sociologist and philosopher (1997:69).

Humans are perpetual wanderers. Since time immemorial people have been migrating from one place to another as individuals, families and groups for various reasons. History has witnessed substantial movements of people over vast distance for food, establish a livelihood, and find a secure home. The rise of nation-state discourse restricts their movements. As a probable and valuable outcome ‘borders’ are became strictly enforced (Ghosh, 2016:291). “Migration is one of the great global dramas of our time. It breath-taking *empirical* reality alone sets the stage” (Burgess, 2013:1) and these sets have introduced various new reasons for migration. Sometimes, these reasons are surpassing the scope and scale of our imagination. The nature, type and causes of the movement of people from one place to another have been found to be different in different places as well as different times. Though history witnessed the movement but migration became a cause for concern only since the beginning of the nineteenth century when economic development processes, political alignment, socio-cultural aspirations, and environmental conditions worked together to establish political and territorial borders around ethno-cultural communities for which purpose global population flows became a hindrance (Kuri and Chakroborty, 2013: 950-955). So, migration is not only the physical movement of individuals or groups, but it also involves a lot of strains in their cultural, social, economic and other facets of life. Hence, the interest in migration is not only limited within demographers but also to sociologists, anthropologist, economists, political scientists and geographers.

The valuable outcome of economic transformation, the migration issue has become a universal phenomenon. Society cannot claim to be an isolated social hole that defies flows of individuals from outside. Economic and structural transformation necessitated by globalisation increased the spatial mobility of groups or individuals in relation to the demand and supply for labour in any fledging economy. India has been widely discussed for its relatively low migration rate in the literatures which is expected to change by the initiation of neo-liberal economic reform and the influence of migration-urbanisation nexus. The development and growth in communication and transport, infrastructural development, growth of Indian economy and associated upsurge in aspirations have led the growth of migration in recent time (Bhagat, 2010: 27-45).

Migration is a multidimensional phenomenon, each migration stream is complex and to some extent unique. Reason behind this unique movement of people may be by force or by own choice but social scientists are usually taking interest in the post-migration consequences along with their management to survive and adaptation tempo with different values, culture and economic condition under changing situations. Social scientists firmly believe that people do not just migrate from one place to another; they also travel from one culture to other. Along with all these social juxtapose migration is a “survival instinct that drives human to seek better prospects” (Sundari, 2005: 2295). Though migration may take place for a variety of reasons but economic and other opportunities play a key role in migration decision. Prime purpose of migration, observed by the NSSO and Indian Census is the economic dualism among the states. It has also been influenced by the labour market of the nation. Theoretical literatures on migration state that migration is a consequences of social and economic transformation (positive) and individual response to job prospects and wage differentials. Marxist model (Mosse, et. al., 2002: 59-87) and the dual economic model (Gidwani and Sivaramakrishnan, 2003: 350) both are considering the notion of migrant labourers mostly from rural traditional agricultural sectors to urban modern sectors. Structural changes, demographic changes as well as cities lure, by providing job in the lower end of labour market, which act as a new dimension of neoliberal economy. So, migration seems plausible to be both a symbol as well as an endorsement – one of the most common alternative strategies in the post socialist world and beyond since the simultaneous collapse of Soviet Un and acceleration of globalism and fragmented capitalism (Pine, 2014: S95-S104). Some movement takes place in circular, some in the face of abject poverty are inclined towards urban low level labour market and involve in perpetual practice of comings and goings in a same place or other (Grill,

2011:79-102). The major function of the labour migration is in fact to act as a 'safety valve' in the poor areas and mostly consumed in urban unorganised/informal sector, where rather than being valorised, migrant "becomes re-inhabited by forms of punctuated time," in near future (Guyer 2007:210). Migration is known to be the strongest tool for development provided it is to be governed by humanistic migration policies (UN Global Migration Group, 2015). Whether it leads towards either upward trend of opportunities in destination areas or downward trend of vulnerability of potential depletion of the labour force in the core areas, is to be determined by the nature of the movement of people as well as the consumption nature of the host's labour market. Structural forces create a natural and unavoidable catastrophe that interjects the expected events in the political economy like colonialism conquest, occupation type, labour recruitment, communal culture (Castle and Miller, 2009; Massey et al., 1998; Skeldon, 1997). Neoliberal economy has become a nationwide system in the last decade of twenty first century, which is demonstrated in the fruition of urban informal economy. Urban informality is practice of norms that emerged through liberalisation and also promoted globalisation as on organising logic (Roy, 2005: 148; Roy and Alsayyad, 2004: 26). In India the growth of informal workforce is observed mainly towards urban destinations for reasonable identities in interstices of rapid metamorphosis of urban geographical regions. The neoliberal practice has dualistic approach: first, it creates a cosmopolitan, mobile world for the 'haves' and secondly, it commences world of barriers, managements for 'have nots'. Any form of wringing of labour is oppressively veiled by the neoliberal ideology of economic efficiency and shared propensity (Samaddar, 2018: 7). There is no doubt that the concept or process of informality creates nebulous range of activities in the lower economic zone, which generates tiring and precarious livelihood for so many people. 'Flexibility' and 'flexicurity' of labourers have been denoted as the possible solution to enhance productivity and a mechanism to accelerate employment generation, but the labour migrant (especially in informal sector) experiences provide a crucial window into the origins and institutionalisation of precarity.

In last few decades India experienced a high rate of migration. According to NSSO 64th Round (2007-08), about 287.8 million people migrated from one place to other and distribution of internal

migration in that year was 14.7% (inter-state). Economic reasons have been denoted as the most noteworthy reason for male migration in India. 28.5% of rural male migrants and 55.7% of urban male migrants gave economic reasons for migration in 2007-2008 (Srivastava, 2011: 3). In last few decades it has been realised that internal migrants are several times larger than international migration. Apart from other reasons behind migration in various streams, employment related issues go as high as 62% in male rural to urban migration (NSSO, 2010; UNESCO. 2007). The pattern and growth of interstate migration under the shade of globalisation has led the changing pattern of demand of labour and also consequent changes in the structure of labour market (Srivastava, 2011: 2). As for the present study on Sikkim's informal sector, migration seems to be of crucial importance. In all major towns of the tiny state of Sikkim, migration secures the informal labour market.

Keeping the above noted trend in mind, this research tries to examine the synergy between human migration, urban informal labourers and migration driven situations in Rangpo and Singtam towns in the East district of Sikkim state. This dissertation tries to assess on the basis of a review the state policies of Sikkim in relation to migrant informal labour issues. It also examines the physical and socio-cultural adaptation possibilities of migrant labourers in the host areas.

1.2. Conceptual Framework

1.2.1 Migration

Migration from one area to another area in search of improved livelihood is a key trait of human history. In the other way migration is a social, economic and universal phenomenon in modern times, through which human beings move from one place to another place in pursuit of certain cherished objectives like avenues of better employment, better wages, better working and living conditions, better quality of life and better livelihood. The nature and pattern of migration varies from one social group of migrants to another because of the fact that the rural migrants are not a homogenous group (Mitra and Murayama, 2008). The term migration has been used in a wide variety to denote displacement from one setting to other, from one physical settings to another, from one background, experiences and environment to others. 'Migration' itself spans categories and discourses (Burgess, 2013: 5). In the modern period new science of migration has developed to meet, explain and to understand the reality of migration. New approaches of migration evolved to show the changing factual reality. Migration study is rich and evolved through different

empirical and theoretical contributions by different people. The quantitative revolution in geography in early 1960s brought a new realisation among the geographers which inspired them to formulate theories and models. But it is not easy for them who deal with the human phenomena, because these are highly dynamic and change their spatial and temporal dimensions with unusual rapidness. So the factors associated with the movement of people are most complex. In this context Humphrey's observation is remarkable that migration was rather distinguished for its lawlessness than for having any definite laws. In spite of all difficulties, development in the field of theoretical model building with regard to migration is quite encouraging. Theory building in the field of migration is almost more than a century old if Ravenstein's attempt of 1885 is considered as the beginning point.

Migration is an inevitable process associated with economic development. O.D Duncan states that whatever effects are created by changes in structural factors of the country, the same effects are caused by migration. Thus to achieve many structural aims, migration is the functional alternative for the social change. We can say that migration studies in this way are the science of correlation, where it is concentrating and dealing with different variables of entire society. Theories on migration try to find out the causes, size, level and magnitude of migration in relation with social production, nature of wealth, environmental effects and land ownership. In capitalistic system industrial development took place which generated different reasons for population movements. This migration causes an end of one old class structure and gives birth to a new class structure that is capitalist labourers class. The Materialism theory by Standing gives the idea about the transition situation of the feudalistic to capitalistic system. Classical theories have emphasised on dualistic nature of development (Lewis, 1954: 139-191), push and pull factors (Lee's, 1966: 47-57), income variations in rural and urban areas (Harris and Todaro, 1970), which claimed migration as a smooth inter-sectoral movement of labourers, but contemporary widespread experiences portray the extensive experience of proliferation of unskilled, low and semi-skilled migrant labourers in growing informal sector and raised the question on the traditional views (Bhatt and Desai, 2010). Neo-classical economic theories expectedly explain migration flows in terms of a calculus of supply and demand of labour, natural resources, housing or food. More recent world system and migration systems theories attempt to explain migration flows by applying interdisciplinary methods and systems theoretical approaches.

Migration from India has taken place from very dawn of civilisation. In ancient time it used to be limited within merchants and sailors but over the past two centuries it has acquired different magnitude and pattern. “The presence of the British and the demand for cheap labour in other parts of the empire lay at the root of the phenomenon of migration in those days, a phenomenon which has continued till date” (Rajan and Kumar, 2010: 2). In this respect Fei-Ranis present a process of rural-urban migration, especially for the surplus labour from agricultural segments to industrial segment in underdeveloped countries. The neo-classical equilibrium theory by Revenstien also deals with the general statements unconnected with any actual migratory movement and emphasises tendencies of people to move from dense to sparsely populated areas or from low to high income areas or link migration to fluctuations in business cycle. But these ‘general’ theories are not able to establish all possibilities of migration. Thus, neo-classical model is far from historical reality and has little explanatory value (Borjas, 1989: 5). It seems better to analyse labour migration as a movement of workers propelled by the dynamics of the transitional capitalist economy, which simultaneously determines both the ‘push’ and the ‘pull’ (Zolberg, 1981).

Modern migration is having its own characteristics, where we can observe that it is a free-standing phenomenon. It has always emerged as a part of a larger system, a larger logic, big set of condition as well as in big associations. Tilly states that, labour migration has always been a factor of emergence of a capitalist world market. Earliest form of labour migration was slavery, which evolved at the time of colonisation and the opening up of the new world. As a consequence, a class of wage labourers emerged. In this way the ‘free proletarian’ was born, a class unfettered by traditional labourers’s bonds or ownership of the means of production. Apart from international movement of labourers, they also migrated within the states and inter-state also. This type of migration takes place mostly from rural areas to urban areas in high magnitudes with the structural and functional development of urban space, technology, network and communication.

1.2.2 A Short History of Informal Sector

The word ‘informal’ has been used lengthily in academic and policy context but without any clear consensus about its meaning. If the term is considered as ‘informality’ related to different kinds of networks, activities, arrangements and providers, the fuzziness of the term increases rather than creating a concrete meaning. When (irregular) economic activities (Hart, 1973: 61-89) are practiced by workers of any kind, not insulated by formal arrangements, are termed informal

economy (ILO, 2002a, 2011; Hussmanns, 2005: 1-25). Urban in-migrants in the informal labour market are by and large perceived as a remnant of quite a lot pre-modern mode of production that unwaveringly disappear into the modernisation of societies (Geertz, 1963; Gilbert, 1998: X+ 190). The ever-increasing growth of the width and breadth of the informal labour market across the Global South does warrant a work-out of re-theorisation of such attempt (ILO, 2011; Williams et al., 2013).

There have been various attempts to define informal sectors in a meaningful way. The concept of 'informal sector' came into development around the early 1970s. This term originates from a research-based work on Ghana (Breman, 2016:26). The term 'informal sector' has been discussed much during the last two decades in order to have universal acceptance. Numerous issues relating to the concept and definition of the unorganised/informal sectors were discussed in the 15th International Conference of Labour Statisticians - held in January 1993 (ICLS, 1993) at Geneva and resolution related to the statistics of employment in informal sector was also adopted. Later on, the System of National Accounts (1993) advised by the United Nations also approved this resolution with regard to the concept of informal sector. ILO defines informal sector as "informal units comprise small enterprise with hired workers, household enterprise using family labour and self - employed persons. Production processes involve relatively high levels of working capital as against fixed capital, which in turn reflects low level of technology and skills involved" (ILO World Employment Report, 1998: 34; Government of India, Ministry of statistics and programme implementation, 2017-2018: 1-4).

It is often termed as the 'residual sector'; it provides employment avenues for a large number of people in urban and peri-urban areas as well as in rural agriculture domain. Sethuraman (1976) has defined informal sector consisting of small scale units engaged in production and distribution of services and goods with the primary objective of employment generation and income to the participants notwithstanding the constraints on capital, both physical and human (Swaminathan, 1991: 1-39), but the most accepted definition of informal sector is the one presented by ILO in UNDP Report in Kenya as "a sector to which entry by new enterprises is comparatively easy; enterprises in this sector rely on indigenous resources and are family owned; they operate on a small scale in unregulated and competitive markets, are labour intensive and use adaptive technology; their workers have skills acquired outside the formal schooling system" (Breman, 2016: 27). "Informal would then be the whole gamut of economic activity consisting of small-

scale business with quick returns, low capital intensity, low productivity, inferior technology, mainly family labour and property, no skill formation or merely training ‘on the job’, easy entry, and finally, a small and poor clientele” (*ibid*, 2016: 28).

1.2.3 Re-theorisation of Informal Economy

Earlier, conceptions of informality were elucidated to distinguish between formal and informal sector as regulated and large scale versus unregulated and small scale sector (Hart, 1973; ILO 1972; Moser, 1994: 11-29). International Labour Organisation (ILO) has differentiated formal/informal sector on seven criteria (Table 1) that clarifies that informal sector is a marginal sometimes independent activity devoid of any association with formal counterpart (Chen et al., 2006: 2131-2139; Chen, 2012; ILO, 2007). It can be progressively influenced by capitalism (Meagher 1995: 259-284), which further controls agglomerated market-migrant nexus in different geographical locations – a possible extension of the Harris-Todaro framework of rural-urban migration (Raychaudhuri and Chatterjee 2006: 83-100).

Table no. 1.1 **ILO Proposed criteria of formal and informal sector**

Formal sector	Informal Sector
Large scale	Small scale
Difficult in accessibility	Easy accessibility
Capital intensive	Labour intensive
Use of imported resources	Use of indigenous resources
Enterprise: Corporate entities	Enterprise: individual ownership
Formal skills	Unskilled
Operate under regulated markets	Operate under unregulated market

Source: ILO version of seven criteria. Adapted from Ypeij, A. (2000)

In case of India “the terms ‘informal sector’ and ‘unorganised sector’ are taken to be synonymous” (NSS, 1999-2000). But there is conceptual difference between these two, especially in the context of India. In India, informal sector is a part of unorganised sector. Unorganised sector is the sector, which is basically unincorporated sector, not covered by the Annual Survey of Indian Industries (ASI) and even it is not included in Factory’s Act 1948. Informal sector is the subset of unorganised sector where workers are generally low-paid and low-skilled and outside of any social security coverage. “Highlighting their vulnerability due to the lack of institutional protection, the NCEUS has also opted for a definition of the informal sector as framed by a wide diversity of firm-like

microenterprises: ‘The informal sector consists of all unincorporated private enterprise owned by individuals or households engaged in the same and production of goods and services operated on a proprietary or partnership basis and with less than ten workers’ (Breman, 2016: 31). The emergence of political economy discourse also predominated research on the informal economy till the first part of the millennium. It has tried to transcend the earlier dualistic depiction of the binary opposite of the formal/informal economies as separate sections, where, it puts informality forward as a component of capitalism. It is enriched with subcontracting, outsourcing practices under deregulated national/transnational capitalism (Williams, 2012: 895-915, 2017) which creates a profound interdependence between migration and urban informal labour market.

It has been considered that the concept of informality had drawn attention to the unclear range of activities, divergent, unorganised and practiced in the lower circuits of the economy which provide a strenuous and precarious livelihood for many people. This sector can attract and consume uprooted, unskilled/semiskilled and poor people. In Sikkim, the arena of this fieldwork - based research, the new economic policy of neoliberalisation had already started after the merger with India (1975). From the last decade of 20th century onwards, the neoliberal scenario became a nationwide phenomenon, it promoted lure private capital investment for foreign (sewage plant in Singtam, Sikkim) and local (various pharmaceutical and liquor plants at Rangpo and Singtam, Sikkim). The space of migrant labourers in this new economic era established one critical, fundamental and problematic relationship between migrant labour and give their impacts on emergent small towns. So, it has become essential to know the background of this new economic structure to understand its influence on everyday life of migrant labourers.

1.2.4 History of Neoliberalism

The term neoliberalism was coined at a meeting held in Paris in 1938. The epistemology of neoliberalism can be traced back to “multiple beginnings, in a series of situated, sympathetic critiques of nineteenth-century laissez-faire” (Peck 2008: 3). The starting point would be the event when a group of twenty-six prominent liberal thinkers, including Friedrich Hayek, Michael Polanyi, Louis Rougier, Wilhelm Röpke, and Alexander Rüstow met in Paris to discuss on Lippmann’s (1937) book, ‘The Good Society’. They aimed to discuss on reviving classical liberalism and its impact on individual economic freedoms. They proposed names for the new philosophy of liberalism as ‘positive liberalism’, which eventually became ‘neoliberalism’ by consensus (Mirowski and Plehwe 2009). It subsequently gained political mileage that used to

propagate each year from the World Economic Forum at Davos in Switzerland at global level.

The genesis of neoliberalism is perceived by an ‘Anglo-American-anchored trans nationality across the Atlantic, that ascended from a historical gestation; embedded in the welfare capitalism and the post-war conjuncture’ (Mudge, 2008: 403-431) and as ‘a *sui generis* ideological hegemonic project’ – that facilitates to project and circulate a kind of coherent program of interpretations of the world of market deregulation, competitiveness, economic self-sufficiency, rescinding welfare, controlling inflation, pushing marginalised peoples including migrants into a flexible low-wage labor market regime devoid of unionisation and bargaining (Peck, 2001: 445-455; Peck and Tickell, 2002: 380-404) on to others. Geographers primarily through the seminal work of David Harvey (Harvey 2005) have validated this construct. Inhuman geography, the term ‘neoliberalism’ refers to a new, modified political, economic, and social arrangement which explains market minimal state intervention and individual responsibility. Neoliberalism has also been criticised because it is suffering from ‘promiscuity’ (involved with innumerable theoretical perspectives) (Springer, 2015: 153-163), ‘omnipresence’ (being treated as a global phenomenon), and ‘omnipotence’ (driver of social, political and economic changes) (Clarke 2008: 145-147).

Thus, neoliberalisation is being viewed as a plural set of ideologies proceeding from both ‘everywhere’ and ‘nowhere’ within diffused loci of power (Plehwe & Walpen, 2006: 27-50). There are no ‘pure’ or ‘paradigmatic’ ideas of neoliberalism (Springer, 2015, 153-163) It is a series of geopolitical dissimilarity and institutionally originated hybrids (Peck, 2004: 392-404), plays a significant role to understand the discourse on a conceptual definition of ‘neoliberalism in general’. Regional variation in per capita income has increased in the era of post-reform. Large studies conclude that in the period of rapid growth of the Indian economy, spatial inequality, captured through interstate variation has increased significantly. So, in contrast to emphasis on ‘convergence hypothesis’ that has been one of the cornerstones of the neoclassical optimism on market-led growth, various empirical studies suggest that there is hardly any move towards convergence of any kind, most of studies remark that inter-regional disparities, as measured by interstate differences in growth performance have increased in the post-reform (Baddeley, McNay and Cassen, 2006, Dasgupta et al, 2000) time and as post-merger time in case of Sikkim. “Dynamics of neoliberalism are underpinned by commonsense” (Mudge, 2008: 703-731), meaning quite literally, a sense held in common for different understanding (Ward and England, 2007: 1-22), a kind of political formation specific to market-centric ‘politics’ (Mudge, 2008: 703-731). It

would be interesting to observe that that labour migration has been a highly politicised issue in Sikkim and due to Sikkim's special status in relation to the Union of India (Article, 371F) different areas of Sikkim's socio-economic opportunities are managed to keep in view the concerns of the Sikkimese and non-Sikkimese people. The situation shows that the working class population is consumed in the urban informal sector in Sikkim but it is susceptible to be very less important if they are non-Sikkimese and also are not in possession of the official or administrative shield – state citizenship (RC and COI or Sikkim Subject), part of union and other policy benefit.

1.2.5 Neoliberal Urbanisation – Related perspective of Migration

Other structural approaches related to migration are those of globalisation, neoliberalisation and global city perceptions, which intersect each other and also with migration development nexus. Global capitalism can penetrate into every part of the world through flows of capital and networks. Scholars designated “globalization as the unfortunate manifestation of a ‘neo-liberal’ ideology and neo-liberal policies” (*ibid*: 72).

Since the mid-1990s, migration has become an increasingly essential component of inter-state relations and due to the rapid process of globalisation, the interconnectedness between economic, political, social, and cultural spheres has drastically increased. Spatial development – as a process of structural transformation of the rural backward sector into the urban modern sector (Lewis, 1954:139-92) has become considered as a dynamic controlling factor for the movement of people as well as generating the job space for them. Different research proposed that we are living in a political-economic era where neoliberal urbanism is hegemonic ideology (Peck et al. 2009: 49-66, 2013: 1091-99, Jessop, 2002: 452-472.). It has included privatisation, market rationality, individualism, enterprise and competitiveness (Harvey, 2005, 2006: 145-158; Peck, 2010; Peck and Tickell, 2002: 380-404, 2006: 26-50). In the field of human geography, the term ‘neoliberalism’ is denoted as a new economic, political and social preparation which considers market relation, states reforms, policy revision and individual responsibilities (Springer, 2010: 1025-1038). It was Emiliano Zapata's series of ‘encounters’ with neoliberalism in Mexico, during the North American Free Trade Agreement that placed the term at global circulation.

Geographers are willing to examine the relations between neoliberalism and the vast array of conceptual varieties, such as, cities (Hackworth, 2007; Kundu, 2014; Mitra, 2018: 47-73), citizenship (Spark, 2006: 151-180), labour (Jha and Kumar, 2018: 123-146; Aguiar and Herod,

2006; Peck, 2002: 179-220), race (Haylett, 2001: 351-370), development (Power, 2003; Hart, 2002: 812-822), migration (Mitchell, 2004; Lawson, 1999: 261-276) and others. The relationship between neoliberal urban cities and migrant labour has focused on the locational space of the migrant labour and also assesses migrants as a critical element for the transformation of towns/cities to supports knowledge-based economy and rental outlet.

Normally, the neoliberal dream has a dualistic approach. On one hand it creates a cosmopolitan, mobile world for the 'haves', and on the other, it perpetuates a world of barriers, and management for the rest. The relationship between labour migration and various layers of urbanisation in post-liberal time in India is not concerned about its historical foundation. Historical frameworks have been closed by various macro and micro level Census data analyses, commenting on the trend and volume of migration etc. but neoliberal studies try to look into the links between government polity/policy and migration decision. Neoliberal ideology believes in flexible, competitive, open and private markets. It is actually going through a new form, which is beyond the state interference. The late 1970s and early 1980s were the times when neoliberalism gained its most widespread importance. Different scholars named this ideology as a strategic political response to solve the global recession problem. This concept elaborates the planned role of the urban centers in the present reshaping of political-economic dynamics. Adequate understanding of a definite and obtainable neoliberalism must be explored in the contextually accurate interactions between inherent rigid landscape and the newly emerged neoliberal, oriented market structure at a large geographic scale. The neoliberal restructuring of concepts in the last decades were not able to establish a rational platform for sustainable capitalist enlargement. It is important to discuss the role of urban space in this contradictory and constantly unstable global market to identify the actual existence of neoliberalism. The most defining characteristics of neoliberal thoughts of accumulation is inequality. Towns and cities are becoming the centers of capital accumulation, especially in a developing world, as well as a place where maximum people are projected to live. Urban spaces are increasingly interlinked in this globalised era; it allows huge flow of resources and locational displacement of labour market through the rapid growth of urban informal sectors. It creates inter-regional labour relationship to a greater extent. In this sense the 'migrant sits at the heart of the city in neoliberal time' (Samaddar. 2016). On the other hand, urban space has become a site of extraction and thereby a rental site of survival by extracting all possible resources including labour. Neoliberal urbanisation integrated social challenges of contemporary capitalism

processes, where towns and cities symbolize infrastructural sovereignty. Moreover, it has been also characterised by high commodification of land creating a new form of socially marginalised group of people and high precariousness among the migrant labourers. Sassen (1991), contributed a lot to the 'world city' concept (Friedmann and Wolff, 1982), arguing that nation-state migration from poor to rich areas is not possible without the development of global cities and that migrants are also responsible for the evolution and development of the cities. Sassen (1996) observed that the presence of huge pool demand of migrants is shaping the labour market of any host cities, here, Sikkim as a case.

1.3 Theoretical Discourse of Labour Migration

Migration is an important study in various fields, which not only considers population movement from one area to another, but also focuses on its influence on livelihood aspects of individuals as well as on mass. There is a growing intellectual attention to the field of international and internal migration, which helps the evolution of different literatures in this field. But theorisation of migration is not very strong as compared to that of the other branches of national and international transaction. It is believed that migration is an important determining factor leading to population change. Migration study helps in understanding the dynamics and the level of the society in different economic configurations. In other words, migration is a process of out-of-place-ness, a concept of change, evolution and modernization (Burgess, 2013:3). There is no doubt that migration is the most important phenomenon in history, which, to an extent, sets in motion new chains of events that perhaps shapes our present ways of life and thinking (IOM, 2004). Migration study has always had an interdisciplinary approach with contributions from a broad variety of the researchers, enriching it from the fields of demography, sociology, economics, social psychology, geography etc. (Krieger, H. 2004: 80).

The mainstream literature on migration portrays the subject as a foreseeable and also useful outcome of economic transformation. History has witnessed these activities from a long past. Migration is a key human response to environmental, social, political and economic changes. The world system analysis, primarily defined by Wallerstein (1974) and others, explains that the rise of capitalism evolved with the constant interaction of the entities with cultural transformations across geographic distance. Hence, globalization is not a modern concept rather an extension of the old processes. In the present era of globalisation - distant places have become more connected, courtesy digital revolution, and migration has become easier, cheaper, and faster which is an

important facet.

1.3.1 Migration Theories in Geography

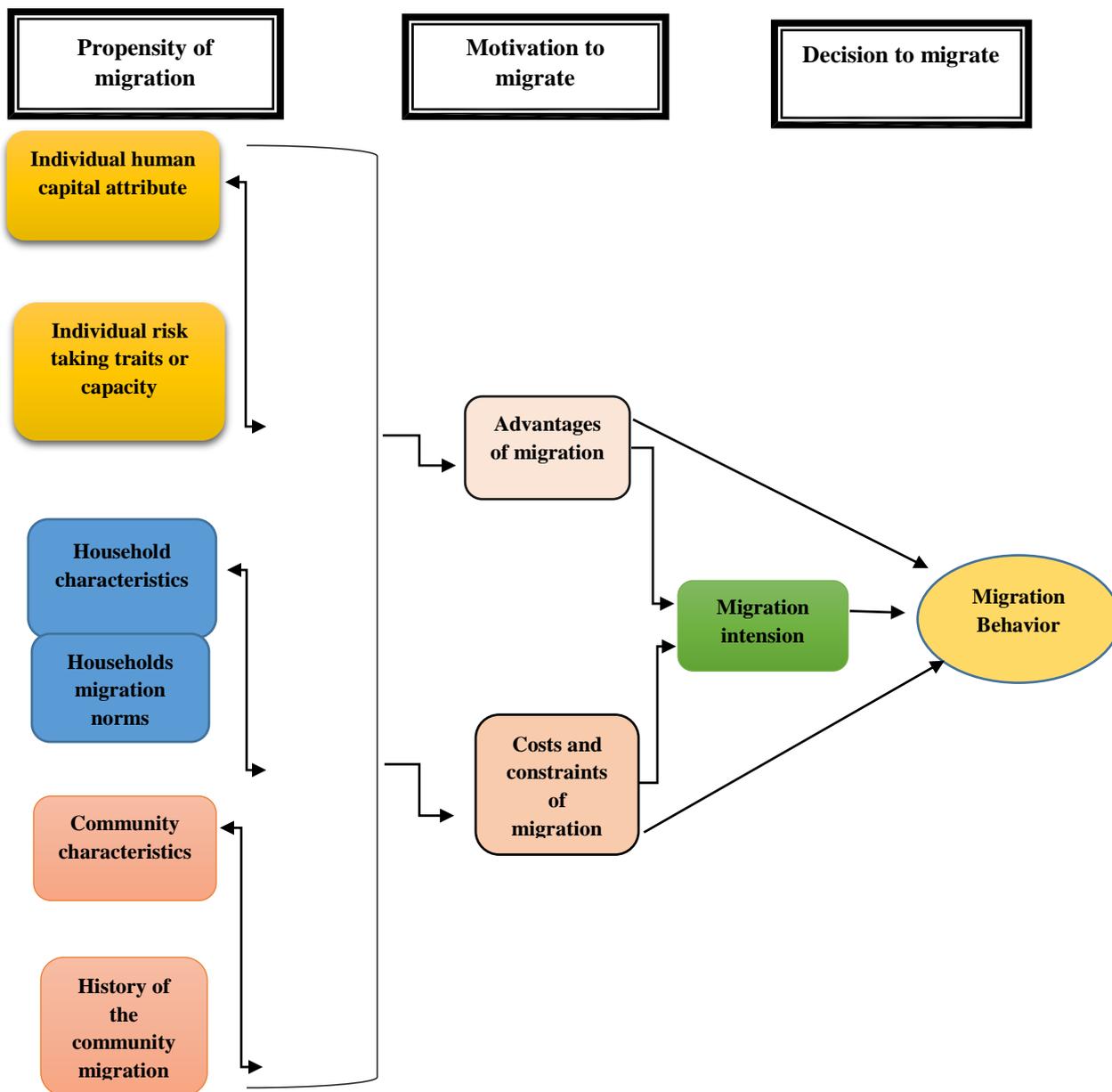
Geography has a tradition of diverse scholarship and its subfield of migration studies is no exception. Russell King's paper in the conference named 'Re-Making Migration Theory', Brighton, U.K (2009), (Mayer and Hammerli, 2016: 15-40), has tried to conceptualise geography's contributions to migration theories, present trends and the upcoming opportunities for migration research in geography. It also indicated that migration itself is particularly suited to interdisciplinary study. Indeed, the interdisciplinarity of both migration studies and geography make them a good match. This chapter builds expressly on the outcomes of my field work of migration study in geography. Situating migration theory in Geography, identifying the current trends in the discipline, and showing where Geographers can continue to make vital contributions to migration studies in the near future are important.

There are different perceptions of classification of migration theories. Some of them are related to the casual analysis of the behavior of the migrants and the migration processes (Massey, Hugo, Kouaouci, Pellegrino, and Taylor 1993: 431- 466), some consider real theoretical insight into migration behaviors, which also gives typologies as well as tautological descriptions of migration as a whole and of individuals. Faist (2000) introduced different levels of theories and nucleated them into three distinctive levels - macro, meso and micro level. There is no single comprehensive model, theory, or conceptual work frame for international or internal migrations, because of its complex nature, which embraces demographic, environmental, political, cultural, economic and other factors. To overcome these complexities there are limited approaches to be used for the illustration of the factors behind people's choice to migrate.

To unfold the underlying mechanisms that lead to migration, we have to understand the phases of migration decision making processes. These processes are not restricted within any spatial-social circumferences. The three-stage model of migration decision making is based on the theory of planned behavior (Kalter, 1997, Kley, 2011: 469-486). The following model gives us an overview of an important area of migration in understanding the conceptual model of De Jong and Fawcett (1981: 13-81), revised by De Jong (2000) in Weeks (2008: 274). The process of migration is thought to having three main stages:

The first and pre-decisional stage has been termed as *considering migration* when subjects are not sure to relocate. *Planning migration* is the second stage of migration decision making processes when decision is in favor of movement, and the third phase is called *realizing migration* or the actual behavior in action stage. These stages mostly work in case of voluntary migration, when people are not forced to displace due to some unavoidable circumstances. However, it can generate and regulate various social relations.

Fig. no.1.1 A Conceptual Model of Migration Decision Making



Source: Weeks. J.R (2008, 274)

These three stages of migration decision making processes may not be experienced by the quasi-forced migrant labourers because a transitional shifting of economic practices generates a massive displacement of people (Breman.1996, 2012) with creating an epistemological gap between formal and informal employment; it creates a ‘compulsion’ based migration among labourers.

The first step in throwing light on the question of why people migrate is methodical in its reviewing of the theoretical literature for the reason of migration in this chapter, mostly on economic and social literature. The ground-breaking paper by Massey et. al. (1994) on migration literature discusses and unifies different migration theories. Migration is a movement of group or individuals from one geographic unit to another for multiple reasons ranging from better life possibilities to persecution.

Table no. 1.2 **Theories of Migration Defined by Their Level**

Micro level	Meso level	Macro level
<p>Migration cause:</p> <p>Individual values/desires/ Expectancies.</p> <p>Scope for phenomenological analysis/ lived experience</p>	<p>Migration cause:</p> <p>Collectives/social networks</p> <p>Scope for qualitative and quantitative analysis.</p>	<p>Migration cause:</p> <p>Macro level opportunity structure</p> <p>Scope for qualitative and quantitative analysis.</p>
<p>Main theories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Lee’s push/ pull factors ➤ Neoclassical micro-migration theory ➤ Theory of social model ➤ Behavioral models ➤ Gravity model 	<p>Main theories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Social capital theory ➤ Institutional theory ➤ Network theory ➤ Cumulative causation ➤ New economics of labour migration 	<p>Main theories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Dual labour market theory. ➤ Migration as a system ➤ Neoclassical macro-migration theory ➤ World system theory ➤ Mobility transition

Source: Faist (2000), Jessica Hagen-Zanker (2008).

The early surveys of migration theory in geography starts with the eminent work of Ernst Georg Whenever we are going to discuss the migration theories, we observed different levels of perceptions. Some theories focused on individual migration decisions, whereas other theories look at cumulative migration trends. The following table no. 1.2 gives us a broader overview of the theories along with different levels and table no. 1.3, which will help us to categorised the

motivation behind migration in a nutshell.

Table no. 1.3 **Theories of Migration Based on Initiation or Perpetuation of Migration**

Initiation of migration	Perpetuation of migration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Neoclassical macro-migration theory ➤ Migration as a system ➤ Dual labour market theory ➤ Mobility Transition ➤ World systems theory ➤ Lee’s push/ pull factors ➤ Neoclassical micro-migration theory ➤ Theory of social systems ➤ Behavioural models ➤ New Economics of Labour Migration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ World system theory ➤ Migration as a system ➤ Social capital theory ➤ Institutional theory ➤ Network theory ➤ Cumulative theory

Source: Faist (2000), Jessica Hagen-Zanker (2008).

Social science researchers have hardly ever mixed their models in terms of individualistic and historical perspectives. (Castles and Millar, 1993, Samers, 2010:80). King (2012) tried to reach and establish significant areas of the migration research in Geography and related fields. By accepting the fact that Ravenstein’s basic laws of theories are still playing a significant role in contemporary migration research in Geography, I want to discuss other relevant theories on migration to obtain a broader overview of the “drivers” of migration. Here, “drivers” refer to the factors that direct people to migrate, involuntarily or voluntarily, for a short term or long term, that perpetuate the movement of the people.

In the historical-structuralist model, migration has been referred as “flight from misery” (Hass, 2010: 227- 264) due to the global capitalist growth, but in the other way Papademetriou (1985: 211-212) argued on behalf of sending areas as “the evolution into an uncontrolled depletion of their already meager supplies of skilled manpower – and the most healthy, dynamic, and productive members of their populations.” Therefore, pessimistic views actually fit into the ‘cumulative causation theory’ (Myrdal 1957), where the capitalist development is rightly noticeable through

spatial wellbeing of inequalities. Optimistic or neo classical views of migration look for optimum benefit of migration-sending and receiving areas. Transformation of labour force from rural agrarian to urban industrial sectors is considered as a precondition of economic growth and also an entire development processes (Todaro, 1969: 139). Massey (1990: 3-26), while explaining 'cumulative causation' has pointed out that the reasons of social and economic effects on population movement make added migration likely.

Majority of migration studies and empirical works have been subjugated by positive economic approaches, which are mostly associated with quantitative survey methods. Recent studies witnessed that there has been a growing interest in different components related to migration phenomenon, which are tinted and investigated under qualitative methods and researchers are considering individuals' preferences of conciseness towards migration processes as well as to choose the destination (Hass, 2010: 227-264). New researches are based on the lived experiences or bodily experiences, along with these they lay emphasis on migration decision making (family and individuals) and identity formation through various socio-economic changes. According to Guilomoto and Sandron (2001: 135-164), migrant networks affect themselves because of institutionalisation but also get affected by external factors, such as labour market changes in the contemporary time scale.

Further advancement in micro modeling approach, 'the new economics of migration' gives more emphasis on family decisions, which act as agents. There is a widespread debate on the factors which cause population to move, from those that put an emphasis on individual sagacity, family behaviour and various structural logic of the process of capitalist development (Haan, and Rogaly. 2002: 48). In this contemporary approach structural processes and family decision can maximise the household utility function by reducing risk factors that are associated with traditional subsistence agrarian sector. (Stark and Bloom 1985: 173-178; Banerjee 1983: 239-257; Tailor,2006). If I consider different theories in one circumference, I can relate these with Welfare Pentagon (Neubourg, and Weigand 2000: 401-412), which represents the special five institutions that individuals or households may use to satisfy or increase their present as well as future economic status. These perform as important motivational pull factors in the migration processes. Even though geographical and historical appearances differ, these core five areas are found to be beyond time and space.

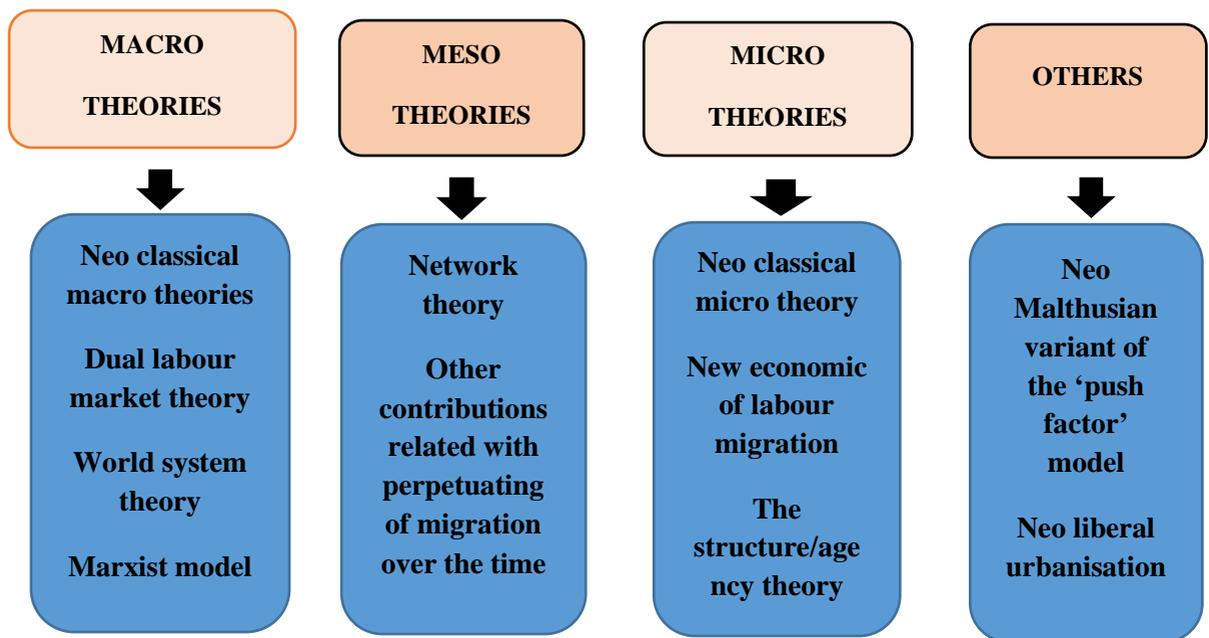
In this way, with the help of various institutions, migrants create a specific network in the destination region with minimum risk factor. These can also minimise migration cost and hence it encourages more other migration flows to the destination place. (Bhattacharjee, 1998 and Mitra,2003), While discussing migration, we should consider or refer to at least two regions because it always tries to elucidate either the cause of an individual, family or mass movement. Recently the disequilibrium perspectives of migration theories have been challenged by the equilibrium perspective theories which identified that the spatial differences in wages are compensating and not reflecting the opportunities for utility gain. The human capital approach is the neoclassical micro level theory proposed by Sjaastad (1962: 80-93), in this theory, migration has been treated as an individual acuity for the increase of productivity of human capital. It also focuses on the labour market and explains the selectivity of heterogeneous migrants. Fischer, Martin, and Straubhaar (1997) also proposed advanced version of this approach, where different cost (travel cost, psychological cost etc.) risks and asymmetric information assumptions are very low. Wolpert's stress-threshold model (1965: 159-169) tries to describe behavioral model of internal migration where he discusses the ex-ante and ex-post factors for the selection of the destinations. Crawford, (1973: 53-65), Jong and Fawcett (1981), also deal with especially non-economic factors and social control. Among other social system theories of migration, the dual labour market theory by Hoffmann-Nowotny's (1981) approach is very popular. There have been different reasons and processes behind migration in different spatial places. In this framework, migration can be referred to as one of the many options in the livelihood portfolio decisions of households. Along with this entire premise, the aspiration and ability to migrate are also very important aspects (Carling, 2002:5-42). So, while discussing the conceptual perceptions behind the reasons as well as processes of migration, we are not able to generalise any one of them. "Individual" and "collective" are always controlling the movement of population.

1.3.2 Genesis of labour migration

Contemporary research on labour migration has undergone a significant and exciting transformation since last few decades. Theories proved that migration literature has prolonged the important variables - which have been dominated and affected by spatial demand and supply of the labour. In other ways, it also played various roles of social entities and established a relationship among in-conditioning migration behavior. This perception has recognised a link between the desire/need of migration as a labour market phenomenon and an important part of the processes of economic

betterment and development. It has also identified the key behavioral parameters – most of them are even important ingredients of present ongoing debates on the connection of migration related with public policies domain. The large majority of global mobility occurs domestically within countries, with an estimated 763 million internal migrants worldwide, including persons displaced internally according to UNDESA, *Cross-national comparisons of internal migration: An update on global patterns and trends*, 2013. The definition of internal migration refers to the movement of population across a political or administrative boundary, which involves an alteration of usual residence (Bilsborrow, 1998). The concept of labour migration refers to changes in the location of labourers/workers in terms of physical, geographical and also occupational mobility (EFILWC, 2005). The theoretical impression of labour migration is mostly scrutinised under the light of economic perceptions. Labour migration actually moves together with capital mobility and the economic efficiency; it also gets affected when the free movement of production is not hindered. Apart from economic perspective, labour migration also embraces the human factors, which create a complex theoretical background to frame the broader migration debate. I am trying to assemble different significant theories to identify ‘drivers’ of labour migration in terms of broader and regional perspectives. We know that migration is a “survival instinct that drives humans to seek better prospects” (Sundari, 2005: 2295). The prime purpose of migration, recorded by NSSO and Census, is a significant indicator of how migration processes are influenced by the state of labour market of the nation. Scholars have identified different perspectives of labour migration. Structural changes, demographic changes act as driving forces as well as the lure of the cities, by providing job in the lower end labour market, acts as new dimensions of neoliberal economy. Migration may start for various reasons. Although the obvious truth remains that the economic and other opportunities normally play a key role in migration decisions, which individually cannot explain the root causes, or patterned and regionally gathered morphology of migration. Structural forces – the natural and inescapable catastrophe that interrupts the expected course of events – in the political economy such as colonialism, conquest, occupation, labour recruitment, communal culture and geographical proximity frequently play a vital role in the labour migration processes. (Castles, S. and Miller, M.J. 2009; Massey, D. S.; Hugo, G.; Kouaouci, A.; Arango, J. Pellegrino, A. and Taylor, J. E.1998).

Fig. no. 1.2 **Theoretical Framework for Approaching the Labour Migration**



Source: own elaboration

The structure of the economy has been characterised by either capital intensive or labour intensive nature. Specifically, in the lower bottom of the jobs layer – low wage or informal jobs need migrant labourers. Piore explains this fact with various possible interpretations. The dual labour market consists of two sectors – primary and secondary, where primary sector is dominated by native people with better working environment, high wages etc. and the secondary sector is subjugated by migrant people. He reveals that the lower zone of the job hierarchy always needs to be filled by the migrant labourers and as a general labour storage. ‘The dual economy model’ claims maximising labour movement from less paid traditional/rural sector to better paid modern/urban sectors. Dual economy in microeconomic ground explains a beneficial relationship through growth processes within the population distribution in terms of growth- poverty nexus. Traditional dual economy (Lewis, 1954: 139-191) analysed a long term transformation and development of two specific economic sectors – agricultural and industrial. He also predicts that capital supply increases over time, the marginal product of labour will also increase, until and unless the state of equilibrium is introduced in the traditional and modern wage market. This thought has been criticised by the neoclassical school, because wage is not determined or controlled as “equilibrium value in general equilibrium model”. (Lombardo. V. 2012: 3). On contrary, this model has become suitable to encompass the structural transformation of the societies with an

enormous number of the marginalised poor. Lewis's perceptions have been reframed after Harris and Todaro's ideas (1970: 126-142). Based on HT (Harris & Todaro) model, several assumptions have been proposed in research especially on agent heterogeneities and market imperfections.

Sjaastad (1962: 80-93) also pointed out that the migration decision acts as a human capital investment problem, where the migrant tries to assess the benefits and costs of migrating. Hence, individual participants decide to move for achieving expected positive net return through cost-benefit calculation. Sjaastad nicely denoted differences between the wage related factors and differentiated certain elements in some non-wage related factors. The newly formed Lewis model proposed urban informal sector as a source of seemingly "reserve army labour" of Marxian insights. Rauch (1993: 901-918) analysed that in the HT model the urban informal sector overlaps with other two sectors (viz. urban formal and rural economy). However, three dominating wage classes have emerged – the rural, the urban formal, and urban informal - which create a perfect competitive structure in the capitalist market. Thus under the light of dualistic model of migration, decision is based on relative migration benefits and attraction power of wages. Banerjee and Newman (1998: 274-298) studied that the insinuation of community effects, high productivity gap between traditional and modern sector and the relationship between development and income distribution also generate the possibilities of migration.

Marxist studies of migration are very relevant in order to discuss and identify fundamental platforms and processes of labour migration. Amin (1974), Meillassoux (1975), Amselle (1976), and Rey (1976) analyse and explain migration focusing on the social structure and large extent of motivational reasons and individual perceptions of potential migrants. Amin analysed the methodological individualist approach of migration (Binsbergen and Geschiere, 2011: 1-336). Marxist model viewed the contemporary liberal society as a blend of different economic sectors, various modes of productions, or a modern sector vs. traditional sector. We know that capitalism creates a specific mode of production, along with a border line between producers and means of production. It also generates different types of market economy in the society.

Meillassoux stated his ideas on migration were based on domestic community with their economic practices. He said that capitalist sector always depends on traditional or domestic sectors for labour reproduction. In this modern economic structure, migration is the important way to secure the required supply of labour force in capitalist economy. Amselle too portrayed migration as an

expansion of capitalism. According to him migration is a process, which gradually leads to separate migrants from rural means of production. He accused that capitalism is the only underlying factor for migration and other factors – land security, conflict etc. are secondary to capitalism.

Rosa Luxemburg (1967), also holds their ideas on labour migration based on the consequences of capitalism. They viewed that mobilisation of labour is always for the benefit and the expansion of the capitalist sector. Historical development of capitalism is therefore viewed by the Marxist as the foremost explanation of migration; they disagree as to the precise ways in which migration reflects and furthers this growth. Marxist view explains that the capitalism is the process which transfers the traditional economy to modern one and creates different possible social, political reasons for migration. More over, Welfare Pentagon framework (de Neubourg, 2002) hypothesize that individuals that are unemployed and underemployed in the source area' local labour market, may migrate.

1.4 Informalisation and Migration

The classic Lewis-type migration that assumes a smooth transfer of labour from agriculture to industry has not been found in developing countries, including India. Most of the migrants to urban centres instead got employed in the urban informal sector. The expanding informal sector has drawn a great deal of attention in past decades. It is increasingly recognised that informal sector, far from being a residual or transitory sector is, in the fact, the core of the economy in terms of its contribution to output and employment. Given the slow expansion of employment in formal or organised sector, in general and organised manufacturing, in particular, the informal sector attracting migrants from smaller towns and rural areas, alike. Effects of globalisation and growth of a particular kind, the informal sector has not been replaced by the formal sector, rather new changes in production organisation has given new lease of life to several informal sector enterprises. Most of those working in the urban, non-agricultural, informal sector are migrants. Some sector, like construction, hotel stuffs are heavily dependent on informal labourers drawn from distance places.

The inter-linkages between the three aspects of the economy – the agrarian context, the linkage between uneven development, poverty and migration and finally the informal economy – are crucial for understanding contemporary issues in migration. There are several sector and region-specific issues within migration. The context of specific nature of migration (plains areas to high

altitude areas), its diverse underlying causes and outcomes undoubtedly required more nuanced and desegregated methods of analysis. In the upcoming chapters, we try to find out the reasons and the socio-economic condition of migrant labourers in Sikkim's informal sector.

1.5 Political Economy Approaches on Migration

According to Swing (2015), there are 750 million internal migrants worldwide. It is stated that one out of every seven people and one of every four persons of the working class is a migrant (ILO, 2015a). Labour migration related approaches are schematic, evocative, and divided by various disciplines – limiting the root cause of migration and also its dialectical relationship with development. Marxist political economy tried to provide a conceptual as well as methodological framework to understand the fact in historical and structural perspectives. Neoliberal and liberal institutionalism arguments give emphasis among domestic/international interest on social, economic and political actors (Milner.V. Helen. 1997: 33-66), since this perception incorporates economic and political analysis – also named as international political economy [IPE] (Hollifield, F, James. 2006). One of the important arguments derived from neoliberal theory is that states are often keen to take risk by open economic trade and by extension of migration if they have some hegemonic power to control these human flows and to solve free rider glitches (Mosley, and Singer. 2015: 283-301). Whereas, I observed – there is no particular regime to control migration for political economic reason, especially post-cold war era. Though, it is a global perception but domestic approach is nothing but the microcosmic views of global context. This contemporary critical thinking constitutes an alternative reality to understand neoliberal capitalism and the role of migration to transform the labour market from formality to informality. Structural changes and demographic changes as well as the lure of the cities played an important role by providing jobs in the lower end of the labour market thereby acting as a new dimension of neoliberal economy. Structural changes are unavoidable catastrophe and expected course of events of political economy –capitalism conquest, labour recruitment, economic practices, communal culture, and geographical proximity often plays vital roles for in the migration of labourers (Castles and Miller.2009; Massey eds.al. 1998; Skeldon. 1997). Marxist political economy considers the phenomenon of migration at its highest level of concept. At the core of the Marxist political economy, capitalism has a dynamic power and performs an inevitable role of expansion through accumulation. It addresses the relation to the dynamic of capital on the basis of original accumulation and surplus population. Actual accumulation is linked with the transformation of feudalism to capitalism in

sixteenth century. This situation separates the producers from the means of production; the demand of the situation was to sell individual's labour to the newly born capitalist sectors as a means of production (Marx, 1975). Harvey (2007: 22-44), states that in contemporary capitalism or in neoliberal restructuring approach, the employment characterised as liberal/flexible labour force and the accretion of power has been limited to few elite capitalists – termed 'accumulation by dispossession'.

1970s and '80s were the time when scholars intended to focus on labour migrations from poor countries to richer countries (Latin America to US, France, Germany to northern Europe etc.) in respect to "political – economic inequality, and the 'development of underdevelopment' through international capitalism." (S. Michael. 2010: 67).

1.6 Statement of the Problem

Migration is a basic instinct practiced since Paleolithic time and is also one of the essential features of the 21st century. It is stated as a probable and valuable outcome of economic transformation. Structural transformation increases spatial movement in response to the uneven demand and supply of labour. Under the processes of globalisation, the volume, geographical scope and other complexities of migration have been largely affected. Development practices followed by the state in colonial as well as independent India have concurrently resulted in displacements, landlessness, unemployment and impoverishments of people. The changing pattern of land use and ownership, erosion of resources in rural areas, increased dependence of rural household on agricultural wage labour, privatisation of common property resources, shrinking spaces for landless livelihoods and its differential impacts on people's lives and livelihoods have become focal in the migration process (Chakraborty and Kuri, 2017: 94-104). It has been expected as a result of increased economic growth. Macro approaches project relatively low migration rate in India in recent past but neo-economic reform tries to change the migration pattern and creates economic opportunities and aspirations for many. Desire for livelihood/economic improvement has induced many to migrate. Now people move beyond the social, cultural and physical barriers. That is why the labourers from plains migrate towards hills in search of better livelihood options (Mishra, 2015: 1).

The conventional literatures on migration depict migration process as a beneficial outcome of economic transformation (*ibid*: 2). Normally migration has been denoted as a tool to reduce 'inter-sectoral gaps in living standards' but the "question is whether, and to what extent, migration has

been able to play this role in Indian context” (Srivastava, 2012: 2). To understand contemporary trends and patterns in migration, it has become essential to focus on various perceptions which help to find out the real picture of migration and related socio-economic transformations on a macro canvas. The relationship between livelihood choice and migration has various dimensions. Kaur points to the broader canvas of understanding migratory decisions beyond pull and push factors to include various socio-cultural, political and economic dimensions adding importance to the question of mobility and agency. Yet, the decision to migrate may emerge from larger household livelihood assessments and not just as an individual decision (Arya and Roy, 2006: 38). There is a close association between migration and job generation in internal migration system of India. Major three areas have been discussed articulately in different contexts crossing disciplinary boundaries. The agrarian questions of labour, uneven development, poverty reduction and migration, informalisation and migration are the major areas that historically had strong root and also becoming an important domain to understand contemporary migration in India.

Since the collapse of Soviet Union and emergence of globalism and fragmented capitalism (Pine, 2014: S95-S104), migration has become a strategic policy to promote development-migration nexus and occupational opportunities under the shade of the liberal economy. On economic front, better employment opportunities in any urban sector attract workers/labourers from any area of the country. But in reality very few of the migrants are able to manage secure jobs, others get absorbed in the urban informal sector. “Under the new mode of profit maximization, labour was massively redundant and more than willing to become footloose, but the problem was lack of access to regular jobs elsewhere and in other branches of activity” (Breman, 2013: 2). India too is experiencing seasonal/temporary movement of people in response to limited options for livelihood, lack of employment, wage differential policies with expansion of technological revolution, improved communication networks and overall demand of casual labour in informal sector. There is a strong interdependence between wage labour migration and mass opportunities in informal sector of the globalised South (Breman, 2013: 70).

There have been various attempts to define informal sector in a meaningful way, but the difficulty arises due to its heterogenic nature. National Commission on Labour (Report of India’s National Commission on Labour, 2002) pointed out the major works to identify or define informal sector. National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) is engaged to estimate the size and proximity of informal sector in India. In their 55th round during July 1999 to June 2000, they clearly

distinguished the difference between informal sector and unorganised sector in the Indian context. According to it informal sector is the subset of unorganised sector. Informal sector is that part of unorganised sector which is more vulnerable and depressed sector and involved in petty low skilled productions (Sarvekshana, 2005). NSSO have used two stages of processes to estimate the informal sector in India. In the first stage, the 55th round covered the enterprise survey and in the second stage, the 56th and 57th rounds covered manufacturing and service sector excluding trade and finance (Sarvekshana, 2000, 2001, 2005).

Urban informality has not only become a part of informal sector and poor societies but has become a continuum 'way of life' (Neema, 2009: 1614-1628). The area of concern is that the discourse of informality underscores the imbrications between 'everyday life' and 'way of life' for the unfortunate people being deported from the other sectors of the economy (Breman, 2013). In Global South (*i.e.* India), the hike in informal workforce has been considerably towards urban destinations [NSSO 61th (2004-05), 66th (2009-10) 68th (2011-12) and PLFS (2017-18)] for reasonable identities in interstices of rapid metamorphosis of urban geographical regions (in this study, Singtam and Rangpo towns in East district of Sikkim). Furthermore, rapidly growing influx of informal labour force impacts the rate of urbanisation but with no corresponding course of industrialisation. Instead, migrant labourers find a niche in the informal service sectors as waged, casual workers (Breman, 2013: 45) in Sikkim's informal economy. There is no doubt that the concept processes of informality create nebulous range of activities in the lower zone of economy, which offer tiring and precarious livelihood, especially for migrant labourer. The lower zone of work pyramid always has large radius accumulating various types of occupations. In Rangpo and Singtam, there are at least four individual domains (of tailor, porter, hotel workers and construction workers) of works which are dominated by the migrant labourers from the neighbouring plains areas. This dissertation seeks to examine the inter-related causes behind migration from convenient plain areas to ecologically fragile mountain areas, especially toward small expanding towns like Rangpo and Singtam. This research also tries to find out the impact of migration in terms of migrant's livelihood option, security option and the adjustment process to be a part of Sikkim.

1.7 Literature Review

There is a vast body of literature on the impact of international relocation, while internal migration has not been studied in considerable note. The majority of literature on internal migration on the

determinants of the move (Kamble (1983), Parida and Madheswaran, (2010), Awad (2009), Acharya, (2010), Jessica-Hagen-Zanker, (2010), Shah, (2012), Sing and Shandilya, (2012), Dwivedi, (2012) Burgess (2013) etc.). Most works analysed the conditions or impacts on the family left behind (Schüttler, Goutam, Narain). Migration is a product not of separate or unconnected factors in context of host as well as the source areas rather historical connections between these two. Chattopadhyaya (1987), stated different historical connections with special reference to Bengal and other states in India during second half of the 19th century to 1931. The concept of internal migration at present connotes much dimension that varies from daily commuting to nearby places on one hand, to short term and permanent shift of residence to distant place on the other. Internal migration is defined as the population movement across a political or administrative boundary, which entails a change of usual residence (Bilsborrow, 1998). The concept of internal migration especially from rural to urban - attracted the attention of both policy makers and academicians only after the seminal work of Lewis (1954). The agricultural unemployment, low agricultural wage, poverty and the transformation of agricultural land are the major responsible factors to motivate (Inderjit Gill, 1984, P. Duraisamy and S. Narsimhan, 1997, Indrani Gupta and Arup Mitra, 2002) whereas, higher wage, better infrastructure etc. act as an important attraction to do migrate (Harris and Todaro, 1970, Barro and Sala-i-Martin, 1991, Gupta, 1993, Pekkala and Tervo, 2002, Joshi and Lobo, 2003). Lewis (1954), Rains & Fei (1961) and Harris & Todaro all contributed to the evolution of classic macro migration model which explain migration as result of geographical differences in the supply and demand of labour.

J. J. Thomas (2014), Majumder (2013) tried to unfold various demographic challenges and employment growth in India to discuss the changing trends toward non-agricultural labour force in India and how these changes led to migration process in rural India. the focus here is on the internal labour migrants at the new destination. There are other literatures which relate migration and human development. Priya Deshingkar and Matteo Sandi, 2012, Mallick, 2011, Ram Bhagat, 2016, Kaustav Bannerjee and Partha Saha, 2010, Darshini Mahadevia 2008, 2009, 2010, Hein de Hass, 2010 etc.) among others have tried to highlight interface between different theoretical juxtapose on migration and development related issues. From the various analysis it has been already clear that migration occurs for a variety of reasons for different groups of people and migrants are involved in different kinds of migration streams over diverse periods. Migration is also characterised by different economic and social diversity spanning socioeconomic variables (J.

Connell, J., B. Dasgupta, R. Laishley and M. Lipton, 1976, Nandini Sunder, 2001). Priya Deshingkar and Daniel Start (2012), Deepak K. Mishra (2016), Haberfeld, Y., R.K. Menaria, B.B Sahoo and R.N. Vyas (1999), Sudhir Katiyar (2005), worked on seasonal, short term and circular migration for livelihoods, rate of accumulation and also their exclusion indifferent parts of India. According to Adrienko and Guriev (2003), Jose (2013), people move from poorer and job scarce areas with less wage facilities to areas that are richer and more prospering and having maximum employment prospect areas.

The geographic dispersal of economic activities that marks urban migration in India today is a key factor feeding the growth and importance of central corporate functions. As cities increasingly take on a more corporate character, highly specialised service firms engaged in activities ranging from waste – processing, hotel business, public relations and related other small sectors, such services always call for migrant labour – Sikkim is not exceptional. Smith (2002), Joya Chatterjee (2005), Harvey (1989, 2003, 2005), Mahadi (2002), Messina, Anthony and Lahav (ed.)-(2009), The World Bank (2010), Mallick (2010), Brenner and Theodore (2011), Tripathi (2014), etc. worked on the relationship between migration and neoliberal urban structure.

Migration, especially internal migration, contributes significantly to the growth of Indian cities. Amitava Kundu (2003, 2007, 2009, 2011a, 2011b) clearly mentioned in his different literatures about the relationship between migration and urbanisation processes., Jean Luc Racine (ed.) (1997), National Institute of Urban Affairs (1983, 1998), Ranabir Samaddar (2018) are the other scholars who pointed out urban employment characteristics and possibilities of new hidden processes in the emergence of neoliberal cities. Joop de Wit (2017) and David Harvey (2013,2017) tried to focus on the different practices of space-making and permitted by State Programmes and Policies of urbanisation. Ranabir Samddar (2018), has highlighted the condition of migrant labourers in neoliberal city structure in different metro Politian cities of India. conceptualisation of urbanisation in India and its impact on knowledge-based development have also been discussed in his work. S. Irudaya Rajan and Prabhat Mallik (2010), Jayati Ghosh (2010), S. Irudaya Rajan and U.S. Mishra (2010), analyse the state response on gender empowerment and cross-border migration which are essential to identify the trends and gender participation rate in labour force.

Ravi Srivastava (1987, 1998, 1999, 2003, 2005, 2005a, 2005b, 2009a, 2009b, 2010, 2011a, 2011b), Ram B. Bhagat (2009, 20211), Mabogunje (1970) intensively worked on the migration and labour

market in India, which provides a comprehensive and accessible view of internal labour migration and also different governmental and non-governmental efforts to protect migrant workers through a right-based approach. Their works offer new insights on the factors that motivate people to seek work outside their area of origin and on the significant development effects on both origin and destination areas. Exposing the often limited access of migration workers to their fundamental rights at their work, the scarcity of the possible decent work condition in the destination areas. Other works also deal with existing and potential governance structure, addressing linkage between labour migration and development, social protection creative practices and policies for better inclusion of migrant workers by Amrita Sharma, Rajiv Khandelwal and Divya Varma, 2012.

Migration is expected to increase as a result of economic growth. The relatively low migration rate in India always been discussed in the migration literature and was expected to be replaced by the new dynamics of urbanization and migration relations, especially after neo-liberal economic reforms (Massey, 1998, S. Mukherjee, 2013, J. Peck, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2008, S. Springer, 2015, Mrtinez and Garcia. 2000). In the mainstream literature on migration always try to portrays migration as an inevitable and mostly beneficial outcome of economic transformation. In the literature on structural transformation it has been stated that increasing spatial mobility of people in response to the regional unevenness in demands for labour and supply for the same is seen as a key feature for economic changes (S. Sassen, 2002, R. Srivastava, 2012) and informal sector constitutes a pivotal part of the Indian economy. More than 92 percent of Indian workforce is accounted by informal economy. In an effort to understand the trends, pattern and ingestion field of migrant labourers, it is clearly found in the Lewis's work. He specified that most of the migrants labour to urban centers got employment in the urban informal sector. some sectors, like construction, restaurant, porter etc. are heavily dependent on informal labour drawn from distant places (K. Mehagher, 1998, A. Mitra, 2002, D. Mishra. 2016). H. Bernstein (2006) argues that in developing world like India, capitalist development is not dependent on accumulation from agriculture to a significant level and this has several implications for the way rural households survive outside the agrigarian economy.

Migration to informal sector frequently involves social networks of diverse kinds and the idea that migration often leads to more migration is not new. Other migration literatures have also highlighted the migration-facilitating role of migrant networks. Once a critical number of migrants have settled at the destination, migration becomes self-perpetuating because it creates the social

structures to sustain the process (Castles and Miller 2009; Massey 1990; Massey et al. 1998, Keshri and Bhagat 2012). Mosse et al., 2002, A. Banerjee and S. Raju, 2009, P. Kuri and D. Chakroborty, 2013 mentioned the role of caste, gender, age-structure, religion in differentiating the outcome of migration. J. Breman (2007, 2013) elaborately analyse each and every segments of labourers who are in the lower strata of the workforce. He also mentioned about their compulsion to become a part of neo-bondage system. Author has narrated precarious nature of informal workers with special reference to Gujrat, India. The resistance and insecurity among informal labour group, their neo-bondage system of commitment reflects the unreformed condition of the no-skilled or semi-skilled labourers.

There are different literatures on adaptation of people in different physical, socio-cultural environment. Different social encounters enrich the migrants about various similarities and dissimilarities of their mother culture and with the new culture (J. W. Berry, 1992, 1997, 2001, 2006). M. Mansell (1981), E. W. Taylor (1994), K. N. Tonsing (2010) are referred migration and adaptation as a microcosm of global discourse, which is related and controlled by geo-political context of the host areas. Ward and Rana (1999), Hutcheon (2006), Asikin, Waulandari and Rukmi, (2017) viewed adaptation as a bimodal process of life practices and as a product of humans.

S. Roy Chowdhury (2003), R. Agarwala (2006), S. George and Shalini Sinha (2018) discuss about labour unionism and transformation of labour space in formal and informal sector in post-liberalised India. K. Rajesh and Smita S. Nair (2018) argue about the workers' rights, inclusion of informal labourers, demand for policy reforms and social security in the post-reform period. T. Subba (1989), M. Choudhury (2006) Debnath (2009) have tried to enlighten the economic history and economic transformation of Sikkim as a state of India. Therefore, in all these context, an attempt has been made to examine the socio-economic and adaptation strategy of migrant informal labourers in Sikkim's industrial towns – Rangpo and Singtam.

1.8 Objective of the Study

Migration is plausibly both a symbol and also an endorsement of the most common alternative strategies in post-socialist world. It helps to understand the dynamics of society and social changes. Migratory movement is basically a product of economic, geo-political, socio-cultural, and/or physical circumstances in which individuals or groups find themselves (Bhende and Kanitkar, 2000:346). This process is an age old process as humanity itself. Some movement takes place in

the face of abject poverty and an inclination to urban informal labour market, some for seasonal/temporary and some for long term or complete change of birth place/last residence (Grill, 2011: 79-102). Migration affects all domains of life – which makes the study of migration most relevant and also more complex. This dissertation looks at the micro spectrum of the global practice to understand the cause and effects of migration on migrant people. It also has the aims to find out specific reasons behind the migration of the plains people to the remote state of Sikkim in the Eastern Himalayas and its consequences on the everyday life of migrants in the host area. The primary objective of this study is to assess the reasons for the movement of plainsmen, especially low-skilled informal labourers to hills, which is quite visible. The objectives of this study are outlined as follows:

1. To identify the source areas of the migrant labourers from the plains working in the informal sector in Sikkim and reasons behind their migration.
2. Work environment of the migrant labourers from the plains in Sikkim.
3. Socio-economic background and present status of migrant labourers.
4. Mechanisms and strategies adopted by the migrant labourers from the plains to adjust physically, culturally, and socially in Sikkim.

1.9 Research Questions

Who moves? Where to and from? How many? Why? And with what consequences for the areas of origin and destination? These are the questions that have sustained a huge literature in the social science on migration (Clark: 1982: 1-56, Lewis: 1982:220 and Cadwallader, 1986: 24-47). In fact, these are the fundamental questions for the study of migration.

The objectives of this study have been addressed with the help of the following questions:

1. Why do the labourers from plains migrate to Sikkim's informal sector?
2. What is the socio-economic status of the migrant labourers?
3. What are the work conditions and policy implementations for migrant informal labourers?
4. What are the patterns and trends of their social, economic and cultural adjustment?

In academia, research on host area is dwarfed in migration study. Empirical extensive research for identifying reasons of migration and also the impact on migrant's life (host area) has been dynamic

in nature. This type of research has become popular in recent past decades (Zanker, 2010:4). This research tries to provide the explanations for all objectives and gives a comprehensive depiction not only of the migration-development nexus and work environment but also migrant's strategies of adaptation in the place of work.

1.10 Methodology

Cartography based descriptive work on the spatial structure of migration opens up the possibilities to interpretation of different patterns by statistical analyses of co-varying factors and to the behavioral investigation, the geographer's preference lying with the collection of small-area data as well as survey work. This methodology is also popular in the contemporary world. The present work tries to explore and explain the past, present as well as the future participation of plains migrants in Sikkim. Idiographic thinking seeks to understand specific events but in my study I need to incorporate the nomothetic explanation too. Windelband also opines, the same object can be investigated with both idiographic methods and nomothetic methods. (Johansson, 2004). Due to this, the qualitative as well as quantitative approach merged together to find out the volume of migration and motivation of the same.

It has been difficult job to find out the real factors behind the aspiring migrants which may be voluntary, forced or quasi-forced. This research took one and half years to collect primary data from the selected study area namely, Rangpo and Singtam towns in East Sikkim. Each town accounts for maximum informal labour for various migration options and also with different migration streams. It is to be noted, "In any society, knowledge and understanding of migration patterns is largely determined by the quality and detail of the data available and, only after that, by the precision of the analytical approach and the insight of the theoretical concepts employed" (Woods, 1979), area-specific accuracy can be achieved. Keeping this in mind, the first part consists of those methods and techniques, which are concerned with the collection of data, both secondary and primary.

1.10.1 Secondary Sources

Indian migration data is collected from two main sources, the quinquennial migration surveys carried out by the National Sample Survey Office and decennial population census. In this research Indian Census 1981, 1991, 2001 and 2011 have been used to determine the decadal changes in the

field of international and internal migration status. Different rounds (especially 55th and 64th round) of NNSO reports also helped to identify the patterns, streams of migration in India. Different government reports like UNDP, NCEUS, MGNREGA etc. are also used to know the quantitative migration structure of the country as well as the state Sikkim. Government websites, gazetteers, articles, published, unpublished research reports have enriched this research work. These sources have helped to construct a simple way to understand migration options and conceptualise migration process with the help of different thoughts and theories on migration.

1.10.2 Primary Sources

In structured procedure of survey method, data have been collected through self-administrated questionnaires and one-to-one interview. As this research is a micro level study and desired updated data are not available, direct field enumeration of migrant labourers from the plains has been the most applicable procedure. This enumeration process started in the year 2016 and continued till 2018. I have structured set of questions based on my research objectives and research questions and collected first hand data from the study area directly. I have used purposive sampling method with stratified sample technique.

1.10.3 Sample Targets

This research aims to get empirical knowledge on the contemporary trends on migration. The pilot survey reveals the fact that migration flow in Sikkim labour market has been enriched by the plains people. It has also been observed that there are four important livelihood practices, namely, tailoring, portering, hotel/restaurant work and construction work - all dominated by the plainsmen migrant labourers. For my survey I have used stratified random sampling method. This stratification is based on the dominant informal occupations held by plains labourers. According to 2011 Indian Census Sikkim is experiencing 43.43% migrants [Total population in Sikkim in 2011 is 6,10,577 and number of migrants is 2,65,158 persons]. The two variables on the basis of which the total sample is to be stratified are the place of origin of the migrants (plain area) and mode of occupation (informal sector). There are one hundred and seventy-five (175) individual samples collected from each town (total sample size is 350). My sampling trait is based on native areas (neighbouring plain regions) of the migrant labourers, and nature of occupation (informal sector). There are common livelihood practices (tailor, porter, hotel/restaurant worker and construction worker) in data sets for both the towns because I have tried to fix the limit and focus only on those economic practices which have been occupied by the plains migrant labourers. It is difficult to fix the sample size from each occupation group. There are no micro level secondary

data sources to establish the magnitude of informal labourers in these occupations. I have randomly selected the number of respondents from stratified group.

1.10.4 Data Collection

In this research, for collecting the primary data interview with schedule for focused group has been the conducted. Interviews help us to know respondent's personal experiences and perspectives (Lindlof and Taylor, 2002) which may not be discussed in a group. Focus groups help to provide different social interaction (Mason, 2002) and through the interaction process it has become easy to recognise whether there is any consensus or disagreement on research topic (Creswell, 2007:1-27).

1.10.5 Data Analysis

In this research I have used thematic analysis because the topic is entirely based on primary data set and thematic analysis (Braun and Clark, 2006) helps the data to speak pragmatism paradigm. Thematic analysis can "provide a rich and detailed, yet complex account of data" (*ibid*: 5). This study shows different perspectives related with labour migration, internal migration, relationship with the transforming economic condition and informality – which are mostly data-driven and supported by various theoretical and conceptual paradigm.

After collecting the data through schedule, I transformed that into initial coding. Actually the code is "the most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon" (Boyatzis, 1998: 3). I have entered all coded data in MSExcel' 16. Different statistical processes have been used to understand the real facts in the field. I have used linear regression analysis to show the correlation between income and remittance of the respondents. The wage distribution of the migrant labourers has been shown through co-efficient of variance, especially for pre and post migration income structure. Mean average, standard deviation ranges have portrayed the changes in income structure of the respondents. Different hypothesis testing (X^2 , t test) is also implemented to accept or reject my hypothesis. Central tendency and deviation calculation have helped me to know the distribution nature and dispersion nature of my data. I used Seven-Point-Likert-type scale (1= not at all, 4=fairly, and 7=completely) to compute central tendency and deviation to identify various adaptive level to know the adaptive competence among the migrants (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 77-101). Different cartographic representations (bar graph, pie diagram, line graph etc.) have been used in this research work. This thesis is the product of all analytical processes created to make the research

interesting and also bring the data 'alive'. I have combined facts with enough detail to create reliable and transferable research report.

1.10.6 Software Used

Software is the integrated part of data representation in contemporary social research fields. In my research I have used IBM SPSS 16, MS Excel 16 software for data analysis. For Drainage Extraction Arc hydro tool 2.0 is used to draw the drainage lines. To prepare digital elevation model and contour, I have used Arc GIS software. The source of drainage and contour map is ASTGTM2_N27E088. This tool is installed in Arc GIS desktop. For spatial analysis tool box a tool called contour has been used to create contour map.

In this dissertation I have used the terms informal/unorganised worker interchangeably. Informal employment is also referred as unorganised sector employment in India. These concepts are in accordance with the descriptions currently followed by NCEUS (National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector) in India. The length of stay of migrant labourers has been classified into three categories – temporary/seasonal/circular (within six months/seasonally available/circulatory movement), short duration (six to twelve months) and long term (more than five years) on the basis of NSSO observation.

1.11 Limitations

- Sample is a proportion of total population. But in this research it was not possible to select sample size through the mathematical formula $n/1+n(e)^2$, where n is the total number of particular observation. Absence of micro level (town) migration data source (secondary) is the main barrier to construct the perfect sampling frame.
- In this study, sampling elements (person) are vulnerable and precarious in nature. To accrue proper data set continuous field survey has been conducted which seized maximum time duration of the research work.
- The precarious nature of the majority of the respondents has impact on the sample number of individual livelihood practices.
- Unavailability of published data sets on informal labour in Sikkim creates huge problems in identifying the macro view of the selected research questions.
- Discrimination among the self-employed informal groups has generated maximum ranges in the data set.
- Micro level migration tables in Indian Census (2011) data are not available yet.

1.12 Conclusion

Geographers are concerned to understand neoliberalism that permeates occurrences of poverty (migrants) and inequality (rich/poor dichotomy), which are experienced across multiple sites of vast swathes of Sikkim's migrant-friendly catchment areas. It could be an honest attempt to understand the reason of migration of labour in different physical and multiethnic location and also identify the processes to maintain solidarity among different ethnic people within the microcosm of the political economy at global level (Brenner and Theodore 2002: 349-379; Peck, 2001: 445-455). It has been argued that there are possibilities to integrate various perceptions of migration theories to establish the actual causes of labour migration (Massey et al., 1993, 1998), but at times it becomes more problematic to combine different theoretical perspectives to establish one fact. Different parameters determine the legitimacy of each perception. For instance, we can take the example of NELM and neo Marxist theories – they are utterly opposed to each other in their analyses. The micro theories consider an individual's perception of decision making, whereas macro concepts take into account the relation between the evaluation of societal states and global labour markets, but these structural macro factors give effect to the decision making processes on the micro/individual level. If this study has considered the coalitional between neoliberal and IPE approach to find the reasons behind raising trend of migration, then it actually need to analyse these factors – historical, ideational, cultural and structural causes. So, while discussing different migration theories, the core shares are not isolated from one another, rather are always affecting one another in terms of social capital, 'developed' and 'developing' dispersion and also cumulative causation. Migration is a dynamic practice and the motivations, decisions and reasons for 'why do people migrate' - considered as a multivariate analysis. All these approaches helped me to identify the perceptions behind the influx of plains labourers in the state Sikkim.

Anderson (1975), Polanyi (2001) and Harvey (2005) rightly stated how economic transition, structural changes and unavoidable catastrophe often playing an important role behind the demand and supply of labour. Interestingly, Sikkim buttressed its position from 'absolutism' to 'constitutional democracy' with the subsequent political transition from feudalism to progressive industrial capitalism. It carries the link with paradigm shift from the feudal economy of restricting the property rights to the ever increasing use of money and labour intensive project, thereby embedding pluralistic social relations in the entire economic system in order to accommodate pluralism into total economic dynamics. Sikkim in that sense acts as a pendulum swinging between needed and needy - if not cultural objections towards migrants. Sikkim shows a precedence of

integrating migrants into the local low-road labour market.

The foregone conclusion is that, there is a serial migration making inroad in the lap of Sikkim, not because of enjoying benefits in Rangpo and Singtam, but because of uncertainties, and grinding poverty that pushed desperate people to desperate measures. It is time to recognise that migration is good for the economy (macro level), contrary to the minimum benefit of migrant labour (micro level). History, recent experience and common sense suggest that the countries who favour a sensible approach to migration will fare better than those who try to close the door on the world. In connection to the reformed labour policy taking migrants as a part of it, Sikkimese should assert/accept the vibrancy of a migrant labour in parity.

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CHAPTER TWO

GEOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNT AND PEOPLE OF STUDY AREA

2.1 Introduction

“To explore labour migration issues through critical and clear way, it is essential to give emphasis on spatial location of the place, because geographical location of any place determines the social and economic processes.”

(Harvey, 1990:418-434).

The relation between space and time is essentially controlled by its spatial location on earth. There has been an emerged awareness of global and local facts that, people are perhaps more chronically mobile and routinely displaced. They explore livelihoods by managing new permanent or semi-permanent homelands. People move out due to desire or through economic necessity. Scholars have written about these movements for a long time and also from diverse perspectives (Moore, 1989:26-48; Malikki, 1992:22-44; Peck, 2003:222-232). All these theoretical shifts have arranged themselves towards an analytical visibility in recent researches. Thus, geographers have old questions, but also something very new. The metaphorical concepts of having roots involves an intimate linkage among people – core and peripheral areas. In recent decades’ geographical concepts have been used critically to comprehend migration. Migration is likely to be a core area of social, political, economic and environmental disputes in recent era. To understand these core controlling factors, we should have a clear knowledge of the concerned area’s physical, demographic and socio-cultural reality.

2.2 Sikkim

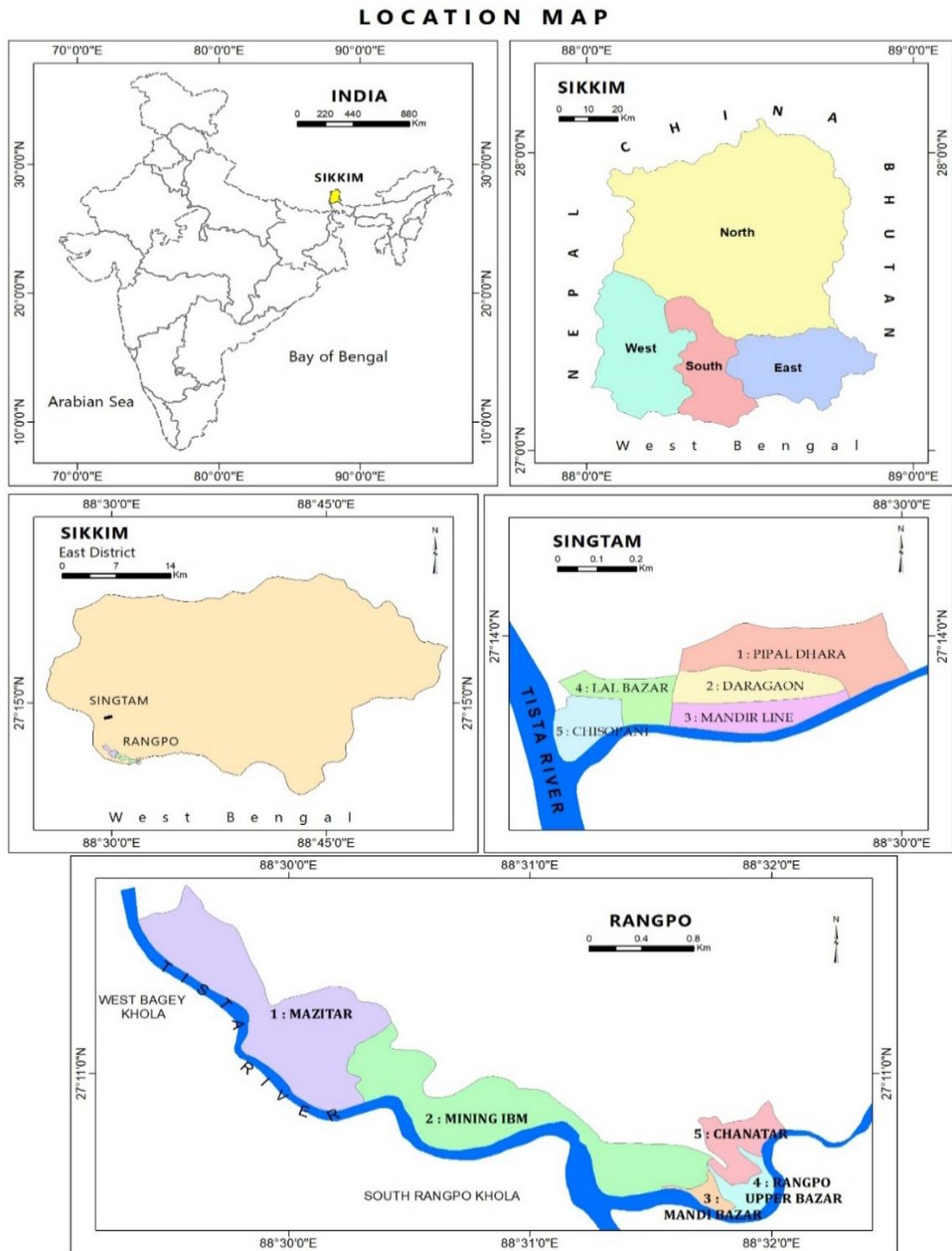
Crowned with Himalayas, sprinkled with snow covered mountains, glaciers and streams, Sikkim is the 22nd state of Indian Union and also a well-known Centre for Himalayan trade and politics since late nineteenth century. Carrying a unique political background, diverse ethnic groups, rich bio-diversity and natural resources, Sikkim has put tremendous efforts to retain stride in the contemporary time and achieved substantially. The name ‘Sikkim’ has been derived from the word

'Sukhim'- the place of happiness and peace (Kakodkar.1955: 7). In ancient time Sikkim was known as 'Mayel-Lyang', which means a hidden paradise to the Lepchas. The Tibetan name of Sikkim is "Donjong" and "Demoshong" meaning the country of valley of rice, but the present name of 'Sikkim' is of Limboo ('Su' and 'Khim') or Tsong (Nepali) origin, meaning 'a new house or place'. Other views are also present. Waddell stated that 'Sikkim' is from Sanskrit origin, which means 'Crested'. The small state sits in the Eastern Himalayas. This land locked state has been bounded in the north by enormous stretches of Tibetan Plateau, Chumbi valley of Tibet and Bhutan in the east, the Kingdom of Nepal in the west and the Darjeeling district of West Bengal in the south. Sikkim has four districts, namely East district, West district, North district and South district. The boundary between Sikkim and West Bengal has been marked by the river Rangit, Rammam, Rungpo-Chu and Rishikhola except in the Southeastern corner.

2.3 Location

The state extends from 27°05' North to 28°10' North latitude and 88°04' East to 88°30' East longitude. My study area is in East district under Gangtok subdivision. East district of Sikkim state is located between 27°18'27" North to 27°24'11" North latitudes and 88°34'66" East to 88°39'25" East longitudes. Gangtok sub-division is the main centre of East district as well as the capital of the state. The area is connected by NH-31A (presently NH-10) with West Bengal. This sub-division is bounded by North district in the north, South district in the west, in east by Bhutan and China and in south by West Bengal.

Fig no. 2.1

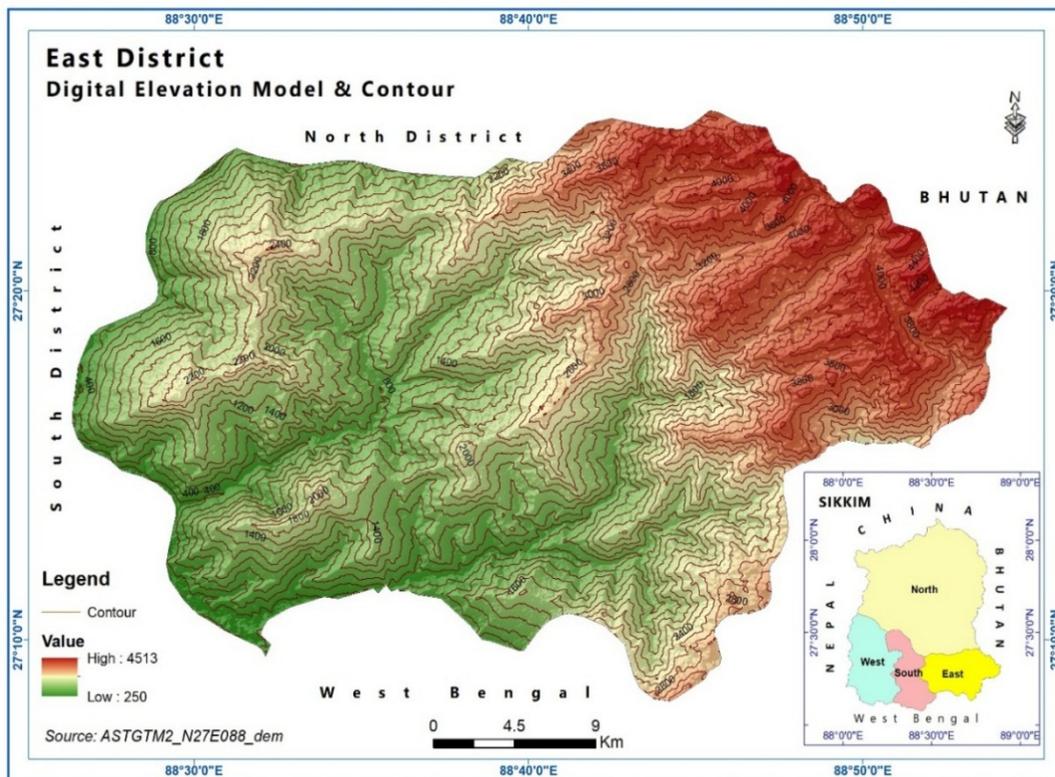


Source: Nagar Panchayat office of Singtam and Rangpo. (Software used: Arc GIS desktop).

2.4 Physiography

The physiographic divisions are not well marked in this State, because it is an essentially mountainous state with almost no flat landmass. The state is a part of inner mountain ranges of the Himalayas, elevation ranging from 300 m. to 8,540 m., but habitable areas stretch only up to the altitude of 2,100 m. This state's physiography varies from north to south due to variation of elevation only. In the northern part of the state the Great Himalayan Range and to the eastern and western parts the Chola and Singalila Ranges are situated respectively, which gradually spill towards the lower altitudes in the south and foothills. The most significant first order zones are glacial zones and high mountain areas.

Fig no. 2.2



Source: ASTGTM2_N27E088_dem. (ArcGIS)

The glaciers are restricted to the North and North-West. The northern part of this state is deeply cut into steep escarpments. The general trend of the slope is from east to west. There is another north to south ridge running through the central portion of Sikkim which separates the Rangit basin from Teesta valley. The entire area is a closed basin between two parallel and deeply

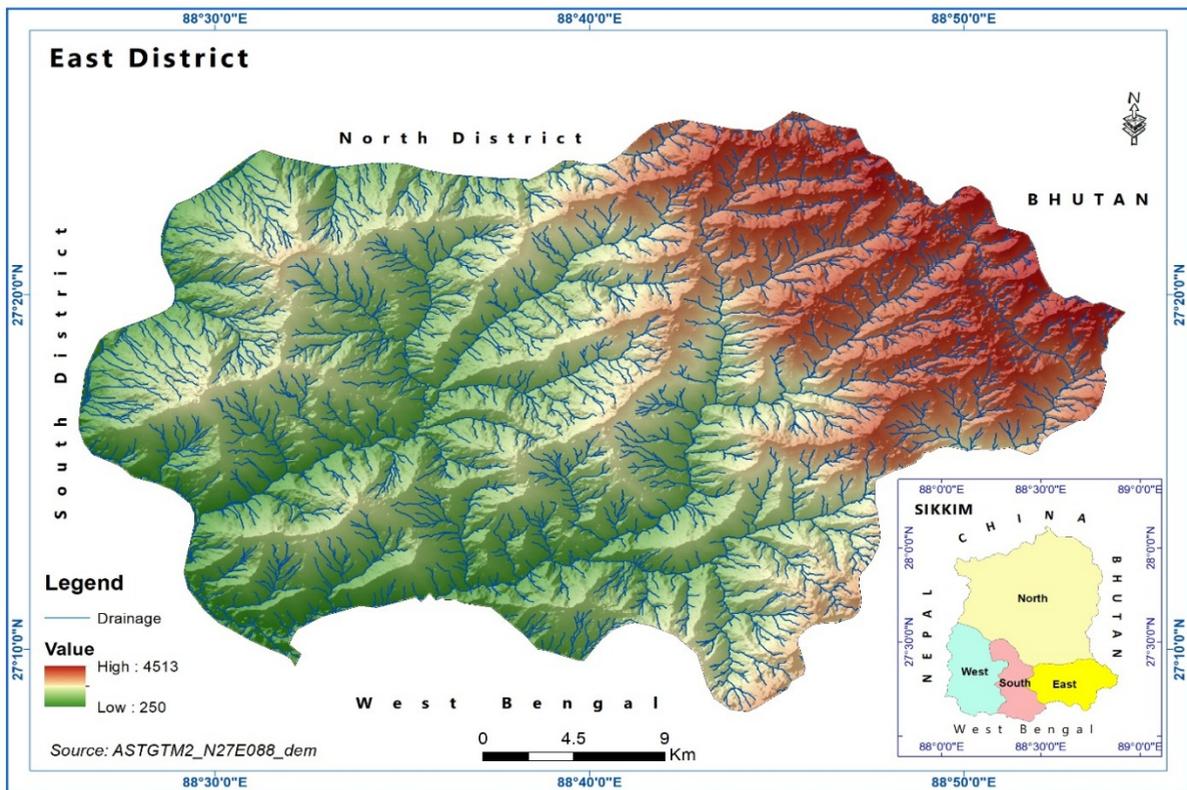
intersected transverse ridges. Presence of great Himalayan passes helped limited trade with Tibet till the Sino-Indian border conflict of 1962. The dominant physiographic features of the East district are the Donkya peak (6,870 m.) in the east and Jela peak (4,350 m.) in the west. Other distinct features of East District are 4,335 m. high Nathula pass and 4,800 m. high Tongkarla peak. The relative relief of entire Sikkim is roughly 1,200 m.

History has witnessed that people have a tendency to migrate from high elevation area to low elevation area to overcome their livelihood hurdles. Afterwards, economic transformation has opened up various reasons to migrate – even also towards unfavorable physical setting (high elevation areas) to carry forward their livelihood patterns, as is evident in Sikkim. The elevations of Rangpo town (333 m.) and Singtam (426 m.) town are comparatively low among the others in East district which helped the establishment of different industries. Low elevation has accelerated the transformation process of these towns.

2.5 Drainage

The drainage system of any area depends upon its physical elevation and the change in physiography in turn depends upon the flow and intensity of the rivers of the place. The topography of the state is of horse-shoe shape as it is surrounded by mountains from three sides. The largest river is the Teesta, a broad mountainous river with numerous shallows and rapids, flowing together with eastern and western tributaries. Rangeet and other rivers that originate from the glaciers drain all the intermountain plateaus and parts of eastern Himalayan mountain systems. The Teesta originates from the Zemu glacier, located in north Sikkim and have tributaries named Rechu, Rorachu, Talungchu and Rungpochu etc. The Rangeet rises from the Rathong glacier in western Sikkim. The river valleys are narrow in the north and widen towards south due to the horse shoe topography.

Fig no. 2.3



Source: ASTGTM2_N27E088_dem (ArcGIS).

2.6 Climate

Natural climate comprising wind, rain, humidity and temperature appears to have played a prominent role in the formation of various civilizations, the occupation, livelihood or the transformation of society over times, and the social and political metamorphosis of indigenous societies. Economic life of Sikkim is mainly influenced by the area's geographical features, especially by its terrain and climate. The climate of the study area is essentially noteworthy because of its location. The state experiences the powerful effect of southwestern monsoon against the Himalayan barrier and configuration of the ridges and valleys. Gangtok sub-division experiences sub-tropical to temperate climate. Annual rainfall is 3,894 mm. Summer Maximum temperature on an is average 28°C / Minimum 13.1°C and winter Maximum temperature is average 18°C / Minimum 5.3°C (Sikkim Statistical Journal 2013). In my research, the climate is considered a major factor behind the adaptation (physical) strategy of the respondents and performance of work in Rangpo and Singtam town.

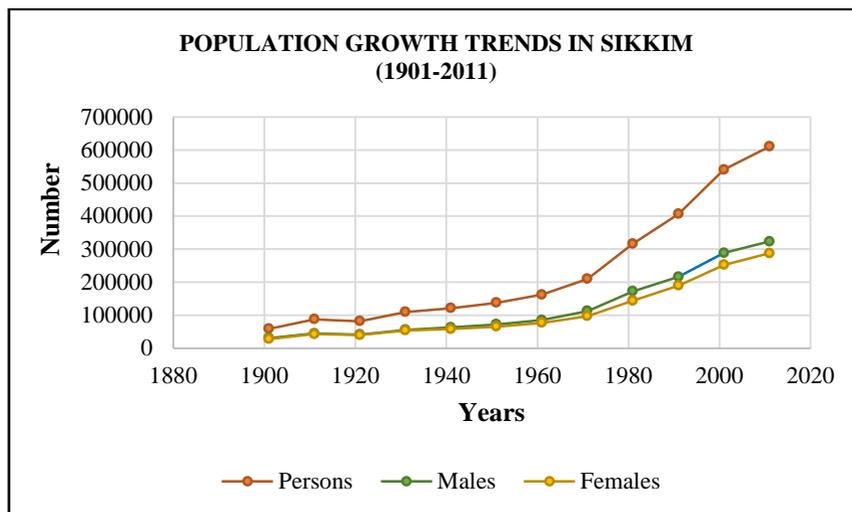
2.7 Demography

Demographic study is considered specially on the changing composition of population structure but human beings have many noticeable and measurable characteristics which can differentiate one individual from other, and that is why demography study is being considered highly pertinent for population studies of a place. Distribution and density of population are unified and important aspects in population geographic studies. These aspects are significant for strategic and socio-economic planning and policy making of the state at micro level.

2.7.1 Distribution and Growth

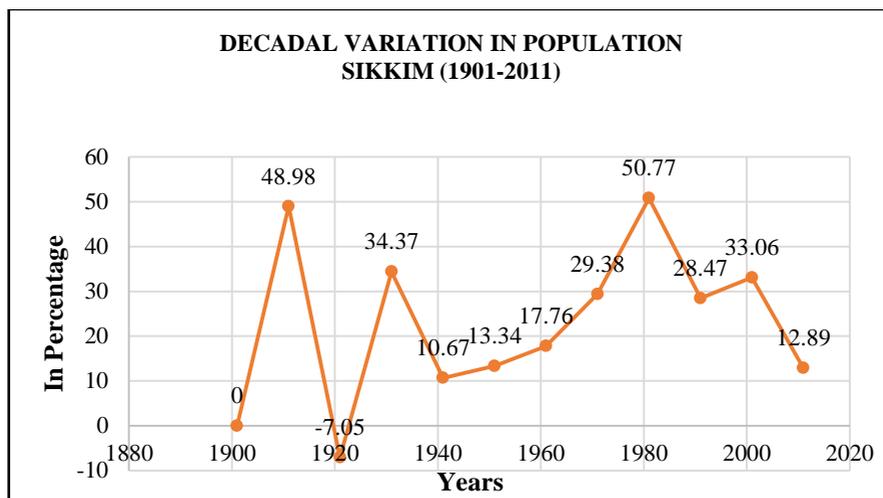
Sikkim is sparsely populated state. The state has 610,577 inhabitants (2011 Census) within the area of 7096 ²km. As Sikkim is a mountainous region, the distribution of population is highly uneven. The population distribution of the state exhibits an obvious relationship between human concentration and relief factor. Therefore, the population distribution is mainly based on various altitudinal zones. The commencement of Census operation took place in Sikkim in 1891, which was guided and conducted by the census authority of West Bengal. In 1971, Sikkim Government made an effort to publish separate census report, as “The District Census Handbook 1971 Census.” Sikkim has experienced remarkable population growth between 1901 census to 2011 census (+1034.63%). The study of population growth is a fundamental demographic process and acts as a vital index of the state’s economic development, political ideology, social transformation and historical background (Chandna,1986). The growth of population in this state is actually representing the cumulative effects of demographic transition and in-migration from the neighbouring states and countries.

Fig no. 2.4



Source: Census of India, 2011, District Census Handbook, Sikkim.

Fig no. 2.5

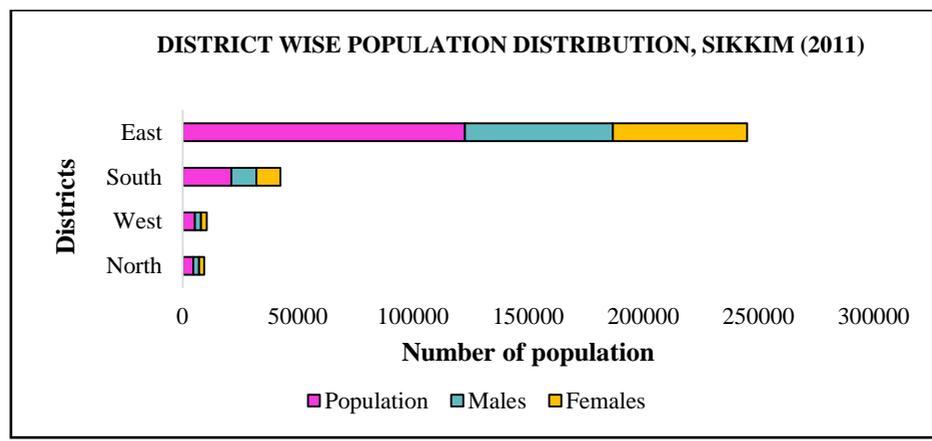


Source: State at a glance: Sikkim. Vol 1(4), 2015.

The state experienced maximum growth of population in 1971-81(50.77%), just after 1975, when Sikkim became 22nd state of India. The low population growth rate (28.47%) is observed in the preceding decade, which was due to the decrease in natural growth rate and declining trend of in-migration due to slow economic development in the state. In-migration is an important factor which has tremendous impact on population growth in Sikkim. According to the 2011 Census of India, the total population of Sikkim is 610,577 persons of which North district has 43,709 persons, 146,850

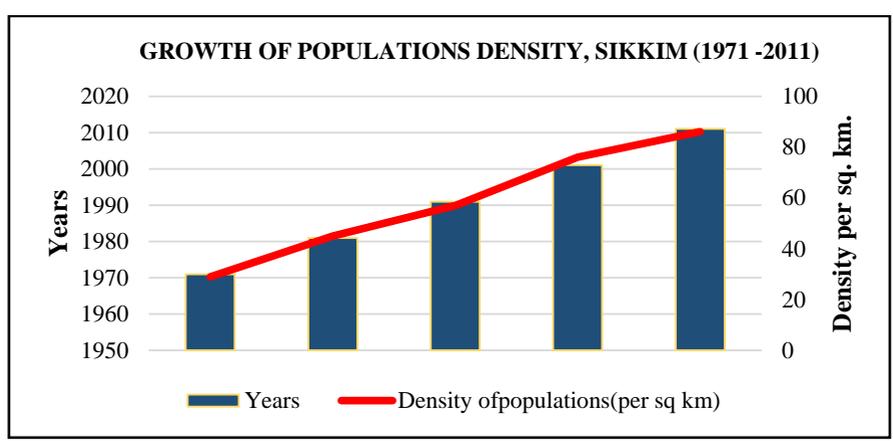
belong to the South district, West district is having 136,435 and East district has the highest populations with 283,583.

Fig no. 2.6



Source: Census of India. 2011

Fig no. 2.7



Source: i) Census of India: 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001 and 2011, ii) Sikkim Statistical Profile (1979-80 & 1991-92).

The density of population in the state is 86 persons/sq. km (2011 Census). There is steady growth in density of population in Sikkim. In 1971, Sikkim was having only 29 persons/sq. km, 45 persons/sq. km in 1981, 57 persons/sq. km and 76 persons/sq. km in 1991 and 2001 respectively.

2.7.2 Rural-Urban Composition

2011 Census of India reveals that 74.85% of the state population lives in rural areas and only 25.15% people in urban areas. District wise rural urban composition of the state is very much significant. In the North district 89.38 per cent lives in rural areas, and the lone town Mangan (NP)¹ accounts for 10.62 per cent urban population. In West district 96.10 per cent population lives in rural areas and 3.85 per cent lives in Gyalsing (NP) and Nayabazar (NBA)² towns. South district has little more urban population in Namchi (M.C1)³ and Jorethang (NP) with 14.4 per cent. East district is having maximum number of people living in urban areas: 43.19 per cent population lives in Gangtok (M.C)⁴, Singtam (NP), Rangpo (NP) and Rhenock (CT)⁵ while 56.8 lives in rural areas. Higher concentration of urban population in East district is due to the fact that all major urban centers including Census town are located in this district. There has been a remarkable disparity between rural population growth and urban population growth. Rural population growth has been - 4.99 per cent and that of urban has been 156.52 % in 2011 census. Urban male decadal change by last residence is 145.4% (2011 Census). Present sex ratio in Sikkim is not at all satisfactory at 890 females per 1000 males. The population growth in urban areas is accredited to the huge rate of in-migration, mostly after merger. However, in 1981-91, the growth of urban population showed a negative (-27.65%) growth (Census of India, 1991: XII), because of the exclusion of considerable portion of some areas, which were treated as urban areas previously.

¹ NP: Nagar Panchayat

² NBA: Notified Bazaar Area

³ MC1: Municipal Council

⁴ MC: Municipal Corporation

⁵ Census Town (CT): CTs are complete settlement units that are classified as urban areas by the Registrar General of India (RGI), as part of the census operations, if they cross the threshold on three specific urban characteristics, viz, size (population of at least 5,000), density (at least 400 persons per square kilometer) and non-farm nature of workforce (at least 75% of male workforce in non-farm sector). However, settlements declared as CTs continue to be administered as rural areas.

Table no. 2.1

District- Wise Rural Urban Population, Sikkim (1971-2011)

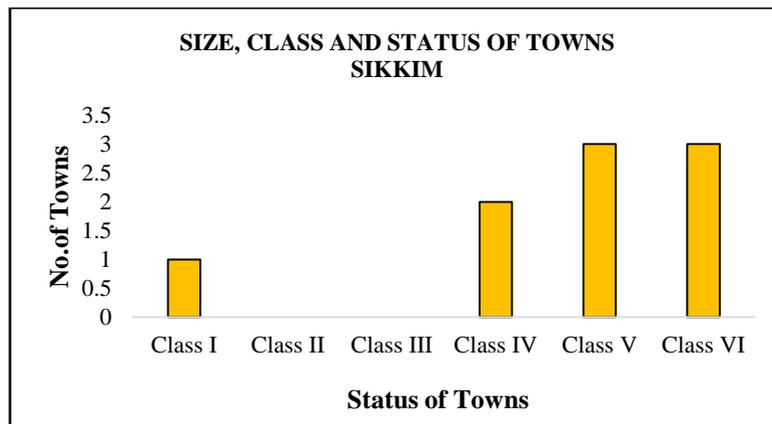
Year	North			West			South			East		
	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
1971	13014	12683	331	58023	56927	1096	53185	51963	1222	85621	68602	17019
1981	26455	25675	780	75192	73495	1697	75976	70611	5365	138762	95520	43242
1991	31240	30437	803	98161	96399	9762	98604	96035	2569	178452	146580	31872
2001	41030	39782	1248	123256	121432	1824	131525	127579	3946	245040	192188	52852
2011	43709	39065	4644	136435	131187	5248	146850	125651	21199	283583	161096	122487

Source: State at a Glance: Sikkim. Vol. 1(4), 2015.ENVIS Centre on Himalayan Ecology.

2.7.3 Class, Size and Status of Towns

The number of Census Town, Nagar Panchayat Town, Municipal Corporation, Municipal Councils and Notified Bazar Area in the state has been changing due to the addition of new Census Towns, conversion of Municipal Councils to Corporation and other changes in the status of various administrative areas. To peruse different comprehensive analysis, towns have been categorised into six classes by the number of populations. According to 2011 Census of India, Sikkim is having total nine towns, and only one class I town (100,000 and above population), namely, Gangtok (MC). Namchi Municipal Council and Rangpo Nagar Panchayat fall under class IV town (10,000 to 19,999 population), Singtam Nagar Panchayat, Jorethang Nagar Panchayat and Rhenock Census Towns fall in class V (5,000 to 9,999 population). Gyalsing Nagar Panchayat, Mangan Nagar Panchayat and Nayabazar Notified Bazar area fall under class VI (Less than 5,000 population).

Fig no. 2.8



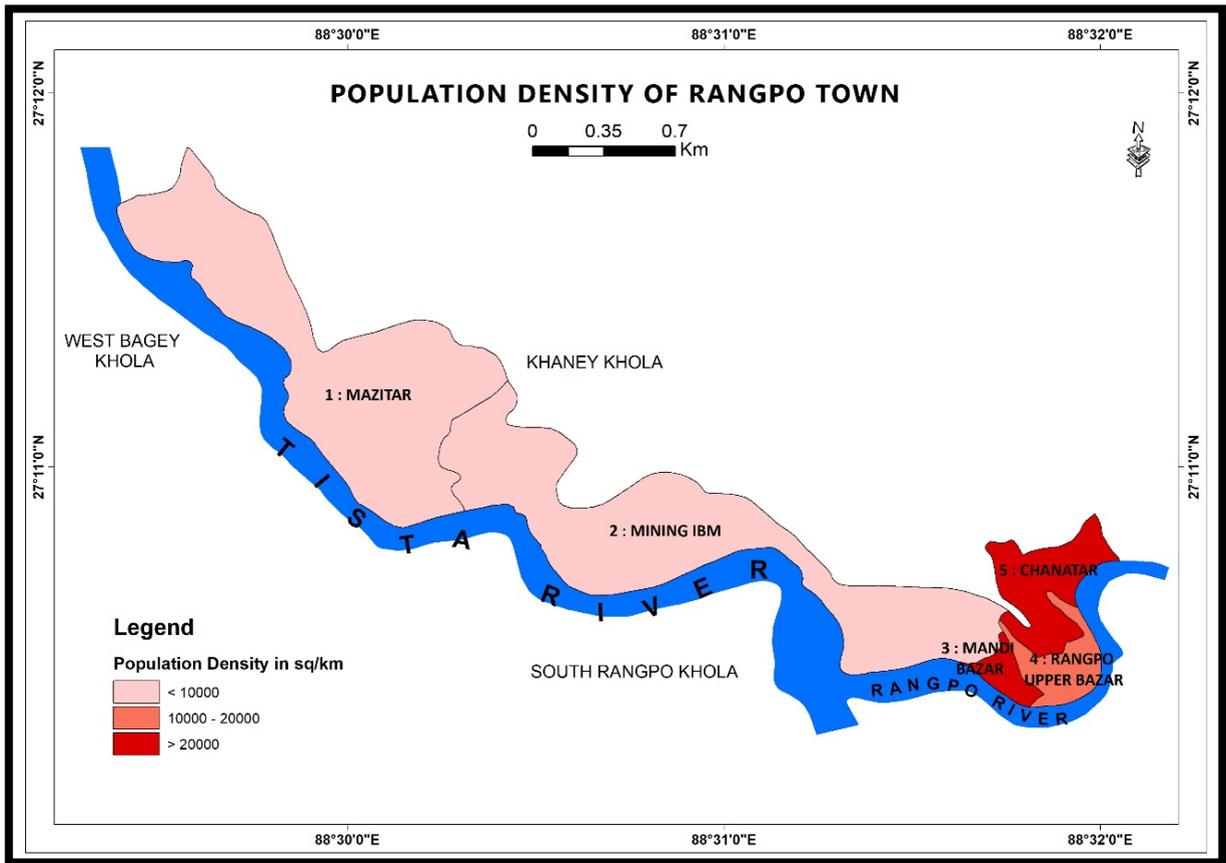
Source: District Census Handbook, Sikkim, 2011.XII-B, series-12,pp.xii.

2.8 Rangpo in its Demographic Frame

Rangpo (class IV, 2011 Census)⁶ is a small Nagar Panchayat town, located in the East district of Sikkim. According to 1981 Census Rangpo was a class VI town. It is 40 km away from Gangtok city (capital) and roughly situated within 27°17'61'' North and 88°29'East to 88°32' East having total population of 10,450 (2011 Census).

⁶ Class IV Town: The urban areas, comprising total number of population between 10,000 to 19,999 are denoted as class IV town. Census of India.2011, Sikkim.Series-12. Part XII-B. District Census Handbook.

Fig no. 2.9



Source: Rangpo Nagar Panchayat Office (2017).

Table no.2.2 **Population Density of Rangpo Town (2011)**

Wards	Population	Area (sq.km)	Density of population (per sq.km)
1.Mazitar	3172	0.800793	3961.07
2.Mining IBM	3084	0.810601	3804.58
3.Mandi Bazar	1020	0.028638	35617.01
4.Rangpo Upper bazar	1563	0.078278	19967.29
5. Chanatar	1611	0.075304	21393.28

Source: Nagar Panchayat Office (2017).

Rangpo is having five wards within its territory. Elevation of this town is 1,093 feet above the mean sea level. Teesta river and Rangpo river bound this town in the south, south-west and east respectively. The area of this town is 1.79 sq.km. having density of 5,838 persons/sq.km. Ward no. 3 (Mandi Bazar) is having highest density with 35,617.01 persons/sq.km. and ward no. 2 (Mining IBM) is least populous ward with density of 3,804.58 person/sq. km. The town has 2,505 households with 10,450 persons (2011 Census). Population has increased in the town by 181.75% in last decade (2001-2011).

Fig no. 2.10

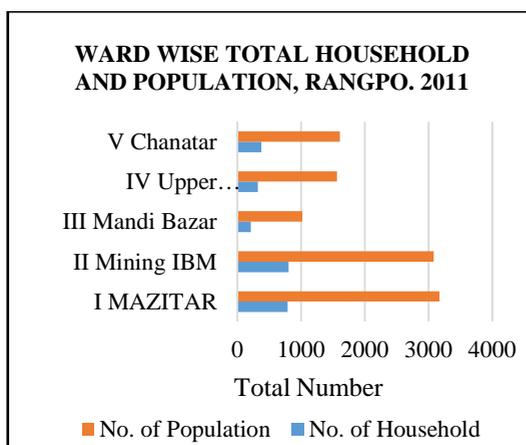
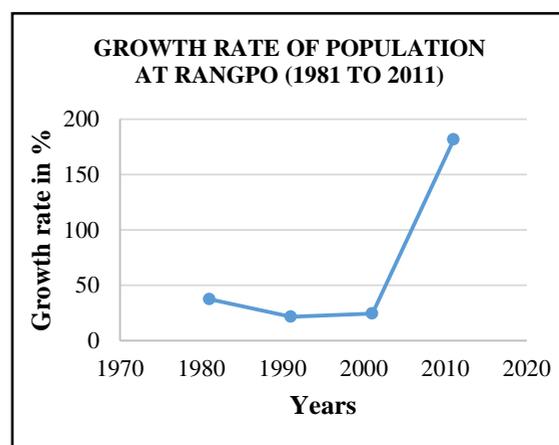


Fig no.2.11



Source: District Census Handbook. 2011. Sikkim. Series-12. Part XII-B and Statement-I.

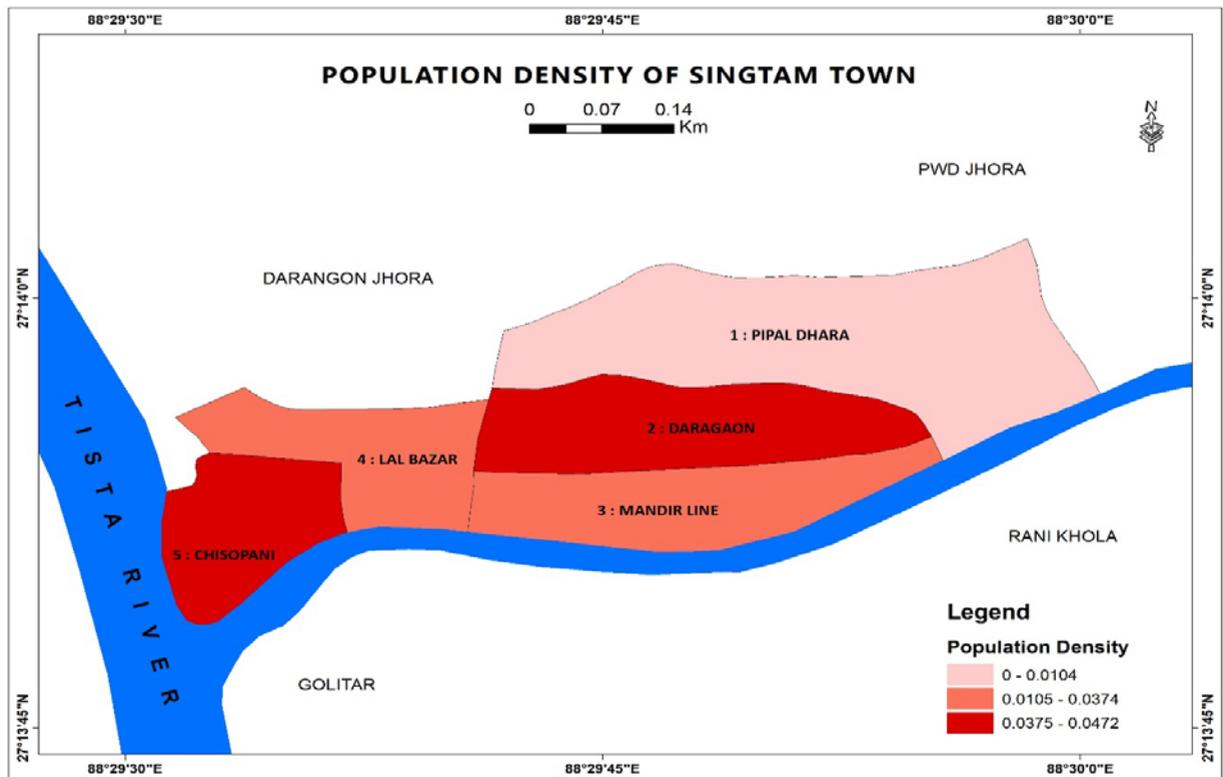
Growth of population signifies the growth of town in terms of its status and development. In 1981, total population of Rangpo was only 2,452 persons, which rose to 2,980 and 3,709 in 1991 and 2001 respectively. Fig no. 2.11 illustrates the numerical strength of population in Rangpo, ward-wise. Ward no. 1 Mazitar accounts for 30%, due to concentration of pharmaceutical industries and distilleries in this ward. Ward no 1 is also having second highest number of trade license holders, which proves commercial potentialities of this place. Second largest accumulation (29.51%) has been observed in ward no. 2 (Mining IBM). After becoming Nagar Panchayat town, Rangpo has experienced high pace of population growth. This growth is indicative of global expansion of capitalism in the town. It also reflects the development rate under the neoclassical perspective. Structural transformation of rural notified area into urban modern sector (Lewis 1954: 139-92) reflects the neoliberal developmental processes that encourage migration to fulfill the gap of potential labour market and increase in production (Nurkse, 1953). Data based (Census of India, 2011) economic activities show that the concentration of other worker is 97.23% in Rangpo town.

This ‘other workers’ include those who are working in some economic activities during last one year, but other than cultivators or agricultural labourers or household industry. In Rangpo, this accretion of ‘other worker’ testifies economic transformation of the town. Figure number 2.12 explains the decadal growth rate of Rangpo town – showing the maximum growth rate in last decade (181.7%, Census of India, 2011. Statement- I).

2.9 Singtam in its Demographic Frame

Singtam is also a small Nagar Panchayat town (class V, total population 5,868), located at 27°15' North and 88°38' East with an area of 0.18 km². Singtam has five wards within its small territory. Rani Khola and river Teesta bound this town in the south and west respectively. Elevation of this area is 1,396 feet above the mean sea level. Decadal growth rate of population is 8.14% (Census of India, 2011). It is the smallest town in terms of area in the Gangtok sub-division. The density of this town is 32,600 person/sq. km. Ward no. 2 (Daragaon) and ward no. 5 (Chisopani) are most populous wards and ward no. 1 (Pipal Dhara) is the least populous ward.

Fig no. 2.12



Source: Nagar Panchayat Office, Singtam (2017).

Despite the diffusion of new economic ventures from small-medium industry including different tertiary jobs, Singtam was well known for the establishment of Distillation and liquors in 1955. Further, there has been a significant growth of job prospects and welfare amenities in urban areas, especially after the transformation of Singtam as Nagar Panchayat town in 2010. In the past (1981 Census) too this town experienced exceptionally high (109.92%) population growth when total population rose from 4,043 to 5,868 in 2011. However, the town recorded a significant drop in 1991 Census, due to anemic trade growth. After that India as a whole gets entry into neoliberal economics that puts the urban centers on the acceleration mode and Sikkim is not beyond that. Fig no. 2.14 shows the numerical strength of total number of household and population, based on 2011 Census. The maximum concentration of population has been identified in ward no. 5 (Chisopani) followed by ward no. 2 (Daragaon). On the other part, ward no. 1 (Pipal Dara) is sparsely populated.

Table no. 2.3 **Population Density of Singtam Town (2011)**

Wards	Population	Area in sq.km.	Population density/sq. km.
1. Pipal Dhara	688	0.062118101	11075.68
2. Daragaon	1398	0.030813967	45369.04
3. Mandir line	1246	0.034662809	35946.31
4. Lal Bazar	904	0.023153147	39044.37
5. Chisopani	1632	0.033578855	48602.01

Source: Nagar Panchayat Office Singtam. 2016-17.

Fig no. 2.13

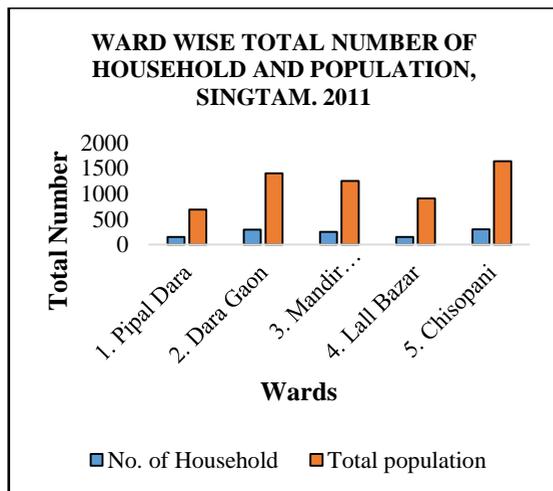
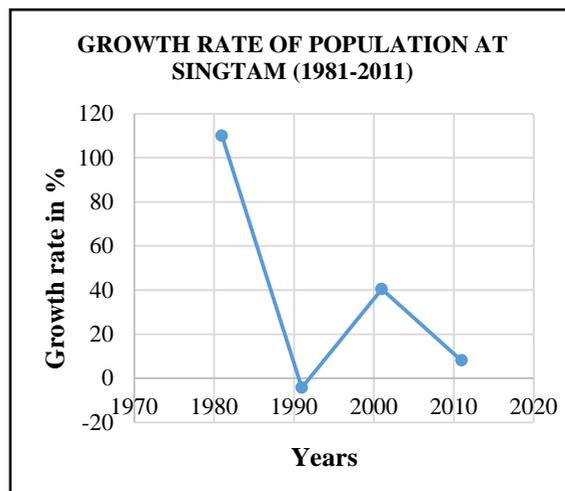
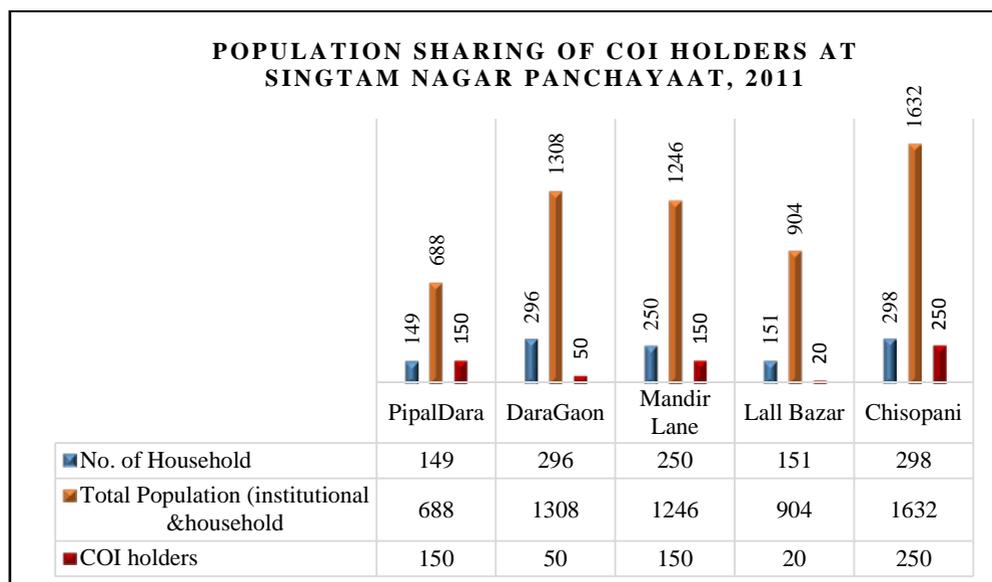


Fig no. 2.14



Source: Census of India. 2011, Sikkim. District Census Handbook, Series- 12 Part XII and Statement -1.

Fig no. 2.15



Source: Nagar Panchayat Office. Singtam, 2016.

Singtam Nagar Panchayat Office stated that in the town area under various wards the COI/Sikkim Subject holders are less in number than the migrant population. Chisopani, Mandir Lane and Pipal Dara are having more concentration of local population while Lalbazar has minimum Sikkimese population.

2.10 Why Rangpo and Singtam: Geographical Context

I consider Rangpo and Singtam as vital places of research in Sikkim – a rapidly urbanising state in the eastern Himalayan region. Zèrah and Denis argue, “understanding the nature and form of ‘small town urbanism’ is imperative to unpacking the role of small urban settlements as an interface functioning at different scales, without trapping them in a dominant and hierarchical view of the world....” (Zèrah and Denis, 2017: 1-35). Amitabh Kundu also observes that small and medium towns exhibited rapid growth during eighties and nineties, these towns (mainly class V, class VI towns) are not going with the general pattern of growth like class I towns, rather they are experiencing higher growth rates.

Rangpo and Singtam (Nagar Panchayat town) provide a case of small town urbanisation with its own scale of various developments. Their geographical location has also accelerated the rate of urbanisation as well as their economic significance for the overall development of the state. Rangpo acts as a state border town, sharing the border with West Bengal, and Singtam acts as a junction town – well connected with the neighbouring states and rest of India, and also of the state itself. On the other side Singtam is an important transit point for legal and illegal goods crossing the state’s border and other parts of various districts. National Hydro Power Corporation Stage V project at Sirwani, Singtam also created large possibilities of construction and allied job opportunities in last decade (Statesman, NB plus. 17.04.08: 5) Thus, these towns occupy an extraordinary geo-spatial importance in Sikkim’s economy and polity, firmly controlled by Sikkim state’s Acts and Regulations, but are also stated to be in a grave situation in the production of transgression zone at the southern edge of the ‘model development (Chettri and Duncun. 2018). Other three important factors are also accelerating the pace of economic Sgrowth of the nation as a whole and Sikkim is not beyond this. India’s entry in neoliberal economy puts her into excel economic growth rate, especially after 90’s which has a reflection of emergent market condition. The advancement of transport facilities, rapid growth in information and communication technology and integrating China into WTO as an emergent market are these three controlling factors. These towns are not beyond these contemporary effects, which can place them into a perfect flexible and competitive market conditions.

2.11 Conclusions

Migration has been controlled by spatial location since long. People are willing to migrate towards comfort zone. History has witnessed that people used to travel from mountain regions to plain regions for better livelihood options. Contemporary world also experienced reverse flow of migration – people are heading towards uncomfortable, extreme physical and climatic regions. This study is carrying the evidence of reverse trends of migration. Labourers are migrating from comfortable plain regions to different physical and climatic (apparently cold climate, rough relief and high altitude) region. This influx of population brings changes on the aerial (shape and size of the place), structural, functional and demographic context of the places.

Global changes in fertility and mortality (demographic transition) have had a great effect on entire population structure, relatively it has been considered that ‘mobility transition’ (Zelinsky, 1971) and ‘demographic dividend’ rather play the vital role in the present trends of labour flow. Zelinsky (1971:229) argued in this ‘mobility transition’ there have been “definite, patterned regularities in the growth of personal mobility through space-time during recent history, and these regularities comprise an essential component of the modernization process”.

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CHAPTER THREE

JUXTAPOSE: INTERNAL MIGRATION AND INFORMAL LABOURERS

3.1 Introduction

Migration is the “survival instinct that drives humans to seek better prospects” (Sundari, 2005: 2295). The major drive for migration, mentioned by Census and NSSO, is an important facet to gauge how population movements are influenced by the state of labour market conditions of the nation. Various concepts and theoretical perceptions have already been discussed in the previous chapter. Structural and demographic changes, lure of cities and job facilities in the low tier are the prime factors that influence labour migration or labour mobility⁷ in a neoliberal economy. Labour migration is an effect of the nation’s economic practices and also acts as a controlling parameter – that of adjustment processes in the global labour market. Jarman (2012) has rightly stated that “Political economists juxtapose the social position of labours with that of capitalists in a capitalist society” (Jarman, J. 2012:4).

It has already been discussed that people migrate for countless reasons, especially, when they migrate for economic reasons such as better employment, high wages and demand: the technological revolution thus plays an important role. In this context the role of ‘labour export’ agencies, middlemen, friends and relatives are also considerable. In this chapter I intend to discuss and analyse why and how labour migration is mostly related to certain types of employment structures and specific economic activities.

3.2 To and Fro - New Dimension of Internal Labour Migration

In India, permanent or semi-permanent displacement of population and workforce had co-existed with the circulatory movement of the population between the agrarian economy and industrial economy and between the rural and urban areas, which are mostly absorbed in the informal sector of the economy (De Haan, 1999:36). Pioneer work by Rao (1991) on Palamur labour in Andhra Pradesh and de Haan’s (2002: 115-42) remarkable study on migration in Western Bihar, or Srivastava and Ali’s 1981 work of labour from Bundelkhand proved that the seasonal and circular

⁷ The terms Labour mobility and Labour migration are used interchangeably.

migration has a part in the livelihood portfolio of poor people in India since long ago. Haan (2002) asserts that the cause of social exclusion does not uniformly impact labour migration. The social experience and consequences of migration can be shaped by class and gender along with social networks and household structures.

The pressure of a huge population on limited resources inspires migration, while rural-urban migration and urbanisation are the natural outcomes of the transformation of agro-based economy into industrial economy. In a study by Mukherjee (1991: 203-45) on “Inter-state migration and regional disparities in India,” it is stated that in India, inter-state migration of population takes place mostly due to poverty, underdevelopment, spatial disorganisation, regional and social disparities, rural stagnation and so on. Structural transformation in the 1990s and fluidity of capital have persuaded the mobility of population and workers in terms of national and international in India. In recent time, various changes in India are controlling the pattern and pace of migration. Dyson and Visaria (2004: 108-29) observe that India is experiencing different changes in the migration pattern.

Internal migration became a subject of research due to its impact on population change and its socio-economic implications. It acts as a sensitive barometer of changes in the social, cultural and economic fields as well as on environment. In India internal migration is perfectly traceable back to the 19th century. Though, in that particular period, the country exclusively witnessed the huge migration of labourers into overseas territories. This migration was in the form of the emigration of indentured labourers.⁸ This system was completely abolished in the year 1920. Apart from the international movement of population in India, internal migration also has its own historical background. Internal migration is typically defined as the physical mobility of people within the political boundary of their own country but across the frontiers of their home provinces. The Census Department of India, 1971 defined internal migration as “any movement within the political boundaries of a nation, which results in a change of the usual place of residence. It may consist of the crossing of a village or town boundary as a minimum condition for qualifying in the category of movement as internal migration” (Census of India, 1971: 4). In India internal migration has various facets, where we can identify various special types of movement with different reasons and forms. When people leave for a temporary period of time, it is not considered as migration in a demographic point of view, though family and individual migration had played an important role in

⁸ Indentured labourers: Indenture was a halfway between free labour and slavery and also different from peonage and serfdom. It was adapted like slavery and recruitment of labour through migration. It began after the abolition of slavery.

the growth and distribution of population (Ghosh, B.N. 1985: 34). These entire practices give effect directly to the receiving as well as sending of areas in terms of population and social changes. There has been a firm increase in the number of migrants in India. In 1961 there were only 144 million migrants by place of birth and the number has become 307 million in 2001. Interstate migrants have been estimated to be 3.6% of the total population in 2011 Census.

Table no. 3.1 **Inter-State migration stream (Duration 0-9 Years) India.**

Types/streams of migration	All internal migrants (persons)	
	2001	2011
Urban- Urban	15.2%	22.6%
Urban- Rural	6.3%	7.9%
Rural- Urban	21.8%	22.1%
Rural-Rural	26.6%	47.4%

Source: Census of India, 2001, 2011. Data Highlight - Table D2.

Intra state and the intra district migration was more prominent among the migrants in rural areas than among the migrants in urban areas (NSS 64th Round, 2007-08). According to NSS report no. 533, in India nearly 25% of male migrants and 3% of female migrants had moved with probable duration of stay for 12 months or more and in urban areas nearly 26% male and 11% female migrants were expected to stay at the place of enumeration for 12 months or more (*ibid*). Over time, the Indian census has shown a continuous increase of interstate migration. According to census 2001 there is a variation (%) in number of migrants by place of birth -54.5% for inter-state migrants (Data Highlights- Table D1, D2 AND D3, Census of India). Table no 3.1. shows that migration pattern (2011) maintains the tradition of a high rate of rural to rural migration rate (47.4%) and between 2001 and 2011 Census; rural-urban migration has increased marginally (21.8% to 22.1% respectively). In urban India (2011 Census), nearly 33% male migrants work in traditional services like hotels, wholesale and retail business and transport, 27% are in manufacturing sectors and 16% are in other sectors (real estate, health etc.).

The NSSO particularly shows an increase in inter-state migration between 1999-2000 and 2007-2008 in the two urban streams (Srivastava, Ravi, 2012). Distribution of internal migration of India in terms of rural to urban stream was quite high with 195 people per 1000 (NSS Report no. 533.2007-08). Inter-state migration increased from 19.9% to 22.9% (*ibid*). NSS 64th round shows minor increase in rural to urban and urban to urban migration through inter-state migration in 2007-08. Times of India, 18 October 2013, reported that internal migrants in India are about to touch 400 million (2011 census).

Globalisation has led to different changes in the pattern of demand for workers and as a result also on the structure of national and international labour market. Changes in various factors in recent decades like infrastructural improvement, telecommunications improvement are reducing different cost factors and risk factors, which generate available options for migration. These changes also create certain types of demand for workers, which create 'race to the bottom' and an increase in informal employment (Srivastava, Ravi, 2012: 1-40). Deshingkar and Start (2003) avow that the short term, seasonal and circular labour migration is one of the most popular livelihood strategies for rural Indian people. So, the changes in development and the demand for labourers are likely to depend on each other.

NSSO suggests eighteen various possibilities of migrations. These reasons vary in the case of male and female. Census and NSS confirm that among all reasons there is an increase in employment-related migration. Maximum increase in this rate has been observed in 1981 followed by 2001. Different NSSO reports established the fact that migration rate is decreasing for the employment related reasons. According to the 49th round (1993) it was 477 persons per 1000 for rural areas and 415 persons per 1000 persons, which became less in the 64th round (2007-2008) - 286 persons per 1000 for rural areas but surprisingly increased for urban areas with 557 persons per 1000 (Statement 4.13, Report No. 533, 2007-2008, NSSO). It is basically due to the growth of urban population. The role of migration in the increase of urban population and the rate of urbanisation are very significant. In this chapter, I intend to correlate all the possibilities of migration in Sikkim from the plain areas with the reasons proposed by NSSO (64th round). Economic survey 2016-2017 reveals that the inter-state migration of workers in India has increased significantly to 9 million annually within 2011 and 2016. It also throws light on the fact that inter-state labour mobility was around 5 to 6.5 million in 2001 to 2011. Sikkim has positive net migration rate with +0.26% (1991 to 2001). This positive growth value indicates that in-migration is higher than the out-migration (Rajan, and Chyrmang, 2016: 96-153). I have made an attempt to find out various causes of in-

migration in Sikkim's informal sector, especially in Singtam and Rangpo towns and the problems faced by the migrants in their native places.

3.3 Economy/ Economics as the Main Driving Force for Migration (Indian Context)

In India, migration takes place not only due to the so-called pull factors of the destination places but also due to poverty, natural calamities, unemployment and underdevelopment in the place of origin. Migration happens especially due to regional discrepancy in development. In the era of globalisation, migration and neo-liberal urban development are the results of direct manifestations. India stands among the top five countries of the world in terms of gross domestic product but only 31.16 percent of its population lived in cities and towns in 2011, and also is the least urbanised country among the top 10 economies of the world. There are numerous evidences in India to advocate that the country is growing fast in terms of overall development with regional disparity. The issue of composition of GDP aside, India has practiced jobless growth, mostly in rural areas. India has continued an annual growth rate of GDP at over 5% in the last decade but no one notices an improvement in number of jobs within the periods 2004-05 and 2009-10. A total of 23.3 million and 4.02 million jobs were lost in agriculture and manufacturing respectively. These losses were offset by a gain of 25.89 million jobs in non-manufacturing and 2.7 million jobs in services. On the whole, only 1.74 million new jobs were introduced. The overall employment improvement is estimated at 0.01 (Government of India 2011). In the past ten years (1999-00 and 2009-10), there has been a minimum decrease in unemployment rate in rural and urban areas (except in the case of rural female). This is only one part of the story; in reality unemployment rate in the rural and urban India does not truly reflect the labour market situation and job opportunities in any state. Another part of the story can be better disclosed by the underemployment rates in rural and urban areas. Practical scenario in rural India is likely to be different, where 10 (4.9) percent of male and 7 (4.5) percent of female workers were eager to do additional work/or sought additional work (Chandrasekhar, S and Sharma, A. 2014). A preponderance of these workers stated that their present occupation is not remunerative enough. This situation would be one of the probable reasons for an increase in rural-urban migration, especially in developing countries. The size of various streams of migration is determined by the choice of institution as well as with the relationship of the source area with the destination centre. Decades ago, Kingsley Davis (1951) in his pioneering work pointed out that Indians were less mobile. He concluded his idea based on inter-state migration which stood at 3.6% in 1931 compared to 23% in United States in 1940 (Bhagat, R. 2014). The latest source of migration data (2011) divulges that inter-state migration based on

POLR is only 41 million whereas within state migrants' number is 268 million (Bhagat, R.B. and Mohanty, S. 2009:5-20). It is surprising to see that in an around 30% of India's population is internally mobile; more over the number remained stable since the last several decades. It is also consistent in the NSSO data. Net inter-state migration in India during 2007-2008 (NSSO) has been categorised for different states but for Sikkim it was almost negligible due to very small sample available.

Labour migrants reshape and accelerate Indian economy through balancing human capital. It also enables the attainment of different new skills and changes the standard of livelihood (Korra, Vijay. 2011:52-71). Labour migration acts as an important feature in affecting and controlling the socio-economic development of the country. NSSO (2007-08) and a limited obtainable data in 2011 Census of India have stated that about 28.3% (2011 Indian Census does not include workers) migrants (age 15-59) are involved in Indian workforce. This labour migration has always played a noteworthy, if not primary role, in the processes of urbanisation (Mitra, Arup, and Mayumi Murayam. 2011: 25-51), since migration for work is the leading driver/motivation of/for migration, especially for rural areas to urban ones.

Table no. 3.2

**Trends in migration rates in urban India
1981-2008 (migrants per 100 persons)**

Census/NSS	Census			NSS		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1981-1983	33.2	40.8	36.8	27.0	36.6	31.6
1991-1993	26.3	36.2	31.0	23.9	38.2	30.7
2000-2001	32.0	39.4	35.5	25.7	41.8	33.4
2008	NA	NA	NA	25.9	45.6	35.4

Source: Census of India 1981-2001 and NSSO, 2010.

Note: migration rates exclude Assam for 1981 census and Jammu and Kashmir for 1991 census, where the census was not conducted.

Indian Census 2011 shows that there are 454 million migrants in India, which is more than two times the number in 1991. Nearly 6 million migrants cross inter-state boundary, but contrastingly 14.6 million people migrate for work or business purpose and out of these 43% cross the state boundary. Rural-urban migration aimed at work opportunities is maximum for male people: according to the 2011 Census it is 49.7%. Table 4.3 shows that rural-urban stream of migration is

dominantly for work/business purpose. So, inter-state migration plays an important role in employment. There is a new database called Cohort-based Migration [CMM] (Outlook, 31 January 2017) prepared from Census of India, 2011 and railway passenger traffic flows by the Railways Ministry to understand labour mobility trends in the country. Dr. Arvind Subramanian, chief economic adviser to the Ministry of Finance stated that “The first-ever estimates of internal work-related migration using railways data for the period 2011-2016 indicate an annual average flow of close to 9 million migrant people between the states. Both these estimates are significantly greater than the annual average flow of about 4 million suggested by successive Censuses and higher than previously estimated by any study” (*ibid.*). The growth rate of labour migration during 2001 to 2011 was double that of the past decade. The growth rate is rising in and around 4.5 % per annum. The perception is that this acceleration of labour migration is a catalyst for the multitude of informal economic opportunities.

Table no. 3.3. **Reasons and Streams of Intercensal Migration in India**
(% share of each stream)

Streams	Work/Business		Education		Marriage		Family Related		Others		Total	
	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001	2011
Rural-Rural	9.3	6.4	1.9	2.7	61.2	59.0	19.4	24.1	8.3	7.7	56.3	47.4
Urban-Urban	21.8	17.5	4.3	3.4	21.9	18.4	42.6	47.9	9.5	12.9	15.2	22.6
Rural-Urban	29.9	24.3	4.9	4.8	21.8	22.4	34.5	40.6	8.8	7.9	21.82	22.1
Urban-Rural	14.5	8.9	3.0	2.7	28.1	25.5	42.9	55.6	11.4	7.3	6.6	7.9

Source: Report of the Working Group on Migration, January 2017. Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, Government of India.

3.4 Poverty, Uneven Development and Migration

In India, migration takes place mostly due to poverty, unemployment, natural calamities, and underdevelopment at the place of origin, but in this globalised period betterment of the quality of life is becoming another key parameter by which the causes for such migrations can be assessed. India is experiencing a higher rate of in-migration in the states in the west, Delhi and the nearby areas in the north. Areas with the lowest in-migration rate are the poorest states in the north and east, which include Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Orissa. This information again can be correlated with the relative wealth of states and the rate of in-migration. For example, Delhi, Maharashtra, and

Gujarat have significant in-migration and have higher levels of state domestic product. The same trends of high in-migration have been observed in Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, and Mizoram (Krishan G. 2007: 182-187). Regional variation in per capita income has risen in the post-reform period. The ‘convergence hypothesis’⁹ is the keystone of neo classical optimism on market growth. It also suggests that most of the studies are concerned with the inter-regional disparities in terms of interstate differences in positive growth recital in the post-reform period (Baddeley, McNay and Cassen, 2006: 1000-1022; Bhattacharya and Sakthivel, 2004: 1071-1077; Dasgupta et.al, 2000: 316-328). The correlation coefficient between state-level wealth and in-migration rates in India is 0.82, (Castaldo, Deshingkar; and Mckay. 2012), which is undoubtedly a broad manifestation that people are moving from poorer to richer areas in India.

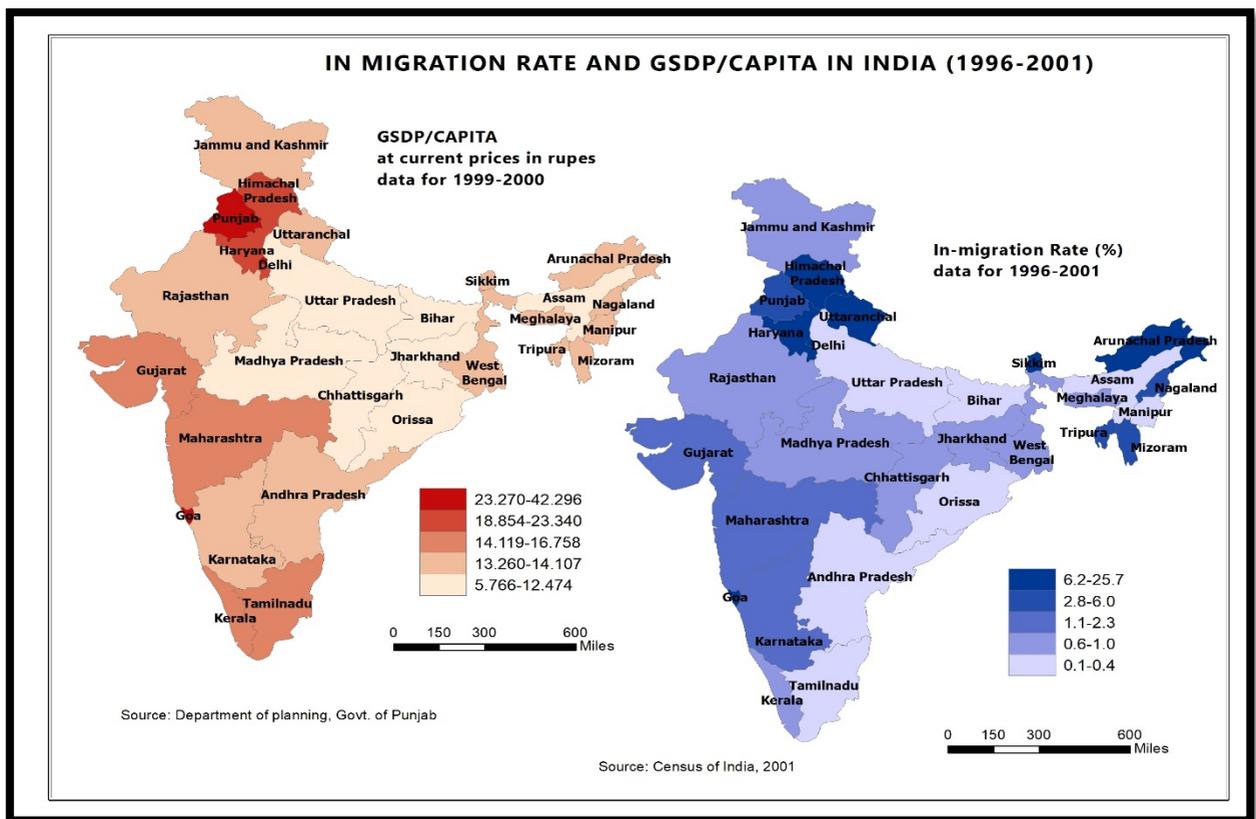
The effect of migration to solve inequality and poverty is still not very clear to us. However, the work by Haan and Roglay (2002) is able to explore some evidences and establish the fact that migration can reduce source and host areas. They also point out that out-migration and development is a simultaneous process and the developmental processes in source areas do not influence the rate of out-migration. It has been truly said that “Better-off migrants are ‘pulled’ towards better job prospects, while the poor are ‘pushed’. ‘Push’ and ‘pull’ migrations are the twin children of inequality in the same sort of village; but they are also sources of new inequality” (*ibid*: 5). Deshingkar (2010) claimed that it is not positively true that poor will not be poorer/will remain poor after migration because it is difficult to measure poverty and other multiple deficiencies (Deshingkar, 2010: vii). She could only have acknowledged a few areas as a positive socio-economic achievement – better access of food and health facilities, faster repay of debt, borrowing capacity etc., in addition to various psychosocial problems.

Different studies from the decennial census explore some stimulating facts – those related with link between level of development and migration, particularly in terms of per capita income. The map above represents the statistics that the states which have the highest level of GSDP also experience a high rate of migration. Alice Charles (Project Lead, Cities, World Economic Forum) explains that migrants are mainly drawn towards towns and cities for economic, social and creative opportunities. Bihar is a state with one of the maximum outflows of domestic migrants. This state has a per-capita income approximately equivalent to Somalia’s (USD 520), and 3.4 children per

⁹ Convergence hypothesis: This idea is also known as catch-up effect in economics. It states that poor economies’ per capita income grows faster in rate than richer economies. Eventually, all economies converge in terms of per capita income. Nair (1971), Majumdar and Kapoor (1980), Dholakia (1994), Cashin and Sahey (1996) and many others are working on Convergence Hypothesis in Indian Scenario.

woman is the birth rate. On the other hand, Kerala (for example), the destination for in-migrants, has four times more per capita income (USD 2350) than Bihar, and has a birth rate of 1.6 children per woman. Sikkim and Mizoram experience higher rate of in-migration (Krishna.G.2007:182-87) among the North Eastern states and these states also had a nominal GSDP growth rate in the year 2013-14 at 24.30% and 27.86% respectively (Planning Commission, Government of India, 2014) which are far more than that of the country as a whole.

Fig. no. 3.1. **In Migration Rate and GSDP/ Capita in India (1996-2001).**



3.5. Sikkim as a Case Study

3.5.1. Historical Background of Labour Migration in Sikkim

It is essential to understand the significance of contemporary economic structure and growth in the light of neoliberal ideologies, the pre-merger economic structure and the transformation processes in Sikkim. The earliest settlers, namely the Lepchas were semi-nomadic in nature with a primitive communal society. In the later period emerged the concept of private property among the Lepchas (G. Gorer, 1938:70, and C. Nakane.1966:261).

The history of Sikkim dates back to the year 1641 when Tibetans were invading in great numbers along with a small group of the Lepcha tribe. The first phase of state's history is linked to the "blood treaty", which was signed in 1641 between the Bhutias and the Lepchas. The second phase started in and around 18th century, when Nepal gradually intruded into the Sikkimese territory. Nepali migration was larger in scale in the 19th and early 20th century too. The British were interested in Sikkim because of their trade and political interests in Tibet. Sikkim came under British influence when the Anglo-Nepali war began (1814-15). Sikkim became a de facto territory in 1861 when the treaty of Titalia, which was signed between the kingdom of Sikkim and the East India Company (1817), was further revised (Debnath J.C. 2009:45). Noteworthy advancement was observed at the time of colonial rule. Due to intrusion of budgetary system in Sikkim's feudalist society, the amount of revenue increased and it was used for the construction of public works - especially roads. In 1906, for the first time Gangtok was linked with India by a wheeled traffic. It was a remarkable time for Sikkim's economic history. In a nutshell the issue of migration to Sikkim is largely confined to the issue of in-migration, as the region has always been historically a migrant receiving area, right from the early migration of the Bhutia community from Tibet in the 17th century, followed by the 19th century mass migration of Nepalese to the 20th century migration of Indian plainsmen, and the influx continues till date. Development of trade and commerce in the colonial time was thus a guiding force for the introduction of capitalism in Sikkim. "There were many *Indian businessmen* who contributed to the capitalist development in Sikkim" (D.D Kosambi.1956:7-10). This participation rate has increased after Independence and the subsequent treaty between Sikkim and India. The introduction of the Indian Rupee pushed up the entire economic system of Sikkim and developed a new economic class that started to earn money through their association with various governmental projects as contractors or wage earners. In this transitional period, commodification of labour power also became an integral part of capitalism. The presence of labour power as commodity was very much present since the colonial time in Sikkim, as Sweezy (1946:56) remarked "the differentia specifica of capitalism". Due to the infrastructural development in Sikkim, there was a huge scope for employment; the British especially employed a large number of wage labourers. The payment for the labour in terms of money during the colonial period was the new phenomenon in the history of Sikkim. In this way British tried to put an end to the forced labour system in Sikkim. The elimination of forced labour and the introduction of paid labour helped Sikkim take a step forward towards capitalism. In the British period Sikkim was not

able to develop full-fledged capitalism. The transition from a colonial to a capitalist phase/economy was much longer because the industrial growth was not subsequent to the British period. Only the traditional Bhutias (indigenous) and few Marwari plainsmen were engaged in trade with Tibet-Sikkim and India-Sikkim respectively. Sikkim Debt Law (1910)¹⁰ was another important phase when Marwari money-lenders left Sikkim because their businesses were declining due to the implementation of this new law.

The entire ethnic picture changed in Sikkim when India became independent and British left India. This also changed the pattern of Indo-Sikkimese relationship. After 1947, Sikkim faced various grim situations in terms of its socio-political contexts. However, in 1975 Sikkim became a full-fledged state of Indian Territory. Sikkim always attracted the plainsmen from various parts of India with various necessities. Thus, migration of plainsmen to Sikkim was not a very new practice. It was in the form of pilgrims, travelers or traders; rather the migration for economic wellbeing is comparatively recent phenomenon. Sikkim is one of the popular Himalayan territories where presence of plainsmen is quite old. A large number of people were engaged in Indo-Tibetan trade in the north and with Gorkhas in the west. Others from Bihar, Bengal, Assam, Punjab, Kerala, and Orissa were also involved in different ancillary trades and other occupations. Somanis, who migrated from Haryana, went to Gangtok as the sole cashiers of British Forces. Another large influx of plainsmen in Sikkim has been observed after the 'merger' of Sikkim with India (1975)¹¹. Some people were specially qualified in looking for white-collar jobs in different administrative sectors and some were skilled and unskilled labourers. Labourers from the plains are distributed all over Sikkim.

3.5.2. Evaluation of Sikkim's Economy

Evaluation of Sikkim's economy is interesting to know. It has been documented that the earliest Lepchas were tribal and semi-nomadic in nature with a primitive communal society. After that when the Bhutias came, they mostly followed Tibetan ideas and cultures, their economy was typically feudal in character, but Sikkim was following free employment of peasantry due to the influence of Tibetan ideology. Significant progression was noticed in Sikkim economy immediately after the British control (1889). Rigorous administrative measures also increased the state's

¹⁰ Sikkim Debt Law: This law was enacted in 1910 to measure rural indebtedness. Minimum rate of interest to be charged on the farmers and money lenders were prohibited.

¹¹ Sikkim merger with India: Indian Constitution through 36th Amendment Act, 1975

revenue. This was the transition period, when Sikkim's feudal economic structure was moving towards capitalism. We know that 'transition' is unconditionally of huge interest to the Marxist view. Robert Brenner (1977: 104) described the changes in the mode of production, as development through production actually explains the development of the relations with the production as well as of the society as a whole (Hilton, R.H. 1982: 42). Feudal mode of production was conspicuous in consumption, and not in accumulation. Sikkim experienced proper feudalistic economy just after the *Nepali* influx during the last part of the 19th century, because it led to permanent cultivation in Sikkim. Pirenne (1968:171-185), Belgian economic historian, put emphasis on trade as a prime reason for the emergence of capitalism. The equation of capitalism through the profit from trade has also been observed by the work of the non-Marxist historian Braudel (1982) and by sociologist Max Weber (1905:19-35). In the case of Sikkim, the Bhutias were engaged in pasturage and trade, and there was no competition with other existing communities. So, there was a coexistence of feudal economy and rising capitalism, but monetisation was absent at that time and 'labour power' was not identified as a commodity. Sweezy and Baran (1966) recognised various considerable stages and changes in feudal society. In Sikkim, the beginning and aftermath of a feudal society cannot be considered as 'relatively primitive'. There is a certain gap between the end of feudalism and rise of capitalism – Maurice Dobb (1946) tried to focus on this gap. Marx observed that there was a long persistent gap (transition period) while discussing the rise of capitalism in Western Europe. The time frame and adaptability was not same worldwide – depending on fundamental socio-economic structure. In this context Marx said, "...the economic structure of Capitalist society grows out of economic structure of feudal society. The dissolution of one sets free the elements of the latter." (1961: 715). Sikkim experienced a prolonged feudal economic structure. Introduction of paid labour (commodifying labour), monetisation, establishment of bureaucratic set up, intervention of state and budgetary system were not able to develop a full-fledged capitalist society in Sikkim. In the British period various public construction works, especially focused on transport and communication took place. In 1906, Gangtok was linked with the Indian Territory by wheeled traffic. The natural impact of this development led to the extension of trade and commerce in Sikkim. Especially, it accelerated Indo-Tibetan trade. Sikkim became an important trade route, which gave a great impetus to the transformation of Sikkim's economy – from feudalistic system to that of a concept of private property – by giving an ultimate insight into capitalism and generating an open system in the state's economy. After the full-fledged introduction of Indian Rupee in Sikkim, the entire economy changed, and a new economic class emerged. These people were

engaged in different government/public projects or worked as wage-earners. The role of money as a “store of wealth” provided a new motivation to the state’s economy. It actually sowed the seeds of a modern, capitalist economy. British administrators had concentrated on various construction works, which created a large demand for wage-labourers. In this regards “Frank hold that in determining an economic and social system as feudal or capitalist, the crucial aspect to consider is *whether the system is closed or not*. On that account it can certainly be said that the British heralded the growth of capitalism in Sikkim by making the country open” (Debnath, 2009: 46). Nepali migrant labourers used to vend their labour as a commodity that was bought by the British. The development of trade, commerce, and infrastructural developments create different job possibilities for the other native states also. Introduction of paid labour system by the British essentially developed the capitalist economy in Sikkim. Land and labour – two fundamental factors of production -- had become the manifestation of commodity. Participation of entrepreneurship by the Sikkimese people was not prominent because of the dearth of raw materials and capital along with the lack of technological knowledge. Moreover, Indian businessmen were not too free even though they were willing to take all the legitimate risks of the business and also ensured to provide better technology and more capital investment in the Sikkim’s economy. The mode of production was reshaped through privatisation, monetisation and flexibility (Naredo, 2006). Indian businessmen were debarred from different facilities which hindered overall economic development. Afterwards, the state took the role of promoting and enhancing of entrepreneurial activities through different corrective measures. The state tried to eradicate the previous obstacles to the liberty of enterprises by taking active part in different entrepreneurial projects. Distillation of wine and liquor was the first modern private industry to be set up at Singtam in 1955; a Government Fruit Preservation factory was also set up at the same place just the following year. These enterprises played a major role in creating a demand for wage-labourers, especially in the low layered economic activities.

In 1976, the establishment of the Directorate of Industries brought a noteworthy change in the industrial activities of the state. The Registration of Companies Act, Sikkim, 1961(Amendment Act no.3, 1989) also changed the entire scenario of economic activities. This act made the provision for the companies to get registration in order to support the industrialisation processes in the state. Nearly 1,500 units have been granted temporary registration from 1976 onwards. Most of them (70%) are located in East district of the state. It shows a completely disproportional concentration of industries within a specific geographical area. In this context it has been rightly said in various

literatures that a large frame of work exists in ethnic entrepreneurship and its appearance (Light, I. 2005).

3.5.3. Post-merger Scenario in Sikkim

Any developing society undergoes the processes of various changes in their social, cultural, demographic, political and economic aspects. Post-merger Sikkim (from 1975), for instance, experienced all such changes. It is to be noted that in the pre-merger period migration from plains took place mainly for trade, but the post-merger scenario facilitates further to involve in service industry. It has been noticed that in recent times there is a popular trend of migration of people from the plains to Singtam and Rangpo town, basically as workers, which has changed the development dynamics. The present chapter explains how such discursive shifts of the exodus from plains in the context of migration in the informal economy and livelihood serve as a survival strategy to integrate the heterogeneous nature of causes of migration in Singtam and Rangpo towns of East Sikkim. Plains to hills movement considers two different physical boundaries as well as two administrative boundaries.

Migration in Sikkim, particularly to Rangpo and Singtam towns is constituted prodigiously of migrants from multi-ethnic and multi-language speaking states, though the main movement of labour were seemingly entrenched in its historical perspectives, cultural links and mostly due to economic associations. The Indo-Sikkim treaty, 1950 and the Article VII (I) helped to continue free movement between India and Sikkim after India's Independence. The Article VII (a), (b) also allowed the citizen of both the countries to continue their trade and commerce and right to hold property on each other's terrain. Post-merger situation was totally dissimilar. Article 371-F was included in the Indian Constitution through 36th Amendment Act in 1975; it was an agreement between Sikkim and Indian Union for the merger. At the same time, Article 371-F (k) was also enacted to protect Sikkim's old laws. This law ghettoises the Sikkimese and the non-Sikkimese. The non-Sikkimese are not allowed to hold any property and state government jobs, but they can carry on with central government jobs, trades and business and the like.

The spatial dynamics of urban development and configuration of an area has become an important aspect in understanding the contemporary socio-economic structure – same happens in Sikkim. The transition of economic structure primarily changes the social and economic practices; secondly, it includes development, which leads to the gap between core and peripheral areas (Herold, Couclelis,

and Clarke, 2005: 369-399). These developments denote a dispersal of the effect of urban growth on the rural hinterland. These processes are changing the state’s economic activities from primary to secondary, to tertiary and so on. The symmetrical growth quantum of migration flow from the neighbouring states is a direct stimulus on the urban growth and its related economic changes. Population density in Sikkim has increased from 45 per sq. km. (2001) to 86 per sq. km. (2011), which hints at considerable urban development. Gradually, Sikkim government started to play an important role in increasing the processes of urban development. Local administration, accompanied by different private agents, has helped to develop city-based modern methods in Sikkim, especially in the East and South districts. Contemporary Sikkim has become a popular tourist spot in northeast India. Its economy is driven through secondary sectors like hydroelectric power generation and constructions, and by tertiary sectors like hotels, trade, transport and communication etc.

Fig no. 3.2

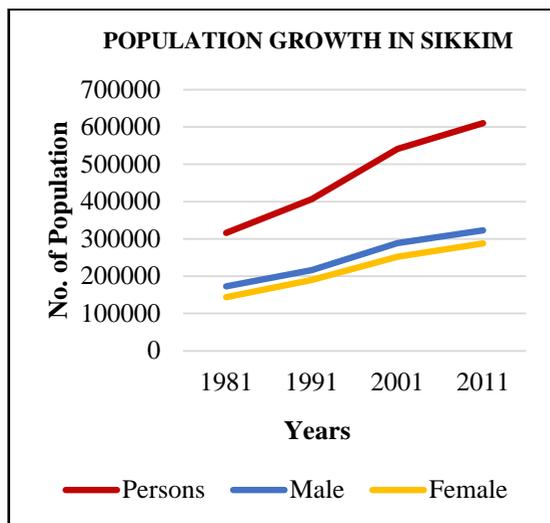
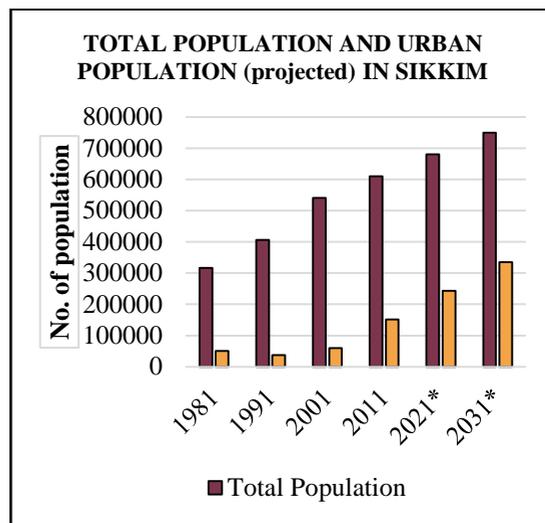


Fig no. 3.3



Source: District Census Handbook, 1981, 1991 and Primary Census Abstract 2001 & 2011.

*Projected population from Census of India.

Figure no 3.2 shows the trend of population growth in Sikkim since post-merger period. The line graph represents the positive growth trend in last four decades. Figure no. 3.3 shows a positive participation rate of urban population in the last four decades. It also shows a projected urban population contribution in the forthcoming times. In 1981, the percentage share of urban population in total population was 16.15%, which increased to 24.84% in 2011. This entire drift projects a

slow but steady urban growth in post-merger Sikkim. Sikkim's in migration (2001 Census) from the other states was 22,519 and it has increased to 2,65,158 in the 2011 Census.

Table no. 3.4 **Number of Migrants by Place of Last Residence in Sikkim (2011)**

	Duration of residence	Business	Work or employment	Other
All duration				
Total	265158	4991	53547	52763
Rural	173196	3061	35606	22373
Urban	51699	1639	12722	8547
Less than one year				
Total	22632	151	7599	5372
Rural	13031	94	4917	1651
Urban	4957	42	1893	715
Duration1- 4 years				
Total	56901	597	15161	8972
Rural	34792	357	8844	3564
Urban	13270	204	4037	1553
Duration 5-9years				
Total	42636	688	7553	7280
Rural	28073	417	5278	3188
Urban	9056	236	1821	1247
10 years &above				
Total	142721	3555	23227	30912
Rural	97238	2193	16556	13936
Urban	24407	1152	4970	5029

Source: The Census of India 2011 (Provisional), table D-5.

3.5.4. Migration in Present Sikkim

The definition of internal migration is 'population movement across a political or administrative boundary, which entails a change of usual residence' (Bilsborrow, 1998: 1-531). Kothari explained three dimensions for the reasons to migrate, which include different motives, geographical aspects, and time (Kothari, 2002). The perception of internal migration mostly depends on the supply and demand of labour. Internal migration at micro level studies creates a relationship between total

migration flows with the presence of spatial heterogeneity within the various geographic locations. Migration always acts as a spatial phenomenon, and hence while discussing this act we should always consider at least two regions.

In tune with the wide variety of the study of migration, the present study on Singtam and Rangpo town scenario attempts to explore the question of why people migrate and how far they move. The former equates the “pull-push” hypothesis (Herberfeld, Menaria, Sahoo and Vyas 1999: 473-489) and the latter has been explained through different models with statistical analysis to explain the internal migration. It has been observed that the possible benefits of internal migration are not being fully recognised because of insufficient evidence of migration patterns, mostly temporary, seasonal and circular migration, different policy barriers to population movement and social exclusion (Deshingkar, 2008: 612-28). On the one hand, while people are moving permanently out from rural to urban areas, on the other, a growing number of provisional or circulatory migrants between the same is experienced (Haan, Brock, and Coulibaly. 2002: 37-58). In India this scenario is also predominant (Srivastava and Sasikumar 2005: 31-55). Rural-urban migration essentially drives the ‘spatial concomitant of the economic development’ (Mabogunje 1970: 1-18) in Singtam and Rangpo town as a case that seems to reverse the dynamic of population from major agricultural based economy in rural areas to less non-agricultural activities in urban areas (Lewis, 1954: 139-191), nevertheless having the status of quasi-permanent casual workers, devoid of civic amenities. According to NSS 64th round (July 2007-2008) Sikkim’s inter-state migration is significant. The following table shows the significant number of migrants; whose last usual place of residence was in other states. NSS Report states that Sikkim experiences large number of migrants due to reasons of employment, [570 rural males, 589 urban males per 1000] (NSS.64th Round. 2007-2008) and movement of parent or earning member (214 rural males, 286 urban males) respectively.

Table no. 3.5

Distribution (per 1000) of Migrants by Location of**Last Usual Place of Residence**

State	Last usual place of residence (Other State)	
	Rural areas	Urban areas
Sikkim		
Rural male	199	42
Rural female	140	19
Urban male	219	356
Urban female	102	226

Source: NSS Report No. 533: Migration in India: July, 2007- June, 2008.

Table no. 3.5 also shows that Sikkim is experiencing high rate of migration in case of urban male migrants which justifies the fact that Sikkim's in-migration totally depends on the job market of the state. In any stream of migration, the importance of transport and communication cannot be ignored (Greenwood, 2005). The gradual transformation of the society from 'field to factory' (Bremner, 1996) creates massive displacement of the identically identified group of people named 'labour'. In Sikkim this transitional span was prolonged due its monarchy based feudal system. Moreover, local Lepchas and Bhutias were not involved in working in the public sectors, and this created a large demand for migrant labourers.

Table no. 3.6

Migration Details of Sikkim (1999-2000 and 2001)

Migration Details	No. of
In migrants (other states)	22,519
Out migrants (from Sikkim)	6238
In migrants (other countries)	7655
Net in migrants	23,936
Migration rate (per 100)	5.9%
Temporary & seasonal Migrants (in	7.1
Temporary & seasonal migration rate	16.6%

Source: Census of India 2001, Data Highlight Table- D2, and 55thNSS. 1999-200. Unit Level Data.

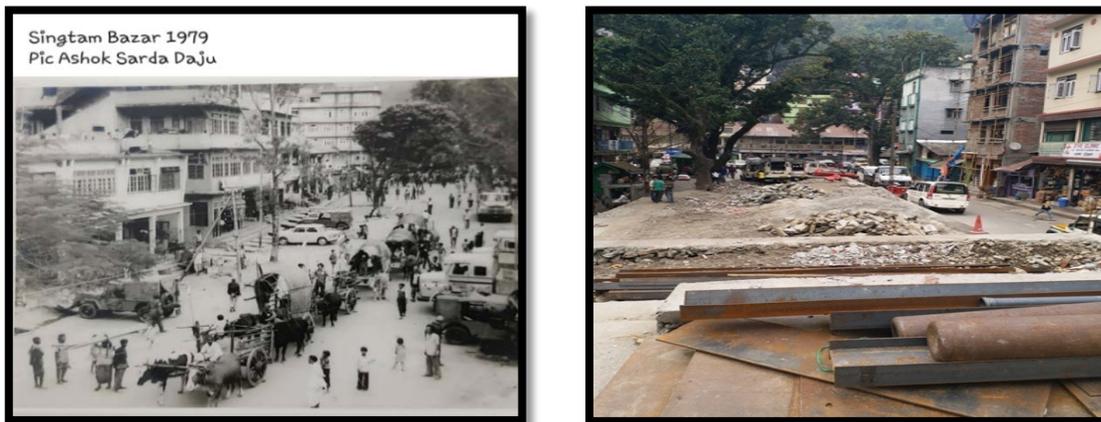
Initially migrant Nepali labourers were satisfying that demand. Afterwards people from other parts of India also penetrated into industrial sectors of Sikkim. Most of the registered industrial units were concentrated in the East district of the state. There was a high absorption of industrial establishment in certain geographical positions like - Singtam and Rangpo towns. Sikkim is a politically stable and peaceful state. The state does not suffer any labour-related and insurgency-related problem either. Industrialists like to establish their units in this state because of few deliberate reasons in terms of raw materials, market and labour. Another landmark is the inclusion of Sikkim in the North Eastern Council; it triggers off the maximum growth in the industrial sector in Sikkim. Today Sikkim is regarded as the pioneer in the realm of investor friendly states.

3.6 Neo-Liberal Urbanisation and Labour Migration in Rangpo and Singtam Town

Urban development is a rapid and continuous concentration of modernism-structuralism and socio-cultural changes. It has been identified as a major factor in economic transformation from breakdown of the feudal system to modern liberal system. Urbanisation took off speedily due to the process of rural urban migration. Riesman (1964) opines that urbanisation is an overall process, when the society transforms from one economic structure to another – feudal to industrial and from homogenous to mass heterogeneous. Different urban developments with a high degree of migration rate (Davis & Golden, 1954: 6-26; Johnston, & Mellor .1961:566-593; Massey. 1988:383-413) have also been witnessed.

Compared to other states in the history of Indian urbanisation, Sikkim's is of a recent origin. It can fairly be traced with the emergence of Gangtok as a town in 1951. In 1971, the number of towns has increased to seven as 'Notified Bazar Committees'. Since 1981 (eight towns) the urban population has started increasing gradually.

Fig no. 3.4 **Transformation of Singtam Bazar Area Since 1979 to 2017**



Singtam Bazar in 1979 (Source: Ashok Sarada, Sikkim Cronicle) Singtam Bazar in 2017 (Source: Author)

One important feature of Sikkim's urbanisation is that it is not the staple case of the Sikkimese people migrating from rural to urban areas. The newly-born towns have received massive number of migrants making them thereby not only populous towns, but also changing the demographic and economic composition of the state as a whole. Most of the migrants come from neighbouring states like Bihar, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa etc. Migration-urbanization relation was consolidated after Sikkim's merger with the Indian Union. The Census of India (2001, series D table) mentioned that the net migration rate in Sikkim (1991-2001) was +0.21(Census of India.2001). Sikkim recorded high in-migration. Migration is predominantly a male dominated concept [net migrant rate '91-'01 for male is +0.26] (*ibid*), and usually of short term or seasonal/temporary in nature and directed towards job opportunities available in Sikkim's fledgling informal economy. Post-merger urbanisation trend in Sikkim is justly dependent on outside state migration flow. This dependency has received further acceleration because of adopting neoliberal governance pattern in the overall Indian body politic.

Researchers have identified that structural reform and corresponding developmental strategies are expected to not only create high economic growth, but also to accelerate the pace of urbanisation (Bhagat, 2004: 47-60 and Kundu, 2003: 3079-3987).

Table no. 3.7 **Total Urban Population in Different Towns in Sikkim**

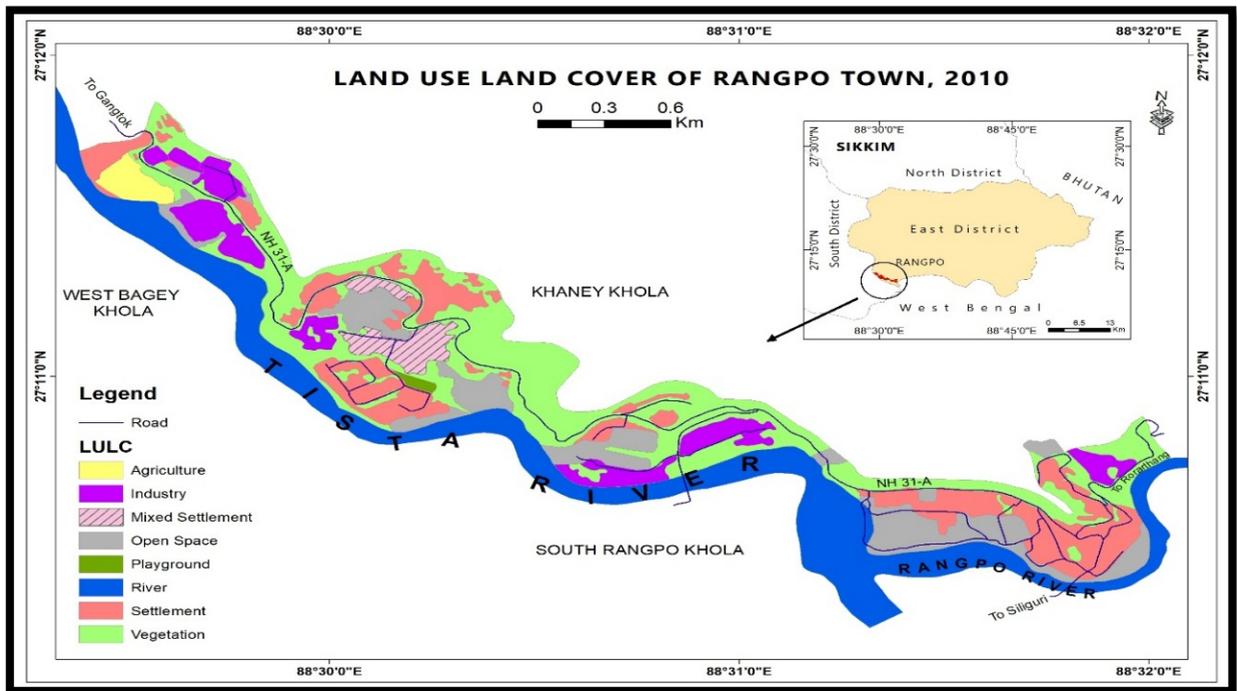
(1981 – 2011)

Towns	1981	1991	2001	2011
Gangtok	36747	25024	29359	98658
Singtam	4043	3868	5432	5874
Rangpo	2452	2980	3709	10326
Mangan	780	803	1248	4644
Jorthang	3921	1939	2967	8895
Namchi	1444	630	979	12194
Nayabazar	952	1045	996	1230
Gayzing	745	717	828	4009

Source: District Census Handbook, 1981, 1991 and Census of India 2001 & 2011.

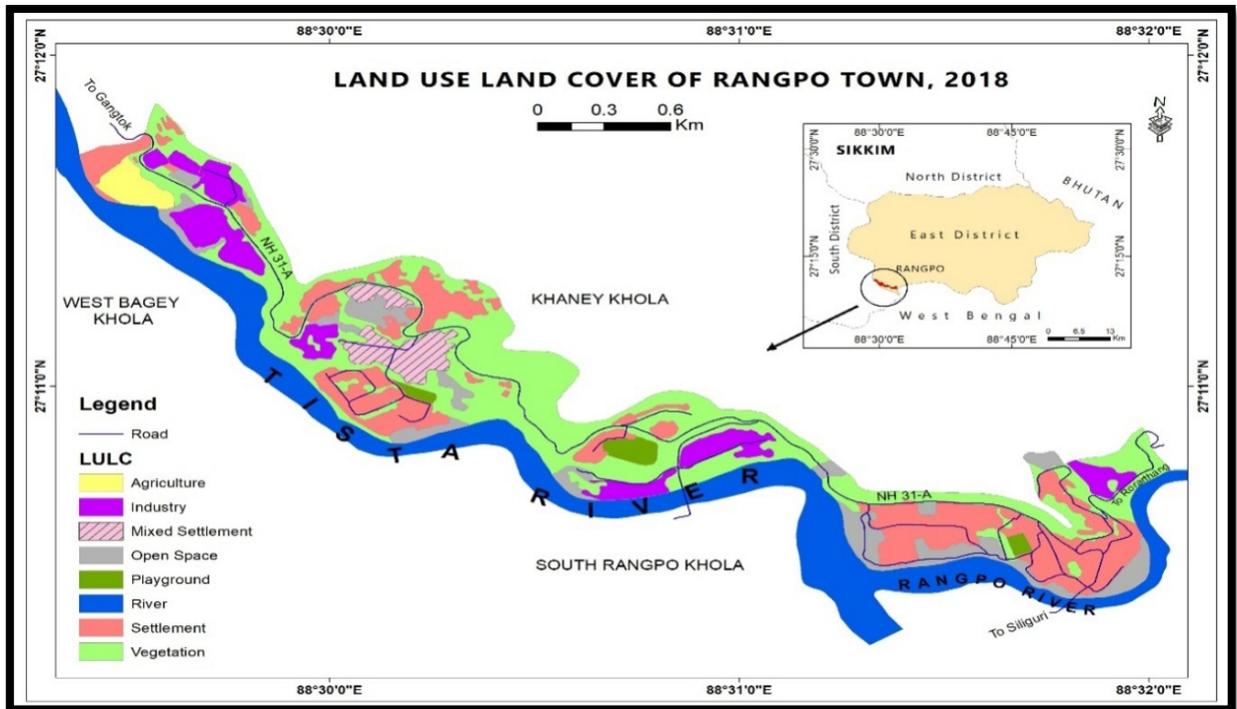
Having functional equality with all India trend, post-reform Sikkim is marked by a noticeable slow growth of formal sector employment, together with a consistent development in the capacity of informal sectors to absorb migrants as a self-employed worker, as informal employer, or as casual labourers. The common attributes of neoliberal urbanisation are governed by the introduction of new policy regimes, which ensure reduction of public sector involvement, and appropriate prices for infrastructural development and urban amenities through reduction or elimination of subsidies, popularisation of legislative system in order to introduce proper land use parameters and value based location of economic activities etc. These factors are advocated as package, heralding a new system of urban governance (Dutta, A. 1999). Sectorised allocation of expenditure to the total development in 11th five-year plan 2007-2012 also claims the aforementioned facts. Sikkim assigns maximum amount on social services (28.51%), transport (8.28%) and in energy (7.74%) (Planning Commission, Government of India, Inclusive growth, Vol.1).

Fig no. 3.5



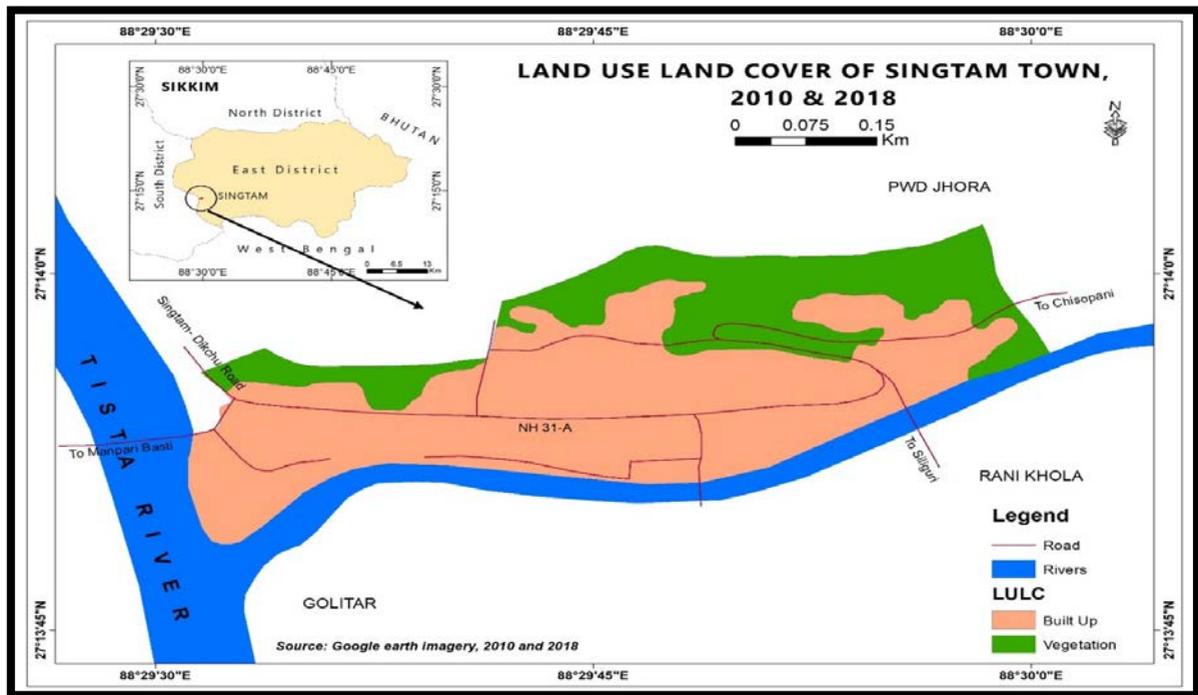
Source: Google Earth Imagery (prepared by author using software arc GIS desktop).

Fig. no. 3.6



Source: Google Earth Imagery (prepared by author using software arc GIS desktop).

Fig. no. 3.7



Source: Google Earth Imagery (prepared by author using software arc GIS desktop).

All these three maps (figure number 3.5, 3.6 and 3.7) represent the present land use land cover. In case of Rangpo it has been clearly identified that settlement area has increased during 2010 to 2018 in ward nos.3, 4 and 5 - Mandibazar, Upper Rangpo Bazar, and Chanatar respectively. Industrial land cover has also increased, mostly in ward no. 2, namely, Mining IBM. Rangpo land use map also carries the sign of accelerated urbanisation through the reduction of open space and increase of settlement and industrial sectors. These developments are creating demand based employment opportunities as well as attracting labourers from beyond the state boundary. According to Nagar Panchayat Office, ward no.1 (Mazitar) has nearly 12 different types of industries, e.g. Mount distilleries, V. Gard stabilizer, Titan (parts), Pharmaceuticals etc. Different other industries are also under construction. In Rangpo there are two ongoing construction works proposed by Central Government. One is the proposed railway lines to connect Rangpo (Sikkim) and West Bengal. The work of portal one and construction of the railways tracks (under Abir infrastructure Pvt. Ltd.) have already started in Rangpo. Another roadway bridge under Central Government Project (NHIDCL) is also being constructed at ward no 2, undertaken by Dinesh Chandra R Agarwal Infracon Pvt. Ltd. (DRAIPL). These developmental works generate the capacity of urban areas to produce job markets and to discriminate between economic sectors – informal and formal. Singtam, a junction

town is mostly engaged in retail and wholesale business with a large market area. According to Nagar Panchayat Office, under NBCC (National Buildings Construction Corporation Limited) there is a project of a huge construction to build a multistoried market area, viz. Lal Bazar at ward no. 5 (Chisopani). Another UNDP programme to construct a flyover is also going on. I have deliberately chosen Rangpo and Singtam, two most important towns in East Sikkim in terms of commercial interests and economic aspirations. The neoliberal urbanisation encapsulates the modern capitalism accompanied by commodification of land. The land use land cover maps of these two towns corroborate this global truth.

A decisive aspect of Sikkim's neoliberal urbanisation is marked by its turn towards transforming its urban spaces into logistical hubs with due emphasis on Urban Development Projects (UDPs) [in case of Sikkim the UDPs form a part of larger North East Regional Urban Development Projects (NERUDP) programme executed by the North Eastern Council (NEC)]. Such indications are prominent in the Sikkim Industrial Promotion and Incentive Act, 2000, that has identified thrust sectors such as precision engineering and IT, food and fruit processing, horticulture, floriculture, tourism, honey and biotechnology. While availability of infrastructure in the state is poor, construction activity has picked up in the last few years and the Government is focusing on development of roads, railway, hydroelectric power plants and telecom infrastructure (NSDC 2012: 30). In its transforming into UDP epicenters, the urban space itself becomes a site of extraction and thereby a rental site that survives on extracting all conceivable resources including labour. The postcolonial milieu of this double transformation makes the contradictions between the urban policy regime and neoliberal urbanity more acute as a whole. These contradictions revolve around two crucial issues: (a) the relation between labour and urban space in this transformation, and (b) the transformation of the city into a rental outlet, based on localised concentrations of migrant labour, a complex of place-based services to support the logistical economy, and a maddening rush for extraction (Ghosh 2017: 1). The migrant labour stands at the centre of these relations. While I agree that large-scale UDPs/ UIPs have indeed become one of the most visible and ubiquitous urban revitalisation strategies pursued by the stakeholders of Sikkim's urban governance in search of economic growth and competitiveness, I also argue that it is exactly this sort of new urban policy that actively produces, enacts, embodies, and reshapes the new political and economic regimes operative at local and regional context of Sikkim within which the vulnerability and precariousness of the migrant labourers are to be sought.

Inter-state migration in Singtam and Rangpo can be viewed as a microcosm of ‘assumed acceleration of global migration’, not only in terms of states of origin but also in terms of migration categories, and attributes to their skills. The demand for labour and provision of employment prospects in the economy is truly determined by the economic growth potential in Sikkim labour market. Sikkim Human Development Report, 2001 and 2014 stated that Sikkim has experienced an exceptional increase in average GSDP rate (13.9%). An inspiring growth in incomes in the state over the past decade has contributed to the increase in HDI. Sikkim’s NSDP grew, on an average, by 17% every year, which is the highest among all Indian states. As a result of high growth in overall economic indicators, real per capita income has also increased more than four times from Rs 15,953 in 2001–02 to Rs 69,202 in 2011–12. Sikkim’s per capita income today is the highest among north-eastern states and ranks fifth in India (after Delhi, Goa, Chandigarh and Puducherry). Maximum growth has been generated by impressive expansion in the industrial and manufacturing sectors, backed by the services sector. The Sikkim Industrial Development and Investment Corporation Limited (SIDICO) is the state level institution engaged in promoting, financing, and developing the small and tiny scale industries. All these factors, in general, are attracting migrants from the neighbouring plain areas – to establish the fact that net migration rate of Sikkim was +0.21% and percentage of migration in the total population was 34.6 (Census 2001 and SSES 2006). Among four districts, East district contains 65.02% of migrant population (SSEC, 2006). This district is especially experiencing the influx of the migrant population because of the presence of state led development initiatives and the best ever growing economic development, infrastructural development as compared to other districts. The proportions of migrant youths (36.74%) are higher than that of the state (34.8%) itself. Furthermore, the presence of 53.41% migrants between 15 to 44 age groups also shows that the young working population is dominated by the migrant labour force. Perhaps the labour market of the entire economy of the state has been controlled by the migrant labour but there is a sharp contrast in the rights of equality in terms of socio-political rights of the migrant workers.

3.7 Labour Migration and Informality

All those activities which build up through work and employment fall under informal economy. These employments are not enlisted and administrated by any public regulation. The informality concept owes its origin/growth to K. Hart’s pioneering work in the 1960s. Informal economy is not a pure product of capitalism rather it exists as traditional *bazaar* economy in agrarian and rural India to provide livelihood more or less of the entire workforce (Breman. 2013). The journey from

agrarian society to industrial society – from feudalism to capitalism – influences the labour mobility. This transition also gives a big spatial radius to the labour for migration, though the classic Lewi's approach of migration is not considered a smooth transfer of labourers from the agriculture to industry in India. At the time of agrarian society/pre-colonial society in India, it was not possible to differentiate labour from the total work force because an 'individual's labour activities are pre-determined by the culture' (David L. Sius, 1968). Breman (1996) also stated that the transition towards the industrial production was not as aerodynamic as the positive views. He named this sector as an 'absorptive reservoir and clearing house for raw labour, undisciplined and untrained, coming from countryside'. The framework proposed by Harris-Todaro (1970: 126-142) provides some imminent connection between informality and urbanisation. Long time back the Dutch anthropologist Julius H. Boeke (1947, 1953) also envisioned two separate domains of activities, one was under the jurisdiction of the colonial law and other one was outside these rules and regulations (Kanbur, R, Ghani, E. 2013). However, labour migration has become noticeable from the beginning of industrial age. India did not experience the common starting point and growth of capitalism. Primitive accumulation implies a group of people with no land or very less land to survive. This process increasingly makes people wage-earners. It also generates waves of rural people migrating to urban areas for the sake of jobs leaving behind their conventional occupations.

The urbanisation in developing world has a distinct feature – it consists of the evaluation of large informal sector. ILO, 2007 identified several underlying factors for this - poverty and livelihood opportunities, increasing flexible labour market, less absorbing power in formal sector etc. Different studies have indicated that there is a close relation between migration and urban informality (Bannerjee, 1983 and Sethuraman, 1992). The growth of informal sector along with the pace of migration is inevitable because this sector acts as a job generator and absorbs newcomers in new jobs offered by capitalisation, modernisation and liberalisation of economy.

It has been already discussed the impact of neoliberal urbanisation and economic structure on the growth of informal economy in Sikkim.

My field surveys reveal the fact that Rangpo has been experiencing a sudden growth of informal economy since last decade due its developmental initiations (NULM, UDPS and others), sites for various industries, hotel businesses, and so on. Correspondingly, Singtam has also been

experiencing substantial development of retail and wholesale businesses, infrastructural developments etc. These overall neoliberal developments and wage structure are always attracting labour from outside the state. As Gary Field (1975) extended the concept of Harris-Todaro towards urban informal employment, in Sikkim, it has been also observed that urban informal employment is characterised as ‘underemployment’ and also as a substitute to open unemployment for rural migrant people due to ‘easy entry’.

3.8 Who are the Urban Informal Labourers in Rangpo and Singtam Town?

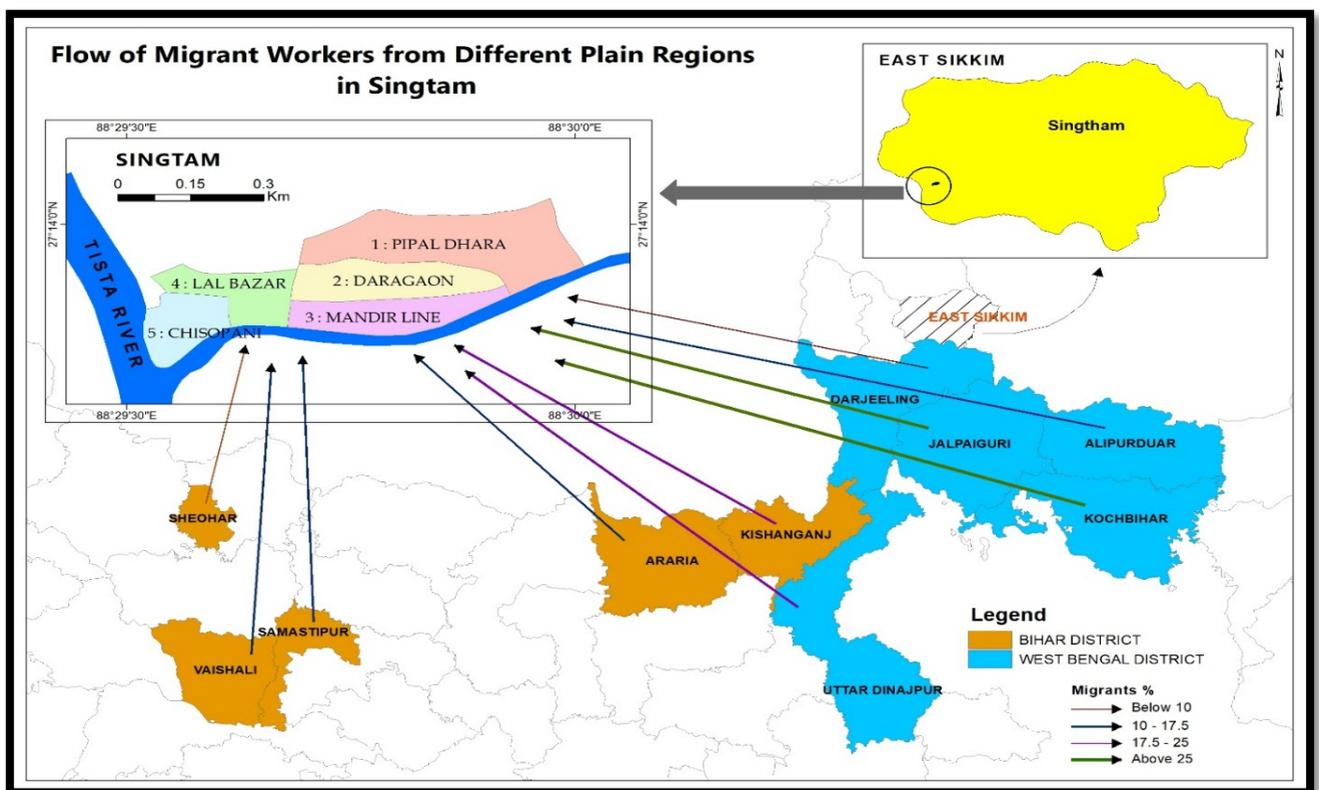
The text book theories on economic progress are always envisioned through transformation of labour from a feudalistic to modern economy. In the contemporary era, the developing countries are undergoing an enormous and quick growth of informal sectors outside agriculture. There is an ongoing debate on the participation rate of informal labourers on the assistance of economic growth. Informal labourers consist of nearly 92% of the total India’s labour force [National Commission for Enterprises in The Unorganised Sector, Govt. of India (2004-05)]. High commodification of land and social flaws of global capitalism also create a marginalised group, especially in informal economy. Normally, migrants enter a new town/city through informal sector with an informal and precarious life style. Buoyancy in the Indian economy has created a sense of euphoria, which is not coexistent with India’s informal economy (National Commission for Enterprises in Unorganised Sector/NCEUS, 2004-05: 1). In Global South, work is the only identity for social recognition and allows individuals to locate their positions within the corresponding social structure. Due to the intensified global competition, technological revolution and flexibility of employment, entire work process has changed.

These processes caused the significant growth of precarious work mostly in the last few decades. There are different drivers of precarious work, especially ‘low-road’¹² (Evans and Gibb. 2009) concepts lead to achieve the cost-cutting perceptions at the cost of job quality, working environment and wages. The upsurge of informal sector specifies the heterogeneity of labour market. It is important to observe that all these symptoms hold true for Rangpo and Singtam too. Spatial location promotes the growth of significant scopes for migrant labourers in these two newly born towns. Migrants, mostly from rural West Bengal and Bihar adapt themselves, as a pro-urban poor in Rangpo and Singtam town. According to my cross sectional random survey, in Rangpo

¹²Low-road ‘is a term used throughout the employment literature. Low road is represented as ‘low-skill, low-pay job which are unsafe, insecure and unsatisfying in marginally profitable industries’ – used in the conference “21st century work: High road or Low road?”

town, 73% of the respondents belongs to West Bengal and 27% is from different districts of Bihar. In the same way, Singtam town has an accumulation of 64.57% of the informal labourers from West Bengal and 35.43% from Bihar. Income of the majority of these migrant labourers is irregular and uncertain, but the amount of money they are earning here is much higher than what they could have earned at their native places, albeit at the cost of high exploitation rate. Especially, due to the stalling of rural agricultural economy people have started to migrate (slender season of agricultural activities) from their native places to distant or nearby urban areas for employment in different informal sectors, such as constructions, that of domestic helps, vendors, waiters and labourers in small hotels (Breman, 1994; Deshinkar and Farrington, 2009a; Haberfeld et al. 1999 and Vijay, 2005).

Fig.no. 3.8



Source: Field Survey. 2016-17. [N= 175 (Singtam)].

Table number 3.8. shows that maximum number of labourers in both the towns are from the West Bengal. 44.24% of the labourer comes from Coochbehar district and cross a distance of 269.2 km. to work in different informal sectors in Singtam town, followed by Jalpaiguri with a percentage of

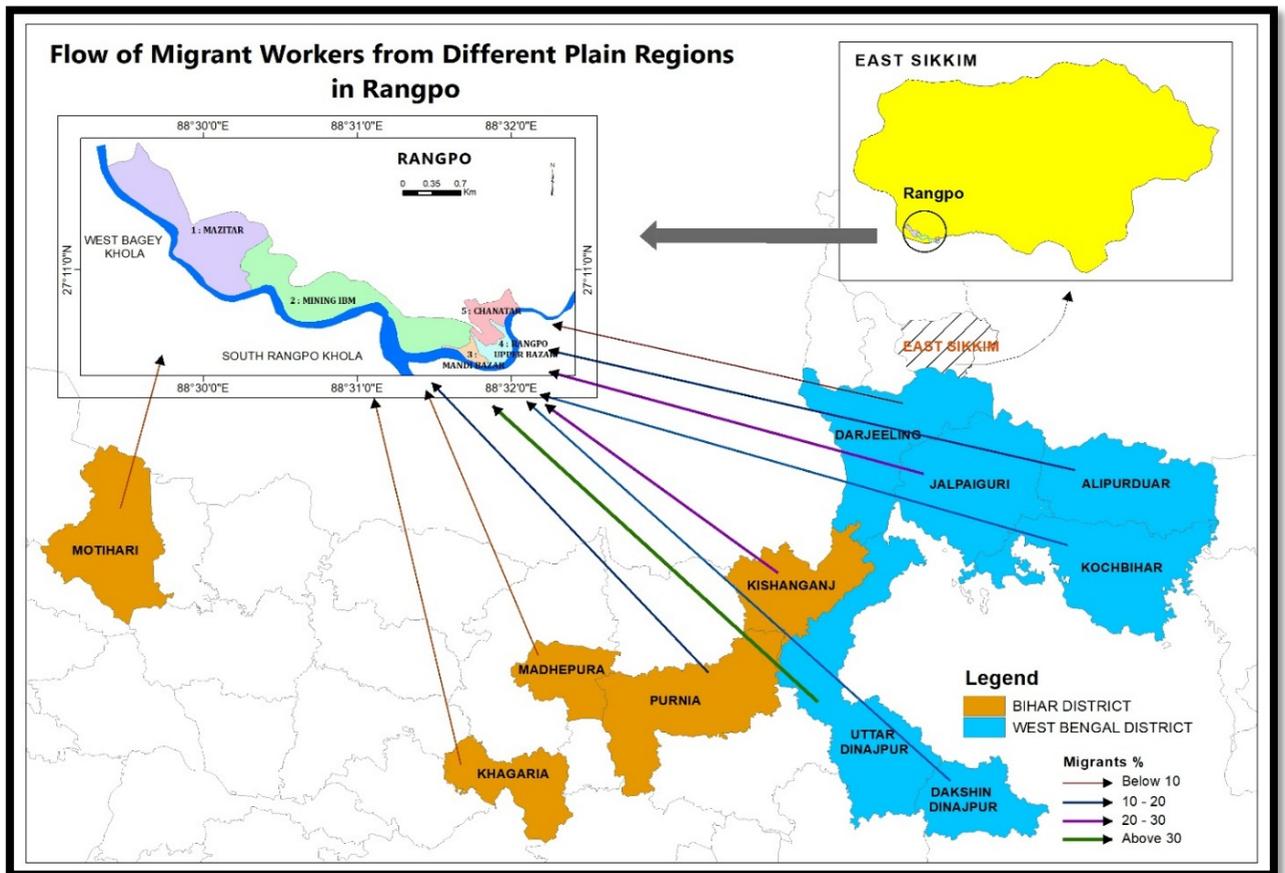
23.9%. Rangpo town has an accumulation of the highest number of labourers (42.18%) from North Dinajpur, followed by those from Jalpaiguri District. The labour flow from Kisanganj district is high (29.03% in Singtam and 59.57% in Rangpo town) among the districts of Bihar. We know that migration unfolds in space and time (Malmberg 1997: 21-48) and is also defined against various thresholds of distance and ‘time in migration’ (Cwerner 2001: 7-36). However, in Sikkim’s informal structure most of the labourers cross a maximum of 269.2 km to a minimum of 145.4 km. for either continuing the same occupation or for starting a different one. Migration is a spatio-temporal process that evolves over space and time. It involves the continual reshaping of place as people move between various origins and destinations, and inversely related to distance is the habitual movement of people or groups from one geographic location to another for various reasons ranging from job opportunities to mental persecution (Hagen-Zanker, 2010), but there are considerable conceptual snags that are unacknowledged in migration literature, and workers’ mobilities take various dimensions, which may coexist. The geographic distance is often not a powerful enough barrier for labour migration in the contemporary world when the migration risk factors are also declining.

Table no. 3.8 **Flow of Migrant Labourers from Various Neighbouring States to Singtam and Rangpo Town, Sikkim.**

Sl.No	WEST BENGAL			BIHAR		
	DISTRICT	Singtam	Rangpo	DISTRICT	Singtam	Rangpo
1.	Jalpaiguri	27	21	Kisanganj	18	28
2.	Alipurduar	14	14	Vaishali	12	0
3.	Coochbehar	50	16	Sheohar	09	0
4.	North Dinajpur	20	54	Araria	11	0
5.	Darjeeling	02	04	Samastipur	12	0
6.	South Dinajpur	0	19	Madhupura	0	03
7.	-	-	-	Khagaria	0	02
8.	-	-	-	Motihari	0	02
9.	-	-	-	Purnia	0	12

Source: Field Survey 2016-2017

Fig no. 3.9



Source: Field Survey, 2016 & 2017. [N=175 (Rangpo)].

3.9 Reasons for the Migration in Rangpo and Singtam Town

Migration, from its recent past has been recognised as one of the major rudiments of the strategic households to secure and possibly improve their livelihoods. It is sometimes also combined with agricultural escalation and local non-farm or industrial activities (McDowell and Haan, 1997; Bebbington, 1999: 2021-2044; Ellis, 2000). Human capital theory states the fact that labour market is the product of the combination of what that particular individual/migrant performs in that destination's labour market. The price of their labour may be the skills, physical abilities or other concerning choices of mixed jobs. On the contrary, there are other controlling variables beyond migrant's skills and physical abilities, such as age, state policies, ethnic background etc.; these act as changing variables of the human capital perceptions through offering new job status in the host area. It has been also recognised that migration is mostly a short term survival approach by rural people, who are also made to suffer by the global capitalist system and are forced to join the newly

born proletariat group. My study argues that migration is a deliberate decision for improving livelihoods, empowerment for future investments (Bebbington, 1999:2027), and also for securing future uncertainty (De Haan et al., 2000:28; McDowell and De Haan, 1997:18). However, these facts and findings are predominantly valid for rural to urban human resource flow within the national boundaries. In this context, it is also important that “there is no *a priori* reason why this diversification-through-migration argument cannot also be extended to international migration and urban households” (Hass de Hein, 2010:245). New economics of labour migration exist analogously with ‘livelihood approaches’, which tend to be heterogeneous in character. These thinking have evolved since the late ’70s among geographers, sociologists and anthropologists, which lead them to pursue micro-research in the developing countries. Diverse and contradictory observations are being evolved through the empirical micro research studies – those do not fit the neo-Marxist thinking (*ibid*: 227-264). Still, it is obvious that migration and economic activities of the origin place are not equally exclusive but are often combined.

One of the major reasons for in-migration observed in Sikkim is the high wages that will be discussed in the upcoming chapter in greater detail. Due to the ready availability of labour, migrants would be able to increase their income through moving or working in high paid locations. Manjula Luthria (2008: 165-170) nicely correlates the population movement towards labour intensive economy/(neoliberal) and high wage location and states that “...under certain conditions the free movement of goods is a substitute for the free movement of the factors embodied in the production of those goods – therefore, trade in goods that are highly labour intensive should do the same for wages as a physical movement of people...” (Luthria, 2008:165). My empirical study shows that (table no.4.12) most respondents migrate in search of better employment in terms of income, e.g. in Rangpo 43.97% and Singtam 52.43%, and 39.16%, 33.53% in search of any employment in Rangpo and Singtam respectively.

Most of the labourers have come from the plain topographic terrain of West Bengal and Bihar. Migrants come to Singtam and Rangpo town to garner major shares of informal employment in construction sectors, tailoring, hotel work and other daily wage based economy like portering because the area has been a migrant receiving area since the time of the Chogyals. If the destination of the migrants has already been facing worker storages, this makes the condition more favorable for the mutually useful movement of labourers. The key to this situation is the nonchalant attitude

of local youths in this field, creating openings for migrants from other states (Wright and Ellis 1996, 1997); in this case, mostly from Bihar and West Bengal.

It has been noticed that these migrants preferred to develop their present livelihood situation, and information and supportive networks facilitated the migrants to take hold of the risk of migration. Reduced migration cost also motivated them to take part in this migration current towards Sikkim. The most relevant work in the present time is to execute the relationships between regional and economic restructuring and in-migration receptiveness of labourers towards cities and also to small towns, and the aptitude of these labourers to efficiently distinguish the 'true-false' situation of labour market and to think about potential destinations (Clark and Ballard, 1981). Hence, this theory regarded migration as a household livelihood strategy. The livelihood approach encompasses entire social and economic perspective of the households and individuals. It can be defined as a strategic choice of the individuals or households to improve and secure their life through heterogeneous activities. Inductive or empirical studies of the respondent can establish the emergence of the livelihood concept. In this context, I tried to find out respondent's income generating activities along with their social institutions, intra personal relationship and the mechanisms for the improvement of their life – under the light of inter-state migration and status of occupation.

Table number 3.9 shows that participation rate as informal employer is very low compared to informal employee. It is also varying among the different informal occupations. Rangpo and Singtam have experienced maximum number of informal employer in tailoring profession (18.75% and 41.18% in Rangpo and Singtam respectively) and Singtam has very low percentage of informal employer in construction sector (3.08%). Construction industry is playing an important role in the development of infrastructure and juxtaposes neoliberal urban trends. Nearly 340 million workforces are engaged in unorganised/informal sector and half of them are from construction industry (NCEUS, 2005; Ramesh, 2009: 1-18; Rajasekhar et al., 2009). This industry is the fastest growing sector with an annual growth rate of 10% (Baruah, 2008: 1-24). Informality has become a norm in construction industry throughout the developing South. Sikkim is also witnessing this fastest growing sector.

Table no. 3.9 **Participation Rate of Migrants in Sikkim's Informal Economy**

Towns	Informal employer				Informal employee			
	Tailor	Porter	Hotel Worker	Construction Worker	Tailor	Porter	Hotel Worker	Construction Worker
Rangpo	3(18.75)	0	0	0	13(81.25)	62(100)	30(100)	67(100)
Singtam	7(41.18)	0	0	2(3.08)	10(58.82)	65(100)	30(100)	63(96.92)

Source: Field Survey, 216-17. [% values are within ()].

In Rangpo town, every respondent – engaged in the construction industry is informal employee and in Singtam the participation rate is as high as 96.92% (table no. 3.9). Geographical location, economic practices and urban development practices of these towns are determining the evolution of different informal sectors, where I have noticed tailor, porter, construction work and hotel work have utmost space to consume migrant labour.

The table no. 3.10 shows different reasons or perceptions of labour in Rangpo's and Singtam's informal labour market in Sikkim. Search of better employment is the dominating practice for migration in both of the towns (43.97% and 52.43% in Rangpo and Singtam respectively). Second leading reason is search of any employment which established the fact that the growth of informal sector is high in these two towns. Urban informality is the well-established trend of contemporary neoliberal economic practices and Sikkim is experiencing this in terms of infrastructural development, city development, various urban developmental projects, etc. My field survey has also explored another area of concern, which is related to the proximity to place of work – one that acts as an important reason for selection of these towns in Sikkim (Table no. 3.10). There are various suggestions in the literatures to identify the increasing tendency to choose nearby working place (Greenwood, 1997). The foremost explanation considers the distance as a proxy for the transportation costs for moving and high costs also act as 'intervening opportunities' (Lee, E. 1940). Psychic costs of separation from the family and home at times play a significant role to choose the close-by working place. Information for the beneficial shorter move by prior migrants also turns as a motivation. Migration and distance are hence related with three contexts. Primarily, when frequent return visits are envisioned by a migrant, which may well be the case when the migrant wishes to endure a close link with their family left behind at the place of origin. Secondly,

the costs of single domestic journeys may be less than the price of distance travel and lastly, for poor households, that are credit constrained, the ability to raise funds to pay the costs of moving before gaining higher earning in their new destination may be a constraint.

Table no.3.10 **Different Reasons for Migration in Rangpo and Singtam Town**

Reasons for Migration	Rangpo	Singtam
In search of employment	65 (39.16%)	55 (33.53%)
In search of better employment	73 (43.97%)	86 (52.43%)
Proximity to place of work	24 (14.46%)	17 (10.36%)
Others	04 (2.40%)	06 (3.65%)
Not responded	09 (5.14%)	11 6.28%)

Source: Field Survey, 2016-2017 (total no. of respondents: Rangpo - 166 and Singtam - 164).

3.10 Labour Migration as a Result of Demographic Disparities or Lack of Human Resource

An important insight gained into labour migration is the fact of demographic disparities between host and the sending regions. Natural growth rates of sending regions are probably higher than the receiving areas and this demographic pattern of growth and slow-down is the driving force of labour migration. Most of the international movement of people between Global North and Global South is because of this reason. Demographic disparity deploys the concept of neo-Malthusian approach (Sturman, 1989:135-152) in population growth in the developing countries. Sikkim has total fertility rate of 2.4 birth/woman, (2015) compared to and Bihar (4.5 birth/woman, 2015). We also know that there is reciprocity in the relationship between migration and geographic population distribution, which facilitates the pattern of urban informal labour flow in towns and cities. Labourers are shifted from low wage areas (Bihar and West Bengal) to high wage (Sikkim) areas and labour-surplus source regions to labour-scarce destination areas. Due to the structural transformation of an area, labour market has created a space for extra labourers in the low profile job market and Sikkim does not have enough hands to fill the vacuum place. So, in Sikkim, the demand of migrant labourers is always very high to execute ‘development’ practices. Another important feature of the development of Sikkim’s urban population is that it is not controlled by the rural Sikkimese migration to urban towns rather newly born towns have received maximum

number of migrants from the nearby states. So, urban population growth rate of Sikkim is chiefly determined by the non-Sikkimese population.

3.11 Conclusion

The labour landscape (George and Sinha, 2018: 22) in Sikkim has changed through different subsequent industrial and infrastructural developments along with labour market deregulation policies. Different studies have already highlighted that structural and sectoral changes are the important parts for the expansion of informal sector (Nath 1994: 513-521; Gupta 1995; Maiti and Mitra 2010), decline of agriculture and allied sectors (Bhalla and Sing 2009:34-44; Rajkumar and Shetty 2015:108-110) and growth of certain section of service sectors (Rajkumar and Shetty 2015), and Sikkim is not beyond these changes. Most determinate factors of the labour space are the production processes, labour relations and strategic policies implemented by the state. These entire processes are decisive in the pattern, rate and the structure of migrant labour market in Rangpo and Singtam towns.

Most defining landscape of neoliberal regime is inequality, which has become the most relevant challenge for the state to maintain its accumulation proportion with the development. These structural changes are very much predominant in towns and cities. Neoliberalisation of urban space in the developing South is posited as a solution to poverty and other global developmental challenges, which may not be a generalised ideology of development. Liberalised migration in contemporary India has taken place because of the reason that towns and cities have been highly characterised by post capital production systems (non-agrarian production) and other specialised corporate functions to incite more migrant labour from the native rural areas. The perception of the informal economy in the 20th century was considered as a vestigial part of the pre-modern mode of production, leading to a subsequent fading away against the dominance of hegemonic control of formal sector (Lewis, 1959; Geertz, 1963). This transformation has faced strong criticisms due to its strong relevance as a potential phenomenon in the vast regions of the globe (ILO, 2011, 2012, 2013a, 2013b; OECD, 2012; Williams, 2014a). The emergence of political economy discourse on the informal economy has clearly transcended the previous dualistic depiction of the binary opposite of the formal/informal economics. It always puts informality forward as a component of capitalism and a part of deregulated national/transnational capitalism (Williams, 2017b). On the other hand, migrant gateways are extensions of transformation, which enforce vast volume of

migrant labour force swings between supply and demand areas and are consumed in elusive employment in the informal economy (Castells and Portes, 1989: 11-41; Gallin, 2001:531-549; Davis, 2006; Taiwo, 2013: 469-492), Internal trans-border migration is often believed to be a gradual transfer of rural labour force and utilization of its potentiality as a cheaper manpower for growing modern industrial complex (Todaro, 1980: 361-402).

This human resources transfer seems to be economically beneficial (Kuznets 1964; 1971) to overcome incessant crises and to fulfill daily needs of the migrant labourers. As the tune has followed by almost zero in the places of origin in order to maintain reasonably better livelihoods, which rapidly grows and results in the 'capital accumulation' in the new industrial sojourn. This accumulation of manpower generates incipient forms of blue collar jobs - those that are widely open in the city's nook and corner, where these migrants are gradually absorbed. The migration and job opportunities are inseparably intertwined in the developing world of Global South in particular. There is a significant paradox in Indian employment issue that the expansion of service sectors is higher without generating employment (George and Sinha, 2018: 20). My study shows that the manufacturing and construction collected nearly 24% of Indian workforce, especially in urban areas. Urban employment is selectively expanding and the highest share is contributed from the wholesale and retail sectors, constructions and also from repairing sectors. This uneven sectoral growth is considerably affecting the sustenance and expansion of informal employment in present economy. Urban migration is also presumed to generate the higher income processes from the hinterland areas, but the strategic role of this neo-liberal economy is to offer them informal services to survive their livelihoods. These growing informal economic activities are not able to expand without a competitive market in Sikkim. The state is experiencing huge growth in its GSDP and NSDP in the corresponding decades and accumulating 65.02% of the migrant population in East district (SSEC, 2006). NSSO 64th Round also reveals the facts that urban Sikkim comprised 76 migrant households per 1000 households during the last 365 days preceding the date of survey. Due to all these factors migration is essential but an invisible component in modern towns and cities, but in case of Sikkim, it has been noticed that entire economy is being controlled by the migrants, especially the informal sector. Saskia Sassen (2005: 27-43) has rightly stated that the city becomes global only with the presence of the migrant.

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CHAPTER FOUR

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE MIGRANT LABOURERS

4.1 Introduction

The movement of rural population to the urban areas in search of better livelihood prospects is a remarkable characteristic of the Indian economy. Neo-liberal economic reform also led people to search for new and better employments on the grounds that expansion of economy creates more opportunities generating aspirations for many people that prompt them to migrate (Mishra, 2016: 1-25). Migration affects every part of life, be it political, social, or economic. These make the study of migration extremely pertinent as well as complicated. Most of the time migration and poverty reduction have become synonymous with each other in this globalised world. Migration is performed as a pedestal of the poverty reduction process. In one hand migration generates the cause and consequences of poverty, and on the other, poverty can be reduced by population mobility. The relation between migration and poverty, according to Skeldon (2002: 67-82), delineates the proportional impact on each other. The entire processes have been controlled by the different stages of progress of the core area. Developing countries are experiencing high internal migration rates mostly in case of rural-urban migration. An idiosyncratic diversity of sex, age, ethnicity, marital status, education etc. is controlling the inclination of migration among different socio-economic groups ((Lee, 1966: 47-57).

Developing countries in Asia, Latin America, Africa, and the Pacific are experiencing migration as a prominent feature of their economic life cycle with the simultaneous progress of economic growth (Gurmu et al. 2000). The infrastructural improvements, transport and communication along with the possibilities of economic development have increased the probability of population migration. In India, it is evident that the total percentage of migration had reduced until the 1991 census, but the rural – urban movement has shown an increasing trend chronologically from 1971 to 2001 (Lusome and Bhagat, 2006). UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), 2009 in a report entitled ‘Mobility and Human Development’ asserted that population movement from rural to urban areas is a natural process and is related to production, migration, and economic integration to promote the development of the rural people of India. The dynamic growth of Indian cities shows that migration is a very important phenomenon in terms of their structural activities. These functions may not have continued without migrants and migrant labourers. Labour migration is

complex in terms of its duration, origin, destination, and also in terms of the characteristics of migrants. An employment opportunity in the urban formal sector, which offers confined employment for certain types of skilled labourers, is what attracts the rural dwellers. But the limited prospects in the urban formal sector push a massive population into the hard core of the informal sectors of the host areas. These movements had influenced not only the migrant's but also the household's living conditions, health conditions, and life style.

This chapter explores the link between the demographic parameters of migrants and socio-economic condition of respondents, which is understandable in that it replicates the assortment of definitions and the overall consequences of migration. For example, potential migrants from various districts of Bihar and West Bengal (plain areas) used to face a stark choice: either adapt to the shrinking pool of agriculture related jobs, other low wage jobs, unemployment in the place of origin, or become possible migrants to a reasonably healthy economic area of the country.

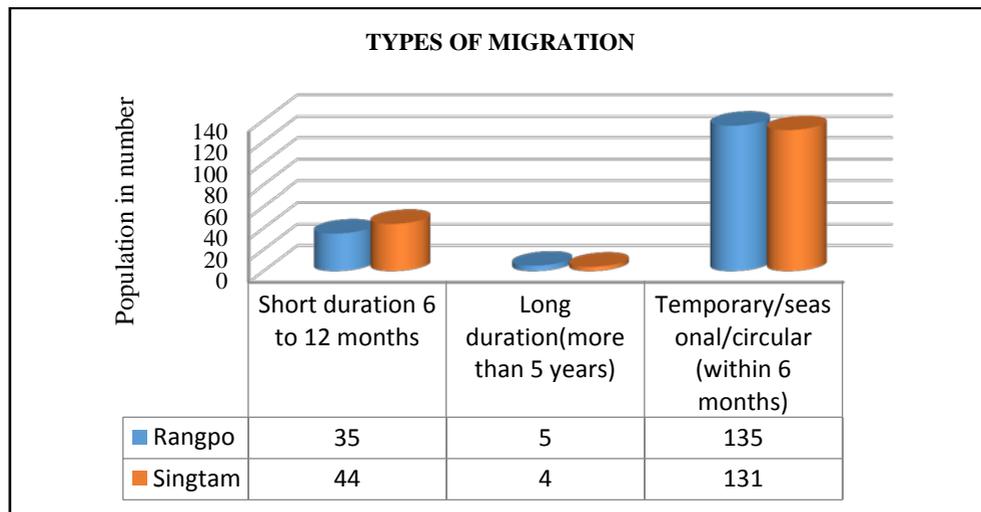
Sikkim is experiencing various types of migrations in terms of its labour influx. Like any developing country's state, Sikkim is also witnessing migrants who move in seasonally in search of livelihoods or better livelihoods.

4.2 Types of Migration Among the Migrant Labourers

Crossing the national or international borders in search of better livelihoods is the fundamental feature of human civilisations (Srivastava and Sasikumar, 2003: 1). These movements may vary ranging from short to long durations and also short to long distances (Massey, 1990: 3-26). There have been numerous evidences from the available studies that temporary and seasonal types of migration are widespread in developing countries (Hugo, 1982: 59-83; Mberu, 2006: 509-540; Brauw, 2007 and Lam et al., 2007: 117-144). Temporary migration has become a discourse to justify the poor rural labour movement towards urban informal sector. It is a changing of economic activity rather a movement of the usual residence of a person (Bilsborrow et al., 1984), which is largely predominant in Sikkim because of the state's Sikkim Subject Regulation Act 1961. There are different opinions on the definition of temporary migration on the basis of the length of stay, but there are some agreements - one important condition of temporary migration necessitates that provisional movement should be related to the uninterrupted absence from the place of residence (Zelinsky, 1971:219-249; Hugo, 1982:59-83). Another criterion is that temporary migration is made for short time duration with the intention of returning to the original place of residence. On

the other hand, large number of circular migrants also consists of seasonal migrants, who are employed in combined activities in various places depending on seasonal labour requirements. Considering the duration of temporary migration, six months is normally recognised as the maximum time frame for temporary movement (Srivastava and Sasikumar, 2003; Mberu, 2006: 509-540; Pham and Hill, 2008: 57-75). Large scale intra or inter-state temporary migration of labour has been observed in various parts of India. According to National Sample Survey (NSS, 1999, 2000), Sikkim is experiencing 16.6 per 1000 temporary and seasonal migration rate. In India temporary migration is influenced by the seasons; so here the terms ‘temporary’ and ‘seasonal’ migrations are superimposed and interchangeably used for further analysis. Hypothetically, it is assumed that the poor and less literate or illiterates are more disposed to migrate temporarily.

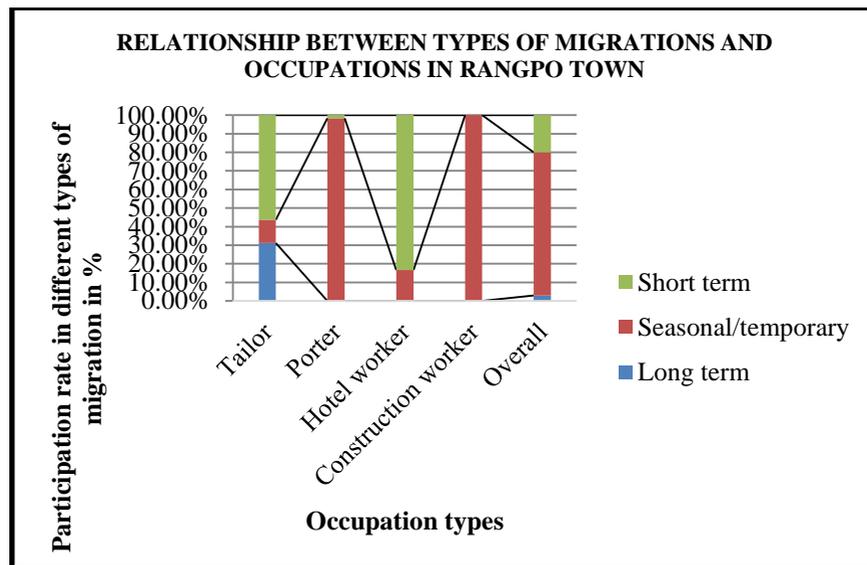
Fig no. 4.1



Source: Field Survey, 2016-17.

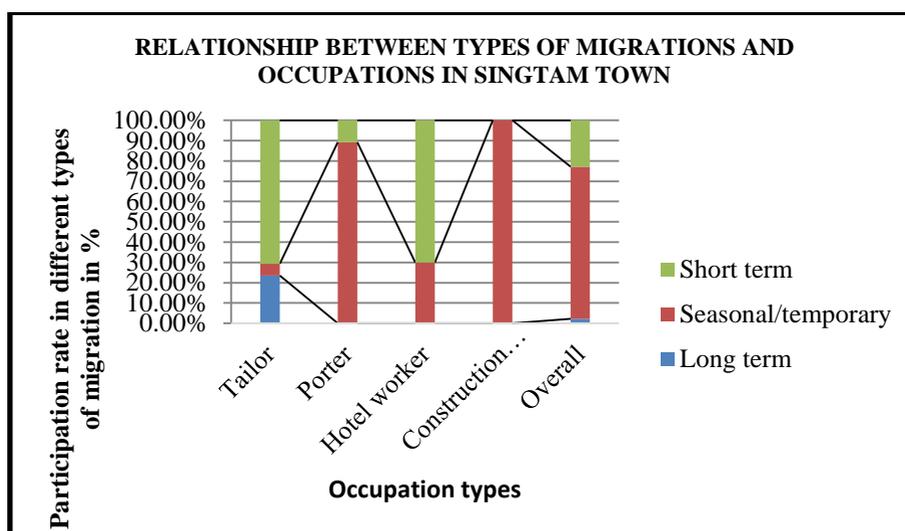
Figure number 4.1 frames the common facts of temporary migration trend in the study area. Most of the migrant labourers - 77.14% in Rangpo town and 74.86% in Singtam town - are temporary/seasonal/circular type. I have shown short duration of migration (6 to 12 months) because many migrations can also exist beyond the descriptions of seasonal/temporary/circular migration. The second leading type of migration is short duration migration. 20% and 24.14% of the migrants are short duration migrants in Rangpo and Singtam respectively. Newland et al. (2008) discussed this in the following way: “While circulatory is not built into all programs, the time-limited contracts and the limited opportunities in the home country often mean that temporary workers go back and forth repeatedly” (Gibson, McKenzie and Rohorua, 2013: 01).

Fig no. 4.2



Source: Field Survey 2016-17.

Fig no. 4.3



Source: Field Survey 2016-17.

Figure no 4.2 and 4.3 represent the relationship between migration types and occupations. Among various types of occupations porters and construction workers are having high participation rate in seasonal/temporary migration in both the towns (77.14% in Rangpo and 74.86% in Singtam town). Another important type of migration is short term migration popular among the hotel workers and tailors. The long term migration is inconsequential except in case of tailoring profession. Therefore,

there are significant differences in the participation rate of various types of migrants in different informal occupations.

4.3 Migration History for Multiple Movers

The migration history of the informal labourers establishes the reality of various types of migration in Rangpo and Singtam.

Table no. 4.1 **Migration History for Multiple Movers**

Migration Particulars	Number of respondents	
	Rangpo	Singtam
Migrated more than once (present destination)	122 (69.71%)	119 (68%)
Migrated once (present destination)	12 (6.86%)	18 (10.28%)
Migrated first time (in life)	41 (23.43%)	38 (21.71%)

Source: Field Survey, 2016-17.

Table no. 4.1 shows that out of 175 respondents in Rangpo town 69.71% have come to the same destination more than once and 23.43% of the respondents have migrated for the first time in their life from their native places. On the other hand, Singtam town (175 respondents) has 68% of repeat migrants and 21.71% new migrants. All 350 respondents in Rangpo and Singtam got job in various informal sectors and none was unemployed. Newcomers are also employed; clearly, previous migration history has not influenced the employment opportunities.

4.4 Relation of Educational and Economic Status with Various Types of Migration

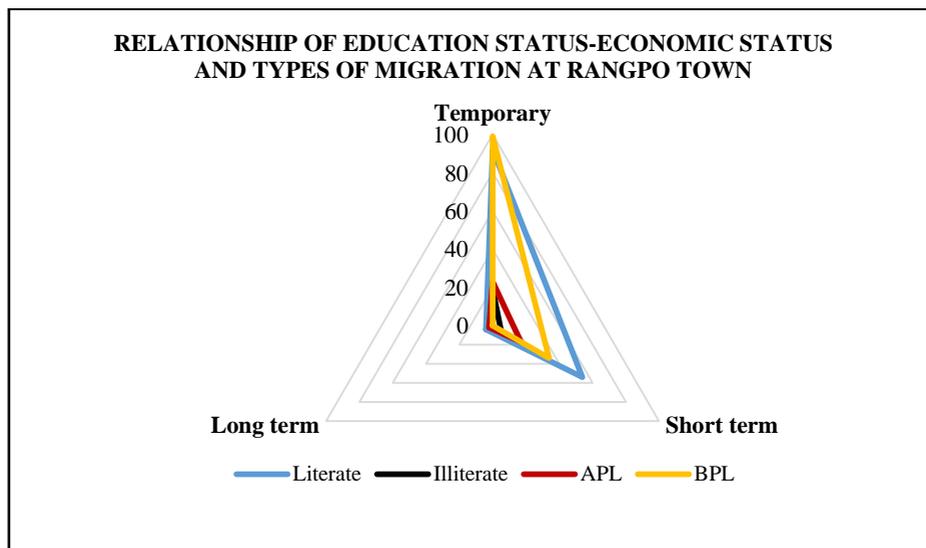
India is the second highest populous country in the world with extensive socio-economic and geographical diversity which is reflected on the types and patterns of migration. There are also direct and indirect relationships of the educational status, skills, and economic status and the migration pattern. In Rangpo, I observed that the maximum inclination of migrants is towards temporary migration, irrespective of their being literate or illiterate and APL or BPL. As evidence of temporary/seasonal/circular migration is scarce and also because empirical study is limited it is not possible to portray macro perceptions in this regard. Temporary, seasonal migrations are the

consequences of liberalisation, but due to limited evidence of the overall livelihoods of the migrants it is difficult to identify whether the proliferation of migrant labourers has impacted on the processes and patterns of migrations and also on development.

The figure number 4.4 shows that literate, illiterate and BPL respondents are more (77.14%) inclined towards temporary/seasonal type and partially inclined towards short term migration (20%). Percentage share of long term migration is almost negligible (2.8%).

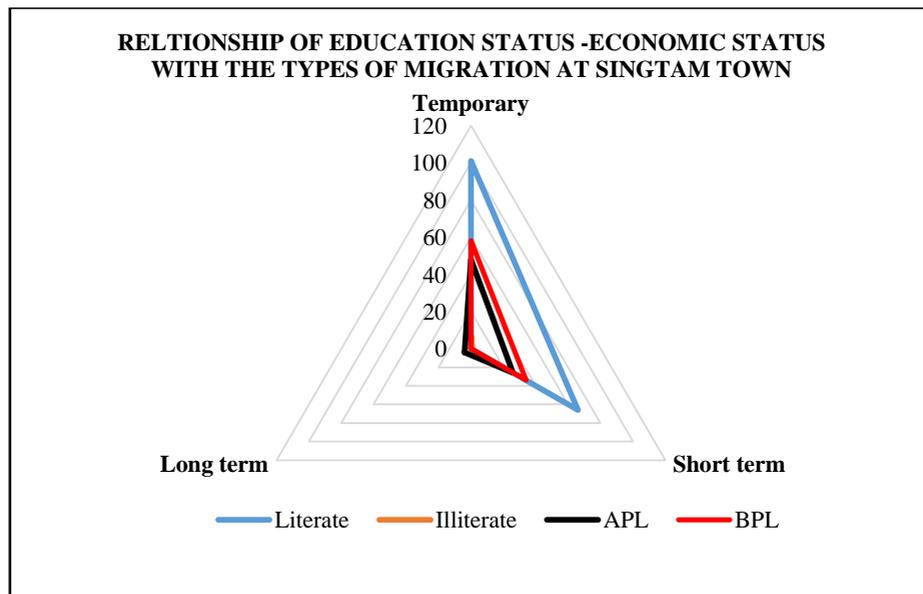
Figure number 4.5. reveals the fact that in Singtam town maximum literate migrants are temporary/seasonal (74.86%) while 29.94% literate migrants prefer to stay for short duration. The NSS 64th round estimated that around 12.24 million people lived away from their usual place of residence (UPR) for seeking work or work purpose between two to six months. This purpose and length of migration have also been studied in Rangpo and Singtam. Singtam being a commercial town attracts more (5.14%) stable migrants than Rangpo.

Fig no. 4.4



Source: Field Survey, 2017.

Fig no. 4.5



Source: Field survey, 2016-17.

Opportunities and availability of different occupations are also other determining parameters which induce different types of migration. The following table shows the minimum and maximum stay of migrant labourers with their deviation value and range.

Table no. 4.2 represents vast diversity among different types of migrants with dissimilar occupations. Tailoring profession shows wide difference between their minimum and maximum length of stay because both the towns have long duration migrants only in this informal sector. Most of the porters maintain an average minimum stay in Rangpo and Singtam, but Rangpo experiences larger duration of stay of the porters. My survey reveals the fact that in Rangpo town porters came when the distilleries of wine and other liquors were established, and subsequently got engaged in other occupational sectors like hotels and construction work. Their duration of stay at Rangpo has been longer because this town has more occupational opportunities owing to its location (first border town) and industrial development.

Table no. 4.2

Average Stay of Migrants (in months) at
Rangpo and Singtam Town (occupation wise)

Occupation	Minimum Stay (months)		Maximum Stay (months)	
	Rangpo	Singtam	Rangpo	Singtam
Tailor (R*16, S*17)	1.33±0.72 (0.00-2.00)	1.18±2.10 (0-6)	89.25±64.69 (12-216)	76.82±117.15 (1-480)
Porter (R*62, S*65)	2.55±1.29 (1.00-7.00)	2.38±.09 (1-7)	122.81±85.11 (6-120)	3.91±1.10 (2-9)
Hotel worker (R*30, S*30)	3.37±1.47 (0.00-6.00)	6.33±3.01 (0-10)	43.53±40.46 (4-192)	11.80±7.39 (4-36)
Construction worker (R*67, S*65)	1.49±1.11 (0.00-5.00)	2.03±1.11 (1-8)	34.72±60.46 (1-420)	3.82±1.76 (2-12)

Source: Field Survey, 2016-17. *R=Rangpo, *S=Singtam. Length of stay has been calculated by months, because least length of stay is less than 1 month.

4.5 Consumption of Labour in Different Informal Sectors in Rangpo and Singtam

In search of work and better livelihoods people traverse short or long distances from their native place. In India, footloose labour force has been flowing towards urban destination due to the replacement of rural agrarian society by urban industrial way of life (Breman, 2013:64). On the other hand, global changes in labour market and flexibility of labour force create a transitional retail market, the informal sector which has the maximum consuming power of unskilled, semi-skilled, and skilled labour. Although they find a niche employment as waged worker or as self-employed individuals, they habitually find job in an informal economy. This research has been observed that, maximum engagement of migrant labourers are in four important informal occupations, namely – tailoring, portering, hotel work and construction work, but broadly all heterogeneity is clubbed together under one umbrella and labeled as informal economy. It is understood that “the formal-informal sector dichotomy coincides with the distinction between waged labour and self-employment” (Breman, 2013: 30) and “a wide range of economic activities often brought under the common denominator of ‘self-employment’” (Breman, 2016: 165). In my study the respondents are categorised under the umbrella term ‘informal sector’ as there is still a lack of perfect word to choose for specific occupations where the concepts of self-employment and

daily wage labour meddled with each other. In Sikkim, I have not only observed day-to-day wage labourers like porters and construction workers but also several forms of long term activities – that of tailors, who are considered as long duration migrants in Rangpo and Singtam. Performance of porters in this respect is casual or daily wage based, and their migration is seasonal and cyclic. Labourers in small hotels are mostly short term or seasonal migrants.

Construction industry plays a vital role in the development of infrastructure of a country/state and also employs a large number of people in its workforce. The construction sector is also regarded as the largest employer of migrant labourers in India with 40 million migrants (Deshingkar and Akter, 2009). All these sectors mostly consume seasonal/temporary migrants to do bottom end jobs. Recent studies witnessed that there has been a growing interest in different components related to migration phenomenon, which are relegated to and investigated under qualitative methods, where researchers consider individuals’ preferences of conciseness for migration processes as well as of choosing the destination. In Rangpo and Singtam, it has been observed that construction labourers are mostly temporary/circular migrants due to the absence of social and physical capital to settle down in other areas. Table no. 4.3 corroborates the above mentioned facts in a lucid way. In this study though the term ‘employee’ has been used, during field survey it has been noticed that it is not synonymous with the contract receptacle, rather it symbolises the self-employment practices. Such labourers earn their remuneration on a weekly or daily basis, and they are also free to leave their job any time.

Table no. 4.3 **Different Informal Job Pattern in Rangpo and Singtam Town**

Occupation	Employer		Employee						Total	
	Rangpo	Singtam	Salaried		Weekly Wage		Daily Wage		R*	S*
			R*	S*	R	S	R	S		
Tailor	3	4	4	3	0	3	9	7	16	17
Porter	0	0	0	0	0	0	62	65	62	65
Hotel worker	0	0	5	7	6	5	19	18	30	30
Construction worker	0	2	0	0	33	25	34	38	67	63

Source: Field Survey, 2016-17. R*=Rangpo, S*=Singtam.

4.6 Age Wise Participation Rate in Different Occupation

Age always plays strong roles in the migration of particular groups or individuals (Birchall. 2016: 12) in selecting the job variations and also in choosing the destination. Table no...tries to unfold the age structure of the respondents and their participation rate in four informal sectors at Rangpo and Singtam towns. As we know, the global trend of internal migration is six times more than that of international movement. Globally there are 740 million internal migrants in different age groups (UNDP, 2009). In 2015, the mean age of cross country migration was 39 and working age was between 20 to 64 years; Global South experienced higher concentration of under 20 aged migrants compared to Global North, for example, in Africa 34% migrants are below 20 and Europe has only 9% migrants under 20 years of age (Birchall, 2016: 11). There is a considerable difference between the age and gender of labour migrants across the globe.

Table no. 4.4 **Age Group Wise Participation Rate in Informal Economy**

in Rangpo and Singtam Town

Occupation	15-20 Years		20-25 Years		25-30 Years		30-35 Years		35-40 Years		40-45 Years		45-50 Years		50-55 Years		55-60 Years		Total	
	R*	S*	R	S	R	S	R	S	R	S	R	S	R	S	R	S	R	S	R	S
Tailor	3	2	0	6	5	4	6	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	16	17
Porter	12	0	21	25	17	19	3	9	6	8	0	0	0	1	3	2	0	1	62	65
Hotel worker	15	22	12	7	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	30	30
Construction worker	9	17	23	12	0	20	23	6	6	6	5	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	67	63

Source: Field Survey, 2016. 17. R*=Rangpo, S*=Singtam.

My field survey also exposed the real fact of Global South in terms of age wise participation rate in labour migration; 54.28% of the migrants are within 15 to 25 years of age in Rangpo and 52% in Singtam town in the same age group. It has been noticed that high concentration of lower age group migrants is in hotel and construction sector. These age group migrants are less experienced and less skilled labourers compared to other age groups, and can easily enter into the arena of urban

informal economy. They are attracted to urban life mainly to earn money. Since there is no particular age span for getting jobs in informal economy, the poor, younger, and middle-aged people are easily drawn into the urban informal economy. Dropping out of school, poverty, family responsibilities also play important roles in enhancing the participation rate.

4.7 Frequency of Poverty: The poorest rarely migrate

The access to physical and human possessions regulates the entry to job markets and self-employed activities. The economic status of a labourer has been reflected in the incident of poverty in segmented or dual labour market. Informal labourers had a much higher incident of poverty (20.5%) compared to that of the organised sector (11.3%) (National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector, Govt. of India. 2008: 24). Monthly per capita consumer expenditure (MPCE) quintiles have been used to show economic indicators to identify different economic positions by government of India. In this research, I have considered APL and BPL card issued by government of India as the indicator of poverty of my respondents.

Table no. 4.5

Poverty Level of the Respondents

Occupation	APL		BPL	
	Rangpo	Singtam	Rangpo	Singtam
Tailor	11(68.75)	15(88.23)	5(31.25)	2(11.76)
Porter	12(19.35)	10(15.38)	50(80.64)	55(84.61)
Hotel worker	6(20)	15(50)	24(80)	15(50)
Construction worker	13(19.40)	21(33.33)	54(86)	42(66.66)
Total	42(24)	61(34.86)	133(76)	114(65.14)

Source: Field Survey 2016-17. Figures in the parenthesis are percentages

Table no. 4.5 establishes the fact provided by the Planning Commission for 2004-05 that estimate of poverty is high in the unorganised/informal sector. There is a striking disparity existing within the economic statuses of seasonal/temporary, short duration, and long duration migrant labourers. Most of the tailors are from above poverty group (APL) in both the towns, 68.75% and 88.23% in

Rangpo and Singtam respectively, whereas, all other migrant workers are below poverty group of people. This group of people is the most vulnerable in terms of socio-economic status. 76% of the migrant labourers in Rangpo and 65.14% in Singtam town belong to below poverty level; this percentage variation is due to the higher concentration of temporary migrants in Rangpo town, and micro-studies show that the poorer are temporary/seasonal labour migrants (Srivastava, 2012: 12) in east Sikkim.

Statistical interface refers the process and use of samples to draw a proper representative fact from the population parameter. Any hypothesis is a belief made as a basis for reasoning. The *t*-testing helped me to identify the fact whether poorer (BPL) have more tendencies to migrate.

Hypothesis: There is a difference between the rate of migration in APL and BPL population at Rangpo and Singtam town.

Table no. 4.6 **Mean Differences of APL and BPL Holder in Rangpo Town**

<i>APL</i>		<i>BPL</i>	
Mean	10.5	Mean	33.25
Standard Error	1.554563176	Standard Error	11.52804551
Median	11.5	Median	37
Standard Deviation	3.109126351	Standard Deviation	23.05609102
Sample Variance	9.666666667	Sample Variance	531.5833333
Range	7	Range	49
Sum	42	Sum	133

Source: Field Survey, 2017. Calculation done by SPSS 16.

Table no. 4.7. **t-Test value of Two-Sample Assuming Equal Variance**

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Equal Variance		
	<i>APL</i>	<i>BPL</i>
Mean	10.5	33.25
Variance	9.666667	531.5833333
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.049137	
t Critical one-tail	1.94318	

Source: Field Survey, 2017. Calculation done by SPSS 16

In Rangpo town, the tendency of migration among BPL population (M=33.35, SD=23.05, Sum=133) was hypothesised to be more than the APL population (M=10.3, SD=3.10, Sum=42) which has been proved with the signified difference, $t(6) = 1.94, p = 0.049$ (one- tail).

Table no. 4.8 **Mean Differences of APL and BPL Holder in Singtam Town**

<i>APL</i>		<i>BPL</i>	
Mean	15.25	Mean	28.50
Standard Error	2.25	Standard Error	12.14
Median	15.00	Median	28.50
Standard Deviation	4.50	Standard Deviation	24.28
Sample Variance	20.25	Sample Variance	589.67
Range	11.00	Range	53.00
Sum	61.00	Sum	114.00

Source: Field Survey, 2017. Calculation done by SPSS 16

Table no. 4.9. . **t-Test value of Two-Sample Assuming Equal Variance**

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Equal Variances		
	<i>APL</i>	<i>BPL</i>
Mean	15.25	28.5
Variance	20.25	589.6666667
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.16225384	
t Critical one-tail	1.943180281	

Source: Field Survey, Calculation: SPSS Version 16.

In Singtam town also the influx of BPL population (M=28.50, SD=24.28, Sum=114) was hypothesised to be more than the APL population (M=15.25, SD=4.50, Sum=61). This difference has become significant in $t(6)=1.94$, $P=0.162$ (one-tail). My findings show that migration among BPL population is significantly more than the APL populations who work in Sikkim's informal sector. Though different case studies on migration showed that a minimum level of assets is required to move from one place to another or to leave some money at their native place for running the household left behind, my 350 respondents have denied the fact that the poorest rarely migrate. Through various interviews I came to know that the migrants sometimes borrow money from friends, relatives and contractors to cover the expenses for migration. On the other hand, through this survey I have also noticed that the tendency of taking loan is low among the respondents (table no. 4.15). There is also a possibility of hiding the recent poverty status among the migrants. Once they are entitled as BPL – they are not willing to change their status even after generations.

4.8 Change in Occupation Through Migration/Occupation Mobility

In the past few decades, neoliberal economic policies have been characterised by liberalisation, globalisation, and privatisation and also by the carrying forward of the transformation processes of feudal economy to capital economy at a high pace. A different urban economy has been introduced to consume unskilled poor labour force within the newly introduced flexible informal labour market. It is not easy to give up agricultural practices and habitat for the migrant labourers because in a way most of them are embedded within the village of their origin and do not keep any vacancy at hinterland. On the other hand, they have been accepted in the destination region as temporary labourers and not as residents (Breman, 2013:68) or as citizens (Sikkim in particular). My field study has revealed noticeable transformation in occupation. Sometimes, these transformations helped to change the occupation completely just after migration and sometimes it was nurtured by variant modes of occupation structure. Nowadays for many households, working on agricultural field is not the prime source of livelihood; ancillary activities have been introduced for young generations. When I studied informal labourers in Sikkim, I found that young generations are not completely dependent on cultivation as their main source of livelihoods; they depend only if no other employment choices are available, especially in the urban 'easy entry' sectors. So, occupational multiplicity has become a chief characteristic of the landless, poor, and marginal land holder inhabitants. Table no. 5.10 projects the real picture of my respondents, whether they have changed their occupation completely or are involved in multiple occupations after migration. Srivastava and Bhattacharjee (2002) have pointed out a few essential conclusions from their analysis on 49th (1992-93) and 55th rounds (1999-00) NSS estimations. They stated that "Comparing activity status before and after migration for all migrants, we find that migrants in general show much higher work participation rates for both urban and rural areas. In the urban areas, the NSS 55th round figures show a significant transition to regular employment and self-employment among the males, with a small decline in the percentage of casual labour" (ibid, pp. 4). In the present case, self-employment in terms of weekly and daily wage labourers is quite high (table no..) and especially, temporary/seasonal migrant labourers are engrossed in amorphous urban economy as the self-employed or casual labourers at both the towns.

Table no. 4.10

Occupational Mobility Due to Migration

Occupation	Completely change the occupation		Multiplicity in the occupation		Continuing the same occupation	
	Rangpo	Singtam	Rangpo	Singtam	Rangpo	Singtam
Tailor	4	3	2	5	8	4
Porter	4	12	34	31	11	11
Hotel worker	13	8	8	7	5	6
Construction worker	8	5	12	10	24	27
Total	29(16.57%)	28(16%)	56(32%)	53(30.28%)	48(27.43%)	48(27.43%)

Source: Field Survey, 2016-17.

The tendency of occupation change after migration is noticeable in both the towns: 16.57% and 16% in Rangpo and Singtam respectively, but multiplicity in occupation is more dominant among the respondents, because migrant labourers are not stable in Sikkim for long time, and once they return they continue their previous job. So, it can be said that present labour market is carrying the characteristics of neoliberal and flexible labour market.

4.9 Family Structure and Its Relation with Migration

Migration encompasses various social diversities. The nature of migration fundamentally reflects the household's livelihood strategies in terms of social, economic, cultural, and demographic constraints. Family pattern of the migrants determines the nature and rate of migration because there is a positive relation between the number of family members and the number of migrants from each family. My field survey has revealed that maximum migrants have six or more people in their families. 74.86% of the migrant respondents at Rangpo and 78.86% of the migrant respondents at Singtam have large or joint family system at their native places. After examining my field data, I have noticed a positive relationship between family size and the number of migrant members from each family. Internal and international migrants jointly account for one in seven persons worldwide (Dèmurger, 2015: 144).

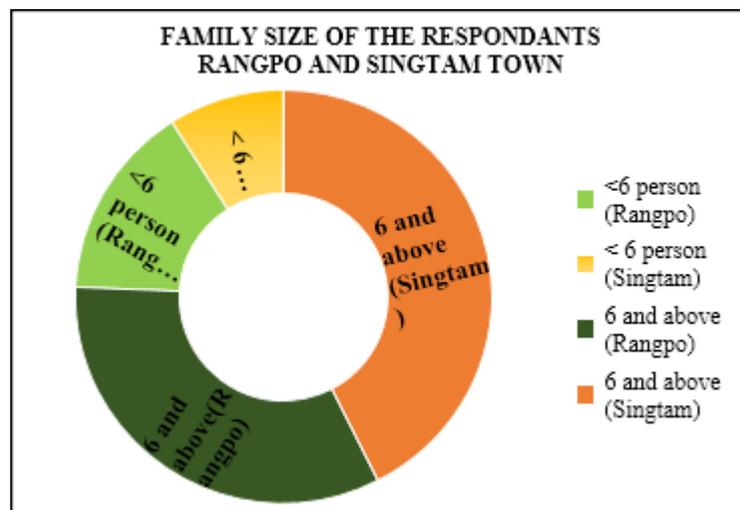
There is a chance for migration of adult children to the urban areas to influence the wellbeing of their younger siblings and elderly parents at rural native place (Hugo, 1987). In Rangpo and Singtam almost every (except long term migrants) migrant's family is left behind at their place of origin. It is also a very common practice in other South Asian countries like China and Philippines (Dèmurger, 2015: 144). Table no 4.11. shows the relationship between family pattern and number of migrants.

Table no. 4.11 **Occupation Wise Relationship Between Total Family Members and Number of Migrants**

Occupation	Below 6 (family member)						6 and above (family member)					
	No of migrant 1		No of migrants 2		No of migrants >3		No of migrant 1		No of migrants 2		No of migrants >3	
	Singtam	Rangpo	Singtam	Rangpo	Singtam	Rangpo	Singtam	Rangpo	Singtam	Rangpo	Singtam	Rangpo
Tailor	2	2	0	3	1	0	9	1	5	7	0	3
Porter	1	3	6	4	0	3	23	13	28	31	7	8
Hotel worker	10	5	2	3	0	0	6	14	11	5	1	3
Construct ion worker	9	11	6	8	0	2	27	29	19	12	2	5
Total	22 (59.46 %)	21 (47.73 %)	14 (37.84 %)	18 (40.91 %)	1 (2.70 %)	5 (11.36 %)	65 (47.10 %)	57 (43.51 %)	63 (45.65 %)	55 (41.98 %)	10 (7.25 %)	19 (14.50 %)

Source: Field Survey, 2016-17.

Fig no. 4.6



Source: Field Survey, 2017.

The conventional approach to test hypothesis does not consider a single hypothesis about the population parameter. Therefore, I have considered relevant statistical testing (χ^2 testing – extension of Chi-square test of independence) to find the real fact of the constructed hypothesis.

Hypothesis: There is no relationship between total number of family members with the number of migrants from each family:

Table no. 4.12

χ^2 test

Size of the household	No. of migrant 1 (families)		No. of migrant 2 (families)		No. of migrant 3 (families)		Total (families)	
	Rangpo	Singtam	Rangpo	Singtam	Rangpo	Singtam	Rangpo	Singtam
Below six	21	22	18	14	5	1	44	37
Six and above	57	65	55	63	19	10	131	138
Total	78	87	73	77	24	11	175	175

Source: Field Survey, 2017

Calculation for Rangpo

$$\chi^2 = \sum [(O-E)^2/E] = 56.46$$

$$v = 2$$

Calculation for Singtam

$$\chi^2 = \sum [(O-E)^2/E] = 57.51$$

$$v = 2$$

For $v = 2$, $\chi^2_{0.05}$ (significance level) = 5.99 for both Rangpo and Singtam town and the calculated value of χ^2 is greater than the table value, so the hypothesis is rejected. Hence there is a relationship with total number of family members and the number of migrants from each family. Deshingkar and Start, (2003: 13) state that “availability of labour within the household is a strong determinant of the likelihood to migrate”. In the field study, I have also noticed that the larger households have greater tendency to migrate. Hence, labour-scarce households have less migration rate.

Micro level empirical works by the household/individual survey are done to prepare an account of internal flow rate from rural households to urban informal labour market. There are some important methodological problems which may reduce the scope of the findings and explaining their inconclusiveness, because migration is a choice based variable, and it breaks the experiential literature through flawless selection and contrary causality problems. The direct effect of migration

in a family structure is the splitting of the family according to geographical discretions between native and destination places (Wahyuni, 2000). Individual migration actually increases the non-familial household in destination areas and reduces the household size in rural native areas. X square methods to justify the hypothesis taken above (Table no. 4.12) also represent the positive and strong relationship between family size and number of migrants.

4.10 Particulars of Persons Accompanying and Helping the Migrants at the Time of or after Migration

The lower end of the labour market comprises unskilled, semiskilled, and low waged informal labourers, who own or are allowed small means of livings as porters, small tailors, small hotel workers, construction workers and self-employed workers. Most of the time, migrant labourers give in to qualms in the possible job markets. At the time of the decision making processes, they have little knowledge about these uncertainties and risk of job searching costs. Due to this reason, maximum migrants are willing to move alone for first time but on the other hand, after the revolution in communication there have been various ways to minimise all these risks. Apart from recruitment processes, single migrants establish 'bridgeheads' to minimise high risks and costs. Sharing of kinship ties is the significant reason for group migration along with experiencing some protection in the new destination's geo-social environment and job politics. Mosse et. al. (2002: 59-88) stated that better-off migrants have access to better social networks and are able to achieve better bridgeheads in town areas, but the poorer normally trade their freedom to established personal contacts through the middle men friends and relatives who are already at the same destination place. In the urban informal labour market, relatives and friends act as the main source of network and the entire job market is segmented and based on religion, caste, kinship, and same native areas (Mitra and Gupta, 2002: 163-68). There is a distinct discrimination between migration and labour migration. If people migrate specially to work, this involves various channels to move (Samers, 2010: 123). There is another way to get entry as a migrant worker – as an illegal recruitment. These networks can help the migrant to settle down at a new place; it also provides information about job market and initial economic supports. The following table shows the types of companions during or before the migration of my respondents.

Table no. 4.13 reveals that there are different types of relationships with persons accompanying and helping the migrants at the time of migration and also during settling down at new work place. In

my research field I have observed that very few respondents, 2.86% in Rangpo and 2.28% in Singtam were accompanied by their wives and children, while 20.57% and 18.86% of the respondents migrated alone to Rangpo and Singtam respectively. I have found higher percentage of accompaniments like friends (26.86% in Rangpo and 32.57% in Singtam) followed by siblings (26.28% in Rangpo and 18.28% in Singtam) and relatives (23.43% in Rangpo and 28% in Singtam). In general, large number of migrant labourers (70.86% in Rangpo and 79.43% in Singtam) left their families at their native place.

Table no. 4.13 **Persons Accompanying and Helping the Migrants at the Time of Migration or After Migration**

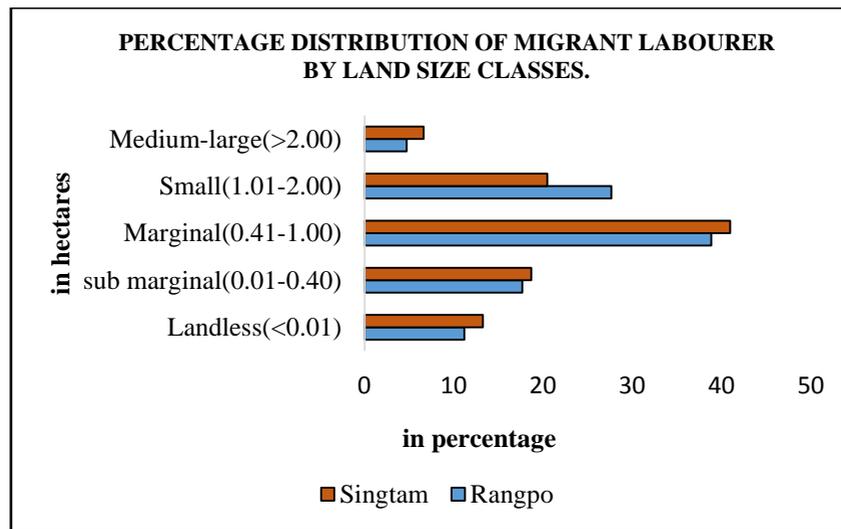
Nature of accompanying	Number of respondents		% of sharing	
	Rangpo	Singtam	Rangpo	Singtam
Accompanied by wife and children	5	4	2.86	2.28
Migrate alone	36	33	20.57	18.86
Accompanied by friends	47	57	26.86	32.57
Accompanied by relatives	41	49	23.43	28
Accompanied by siblings	46	32	26.28	18.28

Source: Field survey 2016-17.

4.11 Land Ownership Pattern of the Respondents

Land distribution pattern is important for the study to understand the real economic transition depiction in this post liberal age. It has been seen in Singtam that among my respondents, 13.25% is functionally landless (<0.01 ha); 18.67% is sub-marginal (0.01-0.40 ha.) and 6.62% migrants are medium-large (>2.00 ha.) landowners. Maximum migrants, 40.96% and 20.48% live on marginal (0.41-1.00 ha.) and small (1.01-2.00 ha.) land respectively at their native place (Table no.). In this town only 5.14% of the respondents are landless. Similarly, marginal landholding migrant labourers (38.82%) are highly concentrated in Rangpo town, followed by small (27.65%) and sub-marginal (17.65%) landowners. 11.18% migrant labourers are reported as landless category.

Fig no. 4.7



Source: Field survey, 2016-17.

Dashingkar and Sandi (2012: 56) rightly observed that “Among all categories of migration, intra-state migration still applies to the largest portion of population, again followed by inter-state and finally international; the proportion of non-migrants was highest among the landless, followed by the marginal and small landowners and medium and large landowners, in that order, suggesting that landless and the marginal landowners find it more difficult to migrate.” Majority of the workers of informal sector have marginal and sub marginal land holdings as noted in the Report on conditions of work and promotion of livelihoods in the unorganised sector, Government of India (2008:16)

Table no. 4.14

**Land Size (in Ha.) Classes of Migrant Labourers at
Their Native Place**

Occupation	LAND SIZE CLASSES IN HECTARES									
	Landless (<0.01)		Sub-marginal (0.01-0.40)		Marginal (0.41-1.00)		Small (1.01-2.00)		Medium- Large (>2.00)	
	R	S	R	S	R	S	R	S	R	S
Tailor (N=16*&15#)	1	6	4	6	7	3	4	0	0	0
Porter (N=60*&60#)	7	4	5	13	27	24	19	14	2	5
Hotel worker(N=29*&30#)	11	9	8	12	2	0	6	9	2	0
Construction worker(N=65*&61#)	0	3	13	0	30	41	18	11	4	6
Total	11.18%	13.25%	(17.5%	18.67%	38.82%	40.96%	27.6%	20.4%	4.7%	6.6%

Source: Field Survey, 2016-17. N =170 for Rangpo and N = 166 for Singtam. *=Rangpo and #=Singtam

4.12 Relationship Between Land Holding Size and Rate of Migration

Previous analysis has already cleared that migration rate depends on various reasons for different groups of people, which also involves various types of migration streams within the national boundary. Migration is also controlled by socio-economic variables like population structure, population composition, land holding, consumption level, and more. Micro studies explain that the bi-modal relationship between land and wealth/income migration is predominant in both low and high level (Connell et al, 1976). National Commission for Rural Labour Report (NCRL), 1991(Srivastava, and Sasikumar, 2003) suggests that land poor farmers and labourers have high tendency to migrate, especially as seasonal/ temporary migrants. Table no. 5.15 represents the relationship between the numbers of migrants from each family with their land holding size.

Table no. 4.15

Land Holding Size and Number of Migrants

		LAND SIZE CLASSIFICATION IN HECTARES									
Number of migrants from each family	<0.01		0.01-0.40		0.41-1.00		1.00-2.00		>2.00		
	Rangpo	Singtam	Rangpo	Singtam	Rangpo	Singtam	Rangpo	Singtam	Rangpo	Singtam	
One person	9	7	15	22	29	27	23	29	2	2	
Two persons	7	11	11	4	35	41	20	5	0	7	
>3 persons	3	4	4	5	2	0	4	0	6	2	
Total	19	22	30	31	66	68	47	34	8	11	

Source: Field Survey, 2016-17. Rangpo (N) =170, Not respondents = 5. Singtam (N) = 166, not respondents =9.

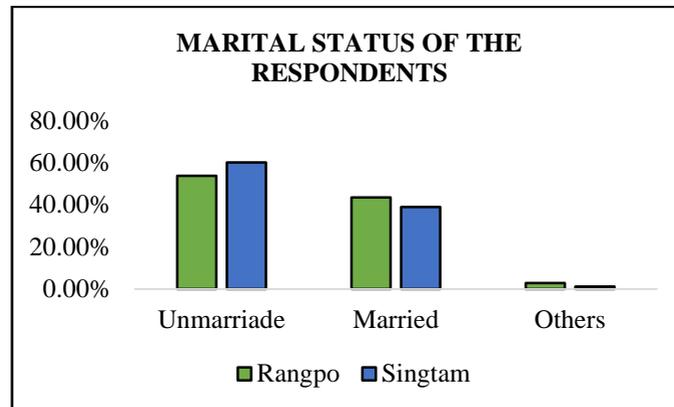
The proportion of migrants from each family is visibly high from marginal land holding households, which is a partially common picture of the Indian rural-urban migration stream, as stated by Priya Deshingkar and Matteo Sandi in 2012 in National Workshop in Internal Migration and Human Development in India, Workshop Compendium. They observed that the landless have to endure much difficulty while migrating, but marginal (17.15), small (16.92) and medium, and large (17.53) land owners are more prone to migrate. In my study I have noticed that marginal and small land owners are more active participants in migration than the medium and large land owners at Rangpo and Singtam town.

5.13 Marital Status of the Respondents

Marital status of the migrants is an important criterion to identify the impact of migration on those family members who stay behind at their native place. I have already discussed why labour migration is conventionally stated as an economically beneficial process for the family members who are left behind at the place of origin. On the contrary, it is also true that migration of

economically active people splits the families and endorses multiple adverse effects – health, education, social status and labour supply response, and kinship (Dèmurger, 2015: 144), which have become fundamental questions with indecisive evidence. Fig.no. 5.8 identifies the marital status of migrant labourers at Rangpo and Singtam and table no. the occupation wise marital status of the migrants.

Fig no. 4.8



Source: Field Survey, 2016-17.

Table no. 4.16 highlights the fact that the concentration of unmarried migrant labourers (53.71% at Rangpo and 60.00% at Singtam) are more compared to married labourers (43.43% at Rangpo and 38.85% at Singtam). As we know, labour migration is profoundly related to the economic benefit, and economically active member’s migration changes the kinship or *de facto* household head and creates a burden on left behind members. These absences can increase children’s possibilities to drop out from schools and reduce motivations for education, whereas remittance can help in progressive education for the children and siblings who have been left behind at the native place. Absence of any family member for long term or temporary basis can influence family structure (Hugo, 1987). It may create disputed family life, which can lead to psychological problems and poor diets. Though different studies have already discussed the impact of migration on those left behind, there is a continuous lack of data sources about the impact of migration of the informal labourers in Sikkim.

Table no. 4.16 **Marital Status of the Respondents in Rangpo and Singtam Town**

Occupation	Marital Status (in %)					
	Married		Unmarried		Others	
	Rangpo	Singtam	Rangpo	Singtam	Rangpo	Singtam
Tailor	14.47	11.76	5.31	8.57	0	0
Porter	48.68	50	26.59	27.62	0	100
Hotel worker	5.26	2.94	25.53	26.66	40	0
Construction worker	31.58	35.29	42.55	37.14	60	0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Field Survey, 2016-17.

4.14 Purpose of Loan Taken by Labourers at the Time of Migration

De Soto (2000:5) stated through his field work in India and Indonesia that a miserable poverty is present among the labourers of informal sector due to the direct effect of lesser means of production and other reasons, which lead to a low return of their labour. This fact is very much prominent in case of my respondents also. Low return of their labour at their native place creates various purposes for taking loans, which they borrow on or before the time of migration. Table no. 5.17 shows the probabilities of borrowing loan by the respondents.

Table no: 4.17

Purposes of Loan Among the Respondents

Purposes of loan	Respondent number		% of sharing	
	Rangpo	Singtam	Rangpo	Singtam
To meet family expenditure at native place (before migration)	19	27	21.84	23.89
To meet health expenditure	9	4	10.34	3.54
To repay old debt	32	41	36.78	36.28
Purchase of agricultural machinery	4	11	4.60	9.73
Migration cost	23	30	26.44	26.54
Total	87	113	49.71	64.57
Not taken any loan	88	62	50.28	35.43

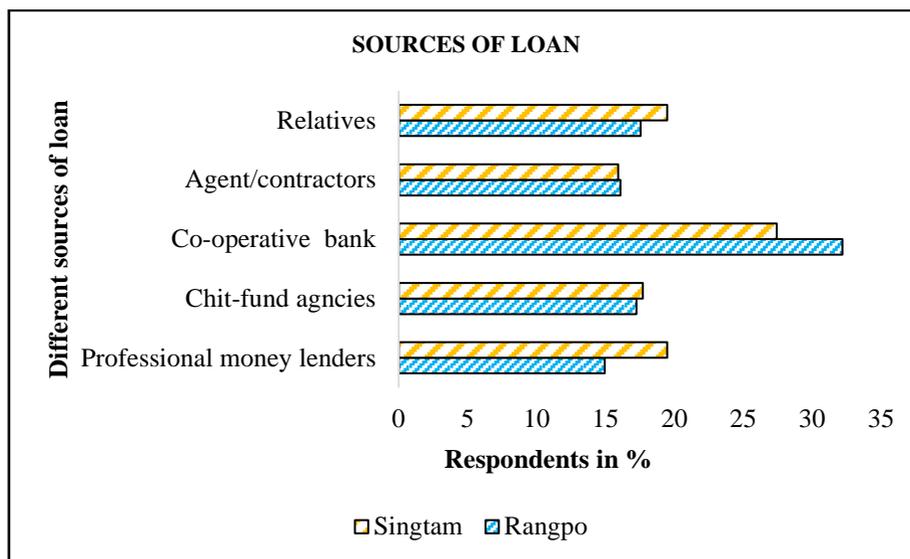
Source: Field Survey 2016-17.

At Rangpo more than half of the respondents have not taken any loan (50.28%), and in Singtam 35.43% of the migrant labourers are not under any compulsion of taking a loan. Regarding the purpose of borrowing loans, the maximum percentage of labourers have taken loan to repay the previous debt – 36.78% and 36.28% at Rangpo and Singtam respectively, which clearly justifies de Soto's observation. Next highest participation rate is to meet migration cost. The percentage share for this purpose actually portrays the relationship between the economic status and the precarity of the labourers. 26.44% of the migrant labourers in Rangpo and 26.54% in Singtam took loans to meet migration cost. It happens due to the possibilities of enormous wage gain through migration. Migrant labourers are sometimes found to borrow to meet expenses for medical purposes and to purchase agricultural machineries: 10.34%, 3.54% and 4.60%, 9.73% in Rangpo and Singtam respectively.

4.15 Source of Loans for the Respondents

There are different sources of loans for the migrants to solve their economic problems. The main cause of out-migration from the rural areas is the burden of debt in the place of origin or what is referred to as debt-interlocking, which is an important push factor in the case of developing countries. In my case study, 49.71% and 64.57% respondents at Rangpo and Singtam respectively, have migrated because of the above mentioned cause, so that they can earn more and repay their debts. In my study debt-interlocking, especially involving agents or middlemen takes place, which is quite common in other part of the country also. To reduce personal dependence and to repay the loans, poor people are willing to migrate. Thus, labour mobility and migration begin, as labourers seek alternative source of employment and cash income (Srivastava, 1987; Breman, 1974,1985; Mosse et al. 1997). During my field investigation I have noticed five main sources of borrowing money by my respondents.

Fig no. 4.9



Source: Field Survey, 2016-17.

Figure no. 4.9 reveals the real scenario of the various sources from which the respondents took loans to meet their economic dearth. Nearly 14.94% and 19.47% of the respondents have taken loans from professional money lenders at Rangpo and Singtam towns respectively. Chit-fund agencies are also active in providing loans (17.24% at Rangpo and 17.70% at Singtam). Important role has been played by the co-operative banks, which lend maximum support and easiest means to

borrow money in the rural native places. 32.18% of the respondents at Rangpo and 27.43% of the respondents at Singtam have taken loans from these sources. Agents or middlemen moderately occupy the field of money lending to the migrant labourers; nearly 16.09% and 15.93% depend for their loans on the agents in terms of debt-interlocking practices. Relatives as a source of loan are also very common because terms and conditions for providing and repaying a loan are very easy. 19.54% at Rangpo town and 19.47% respondents from Singtam town have borrowed money from their relatives.

It has been noticed a few interesting facts, such as, the migrants who have come from Bihar (68% and 70% at Rangpo and Singtam respectively) are more prone to take loans from professional money lenders and chit-fund agencies with comparatively high rate of interest compared to the migrants who have come from West Bengal (37% and 43% for Rangpo and Singtam). Interestingly, Co-operative banks like 'Bandhan' and 'Gramin Bank' have been playing vital roles in the provision of loans to the respondents who have originated from West Bengal. These banks are under the micro-finance status of Regional Rural Banks of Eastern India, which includes the states of West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, and Odisha. These micro-finance groups are providing small loans to poor families who are not able to access the help of traditional financial institutions (Das and Patnaik, 2015:45). Occupation wise, construction workers mostly practice debt-interlocking process. More than half of the migrant labourers who are engaged as casual construction workers have taken loans from the agents or contractors before they migrated.

4.16 Income Level of the Respondents Before and After Migration – Field Observation

In the past, work meant full-time, stable jobs, which resulted in substantial progress of labourers, and the labourers were treated differently than products. At that time, we could have categorised employment under specific standard employment models, but in the era of neo-liberal economy, it is difficult to explain perfect economic structure of labourers under any standard economic model. It is also due to the processes of intensified global competition, globalisation, technological revaluation, and flexible labour market, which have shifted the employment risk away from the farms and imposed it on to the labourers (Jaumotte, and Tytell, 2007: 161-192). In a wide range of studies, it has been observed that neo-liberal policies have been largely controlled by the countries of the developed world like US and the other richer ones. As a consequence, it pulled poor people from poor countries to migrate. My micro level study has identified a wide gap in the income

structures of the migrant labourers between the place of origin and destination. A migrant's earnings have an effect on the income, expenditure, and also on the investments, which can change their entire livelihood along with their household and community relations. Internal labour migration is critically related to the livelihood options of the people from resource-poor areas, to lack of opportunities, better livelihood options, and so on. Literatures (after 1960) prove that there is a strong relationship between economic development and migration (GCIM, 2005; UN High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development, 2006), especially labour migration. Theorists predict that certain conditions are responsible for free physical movement of people, especially the growth of labour intensive services and industries in post-capitalist era, which means that there is always a ready storage of labour migrants, who are willing to raise their incomes by migrating to highly paid locations. On the contrary, in the real world there are people bound to leave their last residences because of poverty and in order to survive. For them I prefer to use the term 'quasi-forced migrant labourers', but the overall motive that I have noticed behind the physical movement of people is economy and prefer to use the term for them 'mercenary migrant labourers' which has already been discussed in the previous chapter. The following table represents the economic structure of my respondents in relations to pre and post migration syndrome.

Table no. 4.18 **Economic Transformation of the Respondents at Singtam Town**

Particulars	Pre-migration individual income in Rs.				Post migration individual income in Rs.			
	Tailor	Porter	Hotel boy	Construction workers	Tailor	Porter	Hotel boy	Construction workers
Observation	17	65	30	63	17	65	30	63
Mean ±SD (range)	5,000±11977.84 (0.00 – 50,000)	4,038.46±1,367.33 (2000-7,000)	18,16.67±2,765.19 (0.00-8,000)	7,865.08±7,090.55 (0.00-25,000)	19,235.29±13,198.15 (3000-50,000)	16,507.69±1,367.86 (14000-20,000)	6,690.00±2,192.52 (2200 - 13,000)	16,388.89±4,458.99 (10000 - 30,000)
25%	0.00	3000.00	0.00	0.00	10000.00	16000.00	5500.00	13000.00
75%	6,000.00	5,000.00	3,000.00	25,000.00	32,000.00	18,000.00	7,000.00	20,000.00

Source: Field Survey, 2016-17

Madhurilata Basu (2018: 101) observed a huge movement of people who got them involved for income benefit - globally and locally - under the influence of contemporary capitalist economy. The projected tables given above (table no.5.18 and 5.19) establish the income benefit factors embodied in the migration processes at Rangpo and Singtam towns. According to Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM, 2005), migration helps to minimise the problems of ageing, diminishing populations, and of labour shortage in any destination area. Simultaneously, through these practice migrants can yield advantages for their family members – to those left behind at native places by sending remittance.

Table no. 4.19 **Economic Transformation of the Respondents at Rangpo Town**

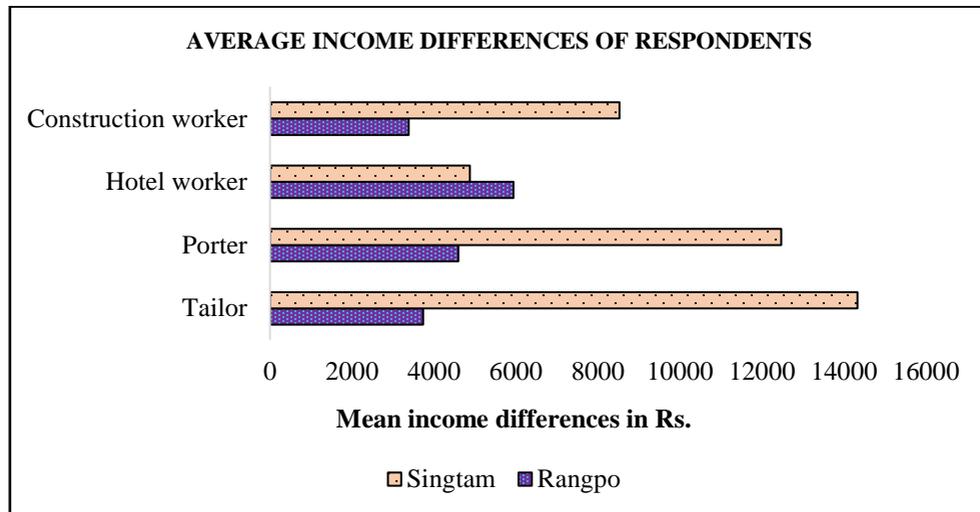
Particular	Pre-migration individual income in Rs.				Post migration individual income in Rs.			
	Tailor	Porter	Hotel boy	Construction workers	Tailor	Porter	Hotel boy	Construction workers
Observation	16	62	30	67	16	62	30	67
Mean ±SD (range)	7,968.75±6,589.05 (0.00 – 25,000)	7,112.90±2,102.73 (0.00 – 10,000)	2,533.33±3,025.56 (0.00 – 8,000)	8,895.52±3,438.35 (0.00 – 18,000)	11,701.61±1,597.79 (8000 – 15,000)	11,701.61±1,597.79 (8000 – 15,000)	8,466.67±2,388.67 (5000 – 16,000)	12,276.12±2,786.99 (7000 – 24,000)
25%	2,500.00	6,000.00	0.00	6,000.00	11,000.00	1,0000.00	7,000.00	10,000.00
75%	10,000.00	9,000.00	6,000.00	10,000.00	23,000.00	12,000.00	8,000.00	14,000.00

Source: Field Survey, 2016-17.

Tables no (4.18 and 4.19) also reveal occupation-wise mean income condition of the labourers prior to and after migration with the dispersion (standard deviation) from the average. It can be seen that pre migration income range has started from Rs.0.00-Rs. 25,000 for tailors because all respondents do not have job experiences. 1.71% of the respondents at Rangpo and 2.28% of the respondents at Singtam have their own tailoring shops and they earn more money than other employees. This situation is common for the other three categories (porter, hotel worker and construction worker) also, but other occupations do not allow the workers to establish their own trade (Subletting the trade license) as tailoring does. There is always a difference in activity status before and after

migration for most of them; in general, they show comparatively higher work participation rate in the destination areas to earn more money.

Fig no. 4.10



Source: Field Survey, 2016-17.

The maximum income difference between pre and post migration status has been observed at Singtam because of the fact that its geographical significance and economic practices have accelerated the rate of urbanisation which attracts people from neighbouring states and also because of the change in the status of town (Class of town). Singtam, a commercial town occupies an extraordinary position in the economy of Sikkim. But Rangpo, a border town, has its history of population flow and economic rise only since last decade (24.46% in 2001 and 181.7% in 2011, according to Indian Census).

I have calculated the coefficient of variance to identify the income distribution of migrant labourers in Rangpo and Singtam towns. The following table bears significant evidence of the uniformity of income after migration. I have also calculated the occupation-wise coefficient of variance of income in the pre and post migration context as shown in the table below. Since the value of coefficient of variance (CV) has decreased sharply in every occupation (table no. 5.18) there is a noteworthy evidence to conclude that incomes are more uniformly distributed after migration in both the towns. It implies that lesser inequalities have been noticed in the income. In the case of tailor, the CV has changed from 82.69 to 13.65 at Rangpo town and from 239.55 to 68.61 at Singtam town; for porter from 29.56 to 13.65 at Rangpo and from 33.81 to 8.29 at Singtam town. The CV value has changed from 83.00 to 28.22 and from 152.43 to 32.77 at Rangpo and Singtam

towns respectively. The same change has also been observed in the case of construction worker; it went down from 38.65 to 22.70 at Rangpo and from 90.15 to 27.21 at Singtam town. My observation quantifies the fact that migration in Sikkim has played an important role to support better life at the native place of the migrants in terms of income, investment, and standard of living than pre migration situation.

Table no. 4.20 **Occupation-wise Coefficient Variance of Income of Respondents in Rangpo and Singtam**

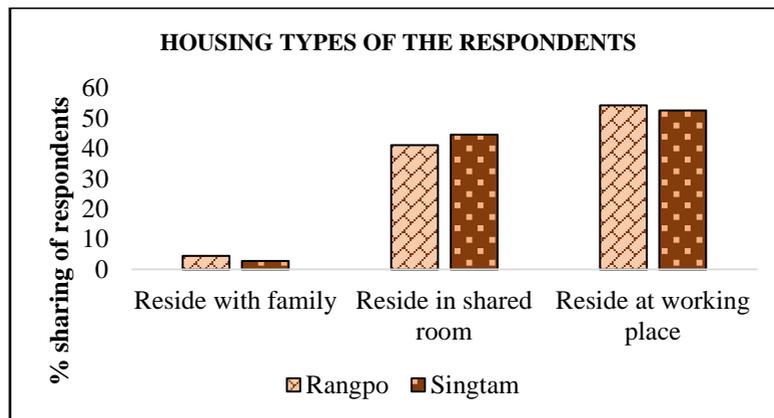
Occupation	Coefficient of Variance of income at Rangpo town		Coefficient of Variance of income at Singtam town	
	Before	After	Before	After
Tailor	82.69	13.65	239.55	68.61
Porter	29.56	13.65	33.81	8.29
Hotel worker	83.00	28.22	152.43	32.77
Construction Worker	38.65	22.70	90.15	27.21

Source: Field Survey, 2016-17.

4.17 Living Condition in the Host Area

According to Ranabir Samaddar, (2018:1) “the neoliberal city encapsulates the central contradiction of modern global connectedness accompanied by a hyper-commodification of land and new forms of social marginalisation, most notably the increasing informality of labour and life, widely known as the informal and precarious life and work of the migrant in the city.” In this context, it is essential to discuss the living condition of the migrant labourer at the destination areas. In Sikkim a considerable number of migrant labourers, particularly those from a poor working class are unable to get decent possessions, especially in terms of housing. This is also common in other parts of the country like Mumbai (Jha, 2016: 69-77). Sikkim has another constraint in terms of legal possessions which is related to Sikkim Residential certificate and COI (certificate of identification). Most of my respondents stay in rented rooms in group. Some of them even live at their work place.

Fig no. 4.11



Source: Field Survey, 2017.

To minimise their expenditure and due to lack of cheap housing they are forced to live in small, unhealthy rooms with too many room-mates. Due to the Sikkim Subject Act, Sikkim towns do not fall under the paradigm of ‘encroacher’ like the other cities of the country (Khalii, 2006). As per my field survey (Fig no. 5.11.) only 4.57% at Rangpo and 2.85% of the respondents at Singtam reside at rented houses with their family members, and it has been found notably in the group employed as tailors. The second highest concentration is noticed in the sharing based rented housing facilities. 41.14% and 44.57% of the migrants are living in this way at Rangpo and Singtam towns respectively. Porters and informal employees in tailoring profession put up in shared rooms. Hotel workers and construction labourers (54.28% at Rangpo and 52.57% at Singtam) stay at their work place.

Other information on living conditions has been shown in the table no. 4.21 to highlight the actual picture of the living condition of migrant labourers. Most of the shared facilities are single rooms, made of wood, the roof with light asbestos or tin. Most of them use community latrines. However, both the towns have bettered their domestic and commercial electricity connection (Domestic electric connection in Singtam - 530 in 2011 and 245 in 2001, in Rangpo 595 in 2011 and 203 in 2001, Commercial electric connection in Singtam - 524 in 2001 and 428 in 2001, in Rangpo 375 and 289 in 2011 and 2001 Census respectively), and very few (Table no. 4.21) of my respondents do not have electricity at their rented homes.

Table no. 4.21

Life Style Amenities of the Respondents in Rangpo and Singtam Town

Lavatory				Electric connection				Fuel Used for cooking				Water supply			
Own/Sharing		Community		Present		Absent		Kerosene		LPG		Govt. supply		Other	
R#	S*	R	S	R	S	R	S	R	S	R	S	R	S	R	S
38	42	137	133	157	170	18	5	101	93	74	82	166	170	9	5
21.7	24	78.2	76	89.7	97.1	10.2	2.8	57.7	53.1	42.2	46.8	94.8	97.1	5.1	2.8
1%	%	8%	%	1%	4%	8%	6%	1%	4%	8%	5%	6%	4%	4%	6%

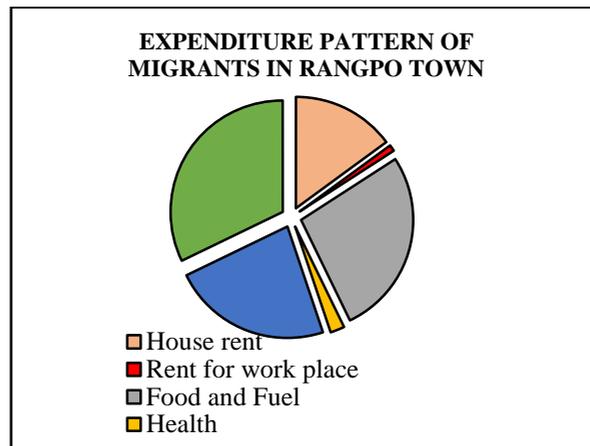
Source: Field Survey, 2016-17. R# = Rangpo (N=175), S* = Singtam (N=175).

Migrant informal labourers live in deplorable conditions, especially when hygiene and water supply is considered at Rangpo and Singtam. Use of community lavatory is obvious, because most of the migrants are living in one-room-sharing basis at their work place (Fig no.4.11.). In case of the fuel used for cooking, though the proportion of LPG use is noticeable, the migrants do not have their own LPG connections. Migrants buy LPG from the Sikkim Subject/RC holders paying higher prices. Singtam's respondents (85.14%) face water supply problem (Govt. supply) and the same problem is also being faced by the migrant labourers of Rangpo (83.25%). These temporary/seasonal, short term and long term migrants endure inadequate water supply and poor hygienic conditions, though waste management payment is also compulsory for those staying in a rented household.

4.18 Pattern of Expenditure in the Host Areas

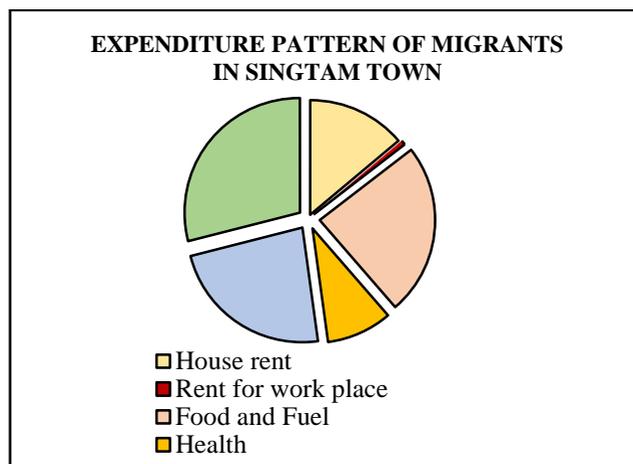
As a whole, living costs for the migrant labourer is quite high in Sikkim. We know that most of the labour migration takes place in a productive age in order to take advantage of higher employment opportunities and to earn more money. Informal employment belongs to an out-stripped sector of the formal one in terms of generating number of employment and also shows a prospective future for further growth. It is very common that the amount of income and amount of remittance have been taken care of by the expenditure pattern of the migrants at their host areas.

Fig no. 4.12



Source: Field Survey, 2016-17

Fig no. 4.13.



Source: Field Survey, 2016-17.

Major share of income of my respondents has been sent to their native places where their families spend that money to fulfill their basic needs, and sometimes for additional purposes like house repairing, establishing new income set up at the native place. However, in this survey I have tried to find out the expenditure pattern of my respondents in the host state. Fig no 4.12 and fig no 4.13 explain the expenditure pattern of the migrant labourers at Rangpo and Singtam town respectively.

As can be expected, the respondents spend their income at destination areas on food, fuel, and house rent. They (except the respondents who stay with their families) always prefer to stay with friends, relatives, and if possible, at work place in order to minimise their expenditure. 45.71% and 47.43% of the respondents pay house rent at Rangpo and Singtam respectively. Only 2.85% and 2.28% respondents at Rangpo and Singtam are paying rent for staying at their work place also. The

migrants need to spend their money for food and fuel (82.86% at Rangpo, 82.85% at Singtam); only hotel workers do not pay any amount of money on food and lodging. Another noticeable area of expense is the mobile phone bill - 98.85% and 99.42% of the respondents at Rangpo and Singtam respectively pay mobile phone bills. The following table also represents the occupation wise mean expenditure value of the respondents at Rangpo and Singtam towns.

Table no. 4.22 **Average Monthly Expenditure of the Respondents in Rangpo and Singtam Town**

Occupation	Average monthly expenditure of respondents at Rangpo town	Average monthly expenditure of respondents at Singtam town
Tailor	7087.50 ±8512.35	13926.47 ±15693.81
Porter	3203.39 ±1324.89	4095.00 ±1599.92
Hotel worker	1405.67 ±1230.20	313.00 ±326.65
Construction worker	2591.64 ±1568.59	3962.63 ±2485.22

Source: Field Survey, 2016-17.

The maximum monthly expenditure has been noticed among those migrants engaged in the field of tailoring, and out of them 2.86% and 2.28% are in the employer group in this occupation at Rangpo and Singtam. There is a high expenditure range between employee tailors and employers. Variations among different occupations have been seen due to the different ways of living. Overall, the respondents try to minimise their expenditure in the host state because their family members are left behind in remote areas. Hagen-Zanker and Azzarri, (2010: 57-84) observed while researching at Albania that households who migrated from rural areas to urban or peri-urban/semi-urban areas are found to have less consumption than those people who stay back at the place of origin. In developing countries like India, a migrant's income or migration process affects the consumption/expenditure nature in the place of origin rather than in the place of destination. Zezza et al. (2011: 1-6) observed a partial correlation between migration and consumption.

4.19 Saving Position of Respondents/ Nature of Saving

The major share of income earned by my respondents is spent for household expenses at their place of origin. Some of them are only able to meet their basic needs and some of them spend money on education of their children, household items, and emergencies. Saving is a very rare practice among the migrant labourers. Very few respondents save for future goal. The willingness for saving has been noticed especially within very young respondents who have migrated to and enrolled in informal sector to uplift their standards of living. Some save money to establish new business at their native place, and also for new investment, household repairing etc. The respondents are following very traditional ways to save money. Very few are conscious about the facilities given by the government banks and post offices. Most of them are saving their money in various informal ways in the custody of relatives, employers etc. I have observed that they do not save money for long term; once they overcome the problem, they stop saving money. The following table shows the most popular purposes of saving by the respondents.

Table no. 4.23

Purposes of Saving by the Respondents in Rangpo and Singtam Town

Purposes of saving	No. of respondents at Rangpo	No. of respondents at Singtam
For retention purpose	8 (4.57%)	11 (6.28%)
Education of children	3(1.71%)	3(1.71%)
Repairing house	2 (1.14%)	3 (1.71%)
Investment	13 (7.43%)	15 (8.57%)
Health	3 (1.71%)	1 (0.57%)
Marriage	9 (5.14%)	6 (3.43%)
Other	4 (2.28%)	6 (3.43%)
Total	42 (24%)	45 (25.71%)

Source: Field Survey, 2016-17.

In my study areas, 76% and 74.28% of the respondents are not willing to save money for any reason at Rangpo and Singtam respectively. Only 24% of the respondents at Rangpo and 25.71% from Singtam are saving money for some common purposes. The major reason to save money is for investment purpose (7.43% at Rangpo and 8.57% at Singtam). These investments are considered to establish small business and even to transform agricultural paddy fields into small tea gardens. A small percentage of my respondents (tailors, hotel workers, and construction workers) keep their savings in the custody of their employers – 12% (Rangpo) and 13.14% (Singtam). In order to review the development impact at native place, it is essential to understand the long term development welfare of households and economic feasibility at the place of origin because most of the respondents are temporary/short term migrants, and Barber et al. (2005) observe that short term/temporary migration may not be enough to save money for business or to make other expressive investments at their home land.

4.20 Remittance Methods

The economic power of labour migrants, the ‘remittances’ acts as an important source of income and capital and gives effect to huge number of households around the globe (Mallick, 2010: 30). It is imperative to discuss remittance in terms of policy perspective as well as in terms of migration and development nexus on the grounds that remittance affects and possibly improves the livelihood of so many people around the globe. Labour migration has a significant impact on the social and economic changes of the host area, as well as on the area of origin (ADB, 2005). The term ‘remittance’ has been used to denote the unrequited transfer/ private transfer of money. IMF’s Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook defines three types of money transfer under the name of remittance. Workers remittance is defined as the value of monetary transfer to native place from workers residing abroad for more than one year (Mallick, 2010: 30), but this term has been used for the national cross border money transfer by the workers. The theoretical debate on remittance and its determinants was triggered by Lucas and Stark (1985: 901-918).

Normally, migrant labourers send money for household purposes or investment purposes. Remittance sent by the labourers is the economic backbone of household members who stay behind at the place of origin. Wahba (1991: 41-44) mentioned two types of remittances, ‘fixed’ and ‘discretionary’. The latter one is resolutely related to the investment; on the other hand, fixed remittance is dependent on the family consumption and expenditure. In a developing country like India, the migration stream of rural to urban is welcoming the fixed remittance by the endogenous

migration view. Most of the literatures on remittance have explained this term as the flow of money due to economics of the family. In developing countries remittances are not recognised as profit driving rather are obligatory transfers of money to serve household expenditures, and they also fluctuate counter-cyclically (Chami et al., 2005: 55-81). In my study, maximum respondents are remitting for an altruistic motive, also referred to as “pure self-interest” and “tempered altruism or enlightened self-interest” (Lucas and Stark, 1985: 901-918). Over the last few decades, different empirical researches have established optimistic views on migration under the light of remittance (Taylor et al., 1996a: 397-418 1996b: 181-212; Rapoport and Docquier, 2005; Katseli, Lucas, and Xenoini, 2006; De Hass, 2007: 1-46). To understand socio-economic position of the migrant’s family, it is essential to discuss the potential role of remittance in social and economic transformation processes. In this study, I have tried to find out the economic impact of this inter-state labour migration on the migrant’s household at the place of origin, though it has been explained as unique in most of the literatures because maximum previous research has been conducted in the form of evocative case studies. I have tried to undertake a detailed study of the migrant’s income and remittance relationship along with their impact on the socio-economic structure. New Economics of Labour Migration [NELM] supports the migration and development nexus through the observation that due to the market failures in the place of origin, people start to migrate from that place of origin to a non-related, flexible labour market. It is a kind of a co-insuring agreement between the migrant and the households left behind. Remittances also support the migrants, especially at the spells of unemployment (temporary/seasonal migrant). The estimations of remittance are either determined by the household/respondents survey at the receiving areas, in this case – various districts of Bihar and West Bengal, or precise surveys of the migrants themselves at the destination areas – Sikkim in my research. Different researches have measured the altruism motive by considering the effects on the migrant’s or household income and on the likelihood and or amount of remittances. Following figures (Fig no. 5.14 and 5.15) show the regression analysis between income structure and remittance structure. It is clear that there is a strong positive effect of income on remittance; migrants are willing to send maximum portion of their income as remittance which impacts on income per capita depending upon the size of the family.

Fig no. 4.14

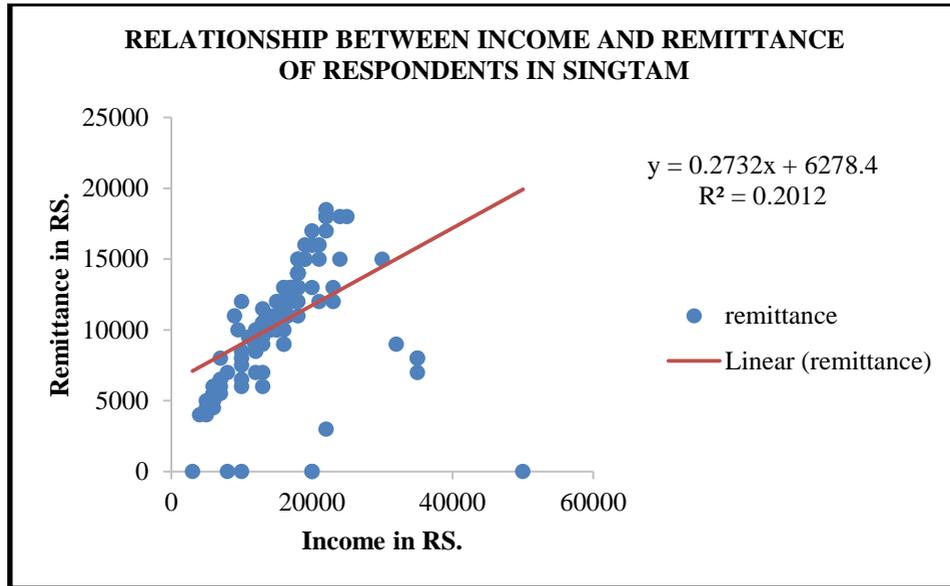


Table no. 4.24

<i>Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0.448567115
R Square	0.201212457
Adjusted R Square	0.196595187
Standard Error	3414.050617
Observations	175

Source: Field Survey, 2016-17. Calculation done by SPSS16

Fig no. 4.15

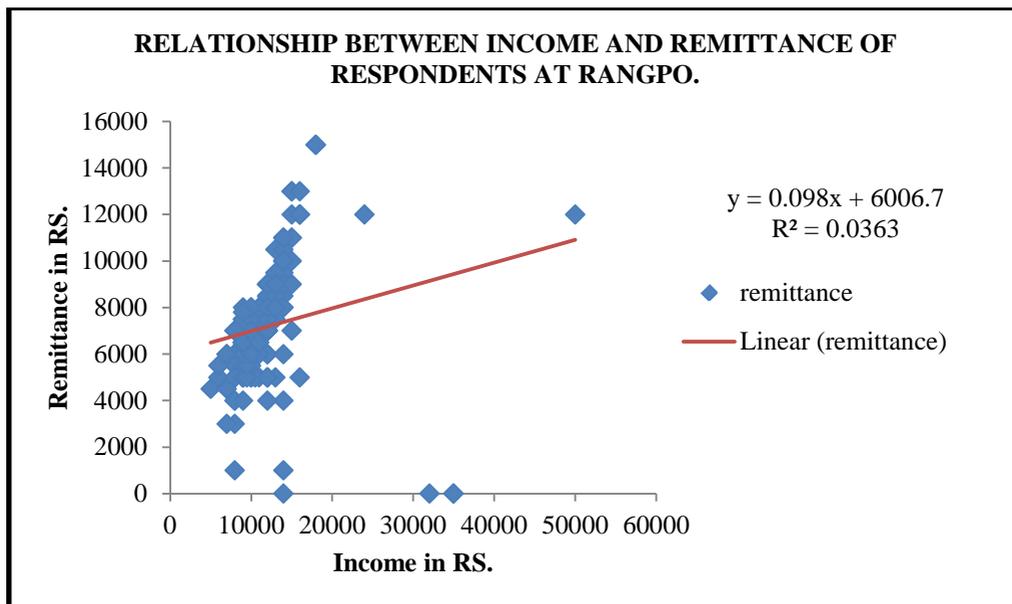


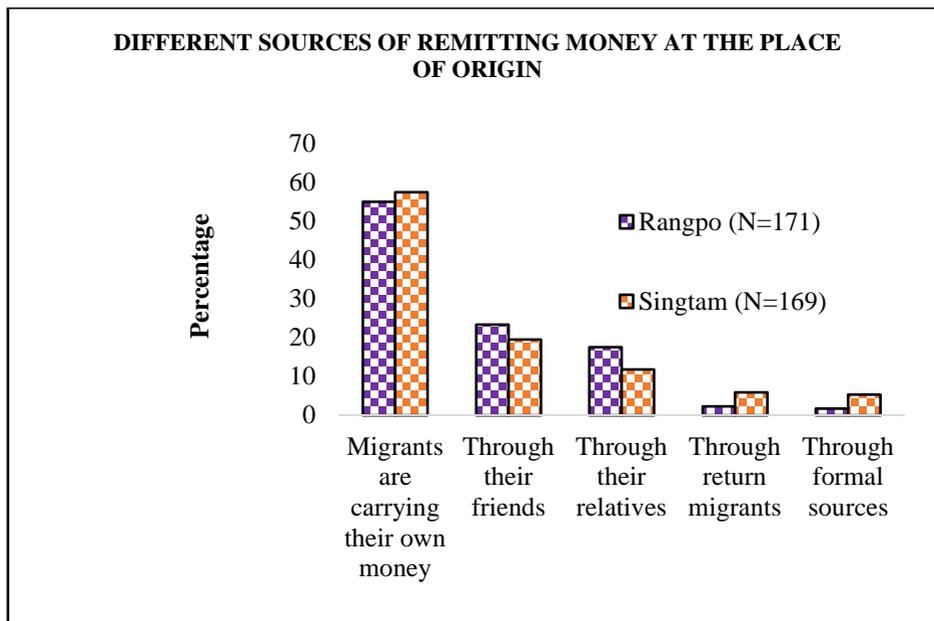
Table no. 4.25

<i>Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0.190430755
R Square	0.036263872
Adjusted R Square	0.030693143
Standard Error	2479.397292
Observations	175

Source: Field Survey, 2017. Calculation done by SPSS, version 16.

The important factors which regulate the migrants' choice of remitting money through informal or formal sources are accountability, amount, and transition costs. There are huge ranges of informal systems present – migrants carrying cash money, sending money through friends and relatives, or sometimes with the returning migrants. Figure no. 4.16 shows the preferable choice of money transfer by my respondents at Rangpo and Singtam towns. It has been estimated that nearly fifty percent of remittances are transferred through informal sources which do not have any documentation; World Bank (2006) estimates around \$300 billion total remittances are sent somewhere around the world (Zanker, 2010).

Fig no. 4.16.



Source: Field Survey, 2017-18.

A large section of my respondents in Singtam and Rangpo carry cash/remittance when they visit their native places – 54.97% and 57.40% at Rangpo and Singtam respectively. As majority of respondents are temporary/seasonal migrants, they visit their native places very often and they keep trying to curtail transaction costs. Normally, because money transfer is high in cost, migrants are remitting rather than repatriating their earned money on their return home, but if the transaction options would be less and transaction costs would be very high, then repatriating practice will be more, which has been observed by Gibson and McKenzie (2013: 5) in their research on New Zealand’s RSE scheme, especially in the case of Vanuatu. 94.68% of the respondents at Rangpo town and 98.75% of the respondents from Singtam are using informal sources of remittance; however, both the towns have enough banking facilities within the small periphery – Rangpo has five national and one private bank; Singtam has four national, one private, and two co-operative banks (Census of India, 2011, statement. VI), but only 1.75% and 5.32% of the respondents use the formal mode of money transactions at Rangpo and Singtam respectively. In case of Sikkim, I have noticed among my respondents that they prefer to carry their earned amount while returning to their homes. In this regard, the inclination to visit their home land is higher due to migrant’s variant economic practices. Literature based on the determinants of remittance is becoming a growing phenomenon because it is linked to the determinants and motivations of migration and transfer

literatures. It is clear that different researches find different motivations for remittance in different space, place and time.

4.21 Conclusion

The main objective of this chapter is to explore the socio-economic status of migrant workers in Rangpo and Singtam towns and to identify pre and post migration locational discourse. The objective of my research is to define this discourse through various demographic, socio-economic, and statistical parameters and to get the real essence of migration-development nexus. Market-oriented or labour intensive speculative capitalism is the successful consequence of liberal or neo-liberal socio-economic structure which acts as a quasi-forced motivational factor for the rural poor people to migrate to towns and cities. In case of Sikkim, the accumulation of migrant labour is not the product of dispossession and rehabilitation due to state policy (1961 Act.). I have noticed significant differences among the various occupations in terms of socio-economic parameters. Income has increased as an effect of migration in both the labour sending states, namely, West Bengal and Bihar, and large number of my respondents professed their improved social and economic status. In the light of human capital approach, it has been observed that individuals who are inter-state migrants are younger and my empirical study also confirms this fact. Income has increased more than the consumptions and savings for the precarious informal labourers at Rangpo and Singtam town. Migrants are able to earn more but because maximum respondents are temporary/seasonal (irregular), and need to meet high expenses of living cost in the host towns, their asset ownership and investment has had negative impacts for the reason that both the towns (Rangpo and Singtam) have maximum participation rate in temporary/seasonal or circular migrant labour (figure no. 5.1.). This type of migration is also extensively increasing (worldwide/internationally) in terms of the agreements among the countries rather than among the number of workers (Gibson, McKenzie and Rohorua, 2013: 13). There are numerous challenges to make a credible evaluation of the irregular and precarious informal workers and to measure migration's effects on their livelihood status. Along with all challenges, there is an area to ponder about as well: that is why has internal migration increased and also continued in a large scale, even though the wellbeing perspectives are not clear. In this regard, Zelinsky's 'mobility transition hypothesis' may be referred to in order to understand migration as a normal development caused by the social and economic changes intrinsic in a capitalist society and by liberating possibilities (King, 2005: 133-155) which attract potential poor migrants from the labour supply zone (i.e.

economic transition and infrastructural development, as is evident in Sikkim) to internally and internationally peripheral zones.

It should be considered that migration is a process of long term investment to expand employment opportunities, earn more money, and have better livelihood at the migrants' native places. All these options have been ensured by the earlier migrants (friends, relatives etc.) rather than the recent movers. So, socio-economic measures help to understand changes to the structure of society, especially in the rise of informal migrant labourer in Sikkim.

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CHAPTER FIVE

WORK ENVIRONMENT AND POLICY STRUCTURE FOR THE MIGRANT INFORMAL LABOURERS

“Migrant workers are an asset to every country where they bring their labour. Let us give them the dignity they deserve as human beings and the respect they deserve as workers.”

Juan Somavia
Director General of ILO

5.1 Introduction

The neoliberal imperative reduces the state’s grip on the ‘free’ market’ and is manifested in Global South as ‘structural adjustment’ and makes national as well as the world economies radically informal (Hart, 2015: 411-416) by casualisation of the labour forces under the influence of corporations. Therefore, the neoliberally driven economy was active when the post-war Keynesian was on a decline. Thus neoliberalism’s improbable/unprecedented rise is a result of deregulation, linked to the privatisation of public goods and services in order to make use of the poor people as wage labour, and thus accelerating migration. In developing countries like India, wage differentials, employment opportunities, and aspirations propel the poor rural young people away from their homeland in search of income opportunities. Nearly, 33-90 percent of total employment has been occupied by informal economy (ILO, 2015: 06), which often leads to hazardous, low paying working conditions along with very limited legal and social protection.

The present chapter investigates the interaction between the informalised migrant labour in the light of actual existence of neoliberalism and working environment of incoming migrant labour force through the prism of locational and specific connections (Barff and Ellis, 1991: 339-362). It should be noted that, except some frontier areas, internal migration in India is not regulated. The Ministry of Labour at the central level and the departments of labour at the state level are chiefly responsible for formulating and implementing measures and legislation aimed at protecting migrant workers. In most cases, the safeguards are common to both migrant and local workers. Concerns of migrant labourers are also shared by some other relevant social sectors, such as ministries of health and

family welfare, human resource development, food and consumer affairs, and social justice. For this research work I have analysed the work conditions of migrant labour in the receiving/host area. This chapter also seeks to highlight how the policies in the receiving areas can develop a nexus between decent work environment and sustainable work environment of migrant informal workers in Sikkim with special reference to Rangpo and Singtam towns.

5.2 Manpower on the Anvil

Structural transformation demanded by globalisation increase the spatial movement of individuals in relation with the demand and supply for labour in any fledgling economy. Dealing with Sikkim's unorganised sector, migration seems to have been of crucial importance. In all the eight major towns of the tiny state of Sikkim, migrant labour constitutes the workforce of unorganised sector. As evidence shows, from the recent past, India has been trying to uphold a rights-based approach through framing several policies and flagship programmes to promote decent work environment and social security measures for the informal sector workforce. Sikkim's progress in this regard is plagued with several intricate problems of its own. The worker-friendly policy of the state government practiced by the state economy favours trade liberalisation, as well as the development activities. However, Sikkimese man-power is reluctant to perform productive, low and semi-skilled activities, despite the support of the government. Therefore, resorting to migrant labour man-power appears to be the possible alternative to run the present economic structure. NSS 61st Round (NSS, 2004-2005) reveals that maximum participation rates of the workforce in India are in informal sectors (92.40%). Due to lack of awareness and poor educational background coupled with their fragmented nature of work participation and mobility, labourers of the unorganised sector fail to secure the advantages of whatever little statutory measures are there, though, in the light of SDGs, sustainable migration is an important contributor for sustainable development and has a synergistic effect upon economic growth. This seems to be an utmost necessity especially in case of Sikkim where the workforce of unorganised sector is almost entirely based upon the migrant labourers coming from different corners of India.

The purpose of the present chapter is to examine the synergies between migrant's positions and the working environment in urban informal sector to find whether labour migration vulnerabilities are driven or not in the informal sector at Rangpo and Singtam towns. These issues will further be assessed on the basis of a review of state policies of Sikkim in relation to informal sector labour. It

would be interesting to note that migration has been a highly politicised issue in Sikkim and due to Sikkim's special status in relation to the Union of India. Article 371 F was included in the Constitution of India through 36th Amendment Act in the year 1961, which was the condition and an agreement between Sikkim and Indian Union for the purpose of merger (The Sikkim Darbar Gazette, 1961). In a same way, Article 371- F (k) also protects the old laws of Sikkim. These Acts changed the post-merger spheres of Sikkim's socio-economic opportunities and managed to keep in view the concerns of the insiders vis-à-vis the outsiders (migrant vs non-migrant).

The situation is that the working class population employed in the urban informal sector in Sikkim is susceptible to be more vulnerable if they are outsiders (i.e. non-Sikkimese) and are not in possession of the administrative or official shields like Residential Certificate, Sikkim Subject Regulations of 1961, Registration as per the Sikkim Labour Protection Act 2005 and the like. Based on quantitative data and qualitative observations gleaned from my field work, this chapter reflects upon various fields of the informal sector like construction work, tailoring, portering and hotel work. The chapter also examines the inadequacies of existing policy regime in Sikkim and the loopholes therein, which ultimately aggravates the helplessness of the urban informal sector labour and consolidates the many layers of their exploitation, denial, and sufferings. In these platforms whether migrants are satisfied or seek to move elsewhere – is assumed as an important research question to be pursued. In brief, the case studies of Rangpo and Singtam would help explore the significance of the analytical triad constituted of migration, work environment of informal labour, and policy regime in determining the employment and labour market situation on the one hand and would also pinpoint the problems and prospects of the various provisions of sustainable migration and their attainments in the State of Sikkim on the other.

Internal serial migration in Sikkim is regarded as a problematic dimension of out migration flows from the native place areas – especially West Bengal and Bihar as my research shows. A primary reason is the kind of irregular state of affairs which puts the migrants in a legally precarious situation where they have hardly any choice initially other than work in 'offered wage' and daily based jobs in the informal economic sector for some time. Bihar, West Bengal, UP rely on labour out-migration to metro cities and towns to help ease unemployment pressures at home land and for the economic benefits of remittances (IOM, 2015). From a geographical point of view, as seen in cities such as Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, and Ahmedabad (Banerjee, 2004: 143-164) labour migrants

tend to concentrate in downtown areas where living expenses are relatively low; Sikkim is not an exception to such practices.

The proportion of informal workers in the industrialised economies varies between 2 and 15 per cent, but for Global South we have ILO figures that vary from 30 to 80 per cent of the working population (ILO 1997: 175). Considering other examples from various countries, (In Latin America it was estimated that 9 out of 10 jobs generated in the 1990s were in the informal sector) we cannot argue that the informal sector is an aberration from the formal norm. Rather, we must understand the growth of informalisation as a major characteristic of existing globalisation. Ulrich Beck recognises this pattern of informalisation under the appearance of greater labour flexibility in the international norm - a process which has been dubbed 'Brasilianisation' (Beck 2000: 79-105), a new norm of irregular informal personnel. Industrial Revolution generated a great transformation which created unregulated free market in a world-wide scale (Polanyi, 2001: 231).

It also expanded the atypical form of labour use: normally we use to stress the political unfreedoms which were making inevitable corollary of all form of coerced labour (Bremner, 2013:285) and because of these reasons, it has become essential to discuss the work environment offered by the state to migrant labourers under the canopy of state's policy regime. In this globalised world, time-space compression has increased and simultaneously the volume and flow direction of labour migrants have also increased and generated a complex, uncertain outcome for the home and destination areas. Urry (2000: 62) described it nicely in the language of the new physics as "a series of turbulent waves, with a hierarchy of eddies and vortices, with globalism a virus that stimulates resistance, and the migration system a cascade moving away from any apparent state of equilibrium".

5.3 Work Environment

Normally, new entrants in the town easily get entry to the labour market through informal sector because this sector does not demand fixed location or any formal training. Informal employments are insecure and uncertain, and they also contain different adverse working situations – long working hours, pressure to complete contract job within very short deadline and so on. There is no perfect correlation between being poor and working in an informal sector (in my case tailors who are employers in the labour market of Rangpo and Singtam) but due to the lack of social protection

and perfect labour legislation in the informal sector, labourers earn less than the workers in the formal economy (ILO, 2004).

Informal workers are mostly low skilled migrants, perhaps they need more attention due to their “brawn drain”, (Penninx, 1982: 793) a flow of young and able bodied persons from the home areas to others and literatures show that informal labourers are vulnerable because: they are not protected by labour laws, have no social security, severance of pay and poor working conditions (Cundogan and Bicerli. 2009: 8). In this chapter, I intend to focus on my respondents’ work environment situations through various field observations. It is already observed that the type of work for most of the respondents is casual, temporary in nature as per the demand or rule in the informal sector. These workers are typically less educated and unskilled or semi-skilled in nature (ref. Chapter Five). Even if they have a long record of employment, it is only recognised as an experience in different varieties of work rather than skilled labour (Breman, 2013:179).

Table no. 5.1 **Proposed Ranking of Different Work Environment by the Respondents in Rangpo Town**

Factors	Total	Average Score of respondents	Rank
Wage	13782	78.75	1
Compensation for over time	9871	56.40	5
Working hrs.	8658	49.47	6
Employment security	7144	40.82	7
Hygienic working place	10890	62.22	3
Bullying by superior	10750	61.43	4
Retention strategies	1105	62.88	2
Protection facilities at working place	5846	33.40	8
Social security	5167	29.52	9
Union rights	4035	23.06	10

Source: Field Survey, 2016-17 (computed after Henry Garrett ranking conversion).

To get a clear picture of the work environment and decent work culture, I have considered ten parameters (table no. 5.1. and 5.2.) for discussion. There are different working groups (i.e. OWG) that proposed and stressed the promotion of decent work or healthy work environment for the migrant labourers. It also includes different facets and focuses on “the need to respect and promote international labour standards as appropriate, and respect the rights of the migrants in their workplace” (UN G.A Resolution, 2013, pars: 14 and 12 respectively). The above table expounds all taken parameters (10) and ranks them by using Henry Garrett ranking conversion process. It is explicit from the tables (5.1. and 5.2.) that the migrant informal labourers of Rangpo and Singtam have ranked the variables in accordance with their experiences and perceptions.

Table no. 5.2 **Proposed Ranking of Different Work Environment by
The Respondents in Singtam Town**

Factors	Total	Average Score of Respondents	Rank
Wage	13632	77.9	1
Compensation for over time	9729	55.59	5
Working hrs.	7022	40.13	7
Employment security	6622	37.84	8
Hygienic working place	10927	62.44	3
Bullying by superior	11516	65.8	2
Retention strategies	10328	59.02	4
Protection facilities at working place	7543	43.1	6
Social security	5502	31.44	9
Union rights	3216	18.38	10

Source: Field Survey, 2016-17 (computed after Henry Garrett ranking conversion).

5.3.1 Wage

My respondents of Rangpo and Singtam town have given top rank to the wage structure offered by the government of Sikkim, considering the facts that they are getting least minimum wage from the state. Although the everyday/weekly/monthly earnings of migrant labour at the host areas may be marginally higher than the source area, the migrants undertake this drifting work to uphold or slightly recover their present situation at native place (Haan and Rogaly, 2002: 1-14).

There are strong views that minimum wages in the informal labour market are not being regulated in a proper way, though legislative protection to provide minimum wage may be measured as a hallmark of any reformist nation. It is one of the fundamental natures of a healthy, decent work environment. NFLMW (National Floor Level of Minimum Wage) has increased India's minimum wage to Rs.137/day from Rs.100/day in 2007. After that the new improvised minimum wage has been declared as Rs.160/day which came into effect from June 1st, 2017. Any respective state government has been empowered to fix their minimum wage independently; it may depend on the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) of the state or nation. In my study the maximum flow of people has been noticed from the state Bihar and West Bengal which have their GDP at \$520 or Rs. 34,168 and \$1200 or Rs. 78,903 respectively, whereas Sikkim has GDP at \$3500 or Rs.2,27,465, (Reserve Bank of India, 2018) i.e. more than that of India as a whole at \$1700 or Rs.11,2764 in 2017-18 (PRS Legislative Research, 2018).

Minimum wage, which has been enacted in Sikkim from July 1st, 2017, is much higher than the home states of my respondents. Individual state trends can set up higher minimum wages carefully bearing in mind their feasibility. Government of Sikkim proposed to revise their existing minimum wage rate as per their policy decision adopted in the year 2014. Sikkim's retrieved wage rate offered minimum wage for unskilled labourers of Rs.300/day; semi-skilled are entitled to get Rs.320/day, skilled labourers are allowed to receive Rs.335/day, and highly skilled are getting Rs.365/day (The Sikkim Government Gazette, Department of Labour, 2017). On the other hand, home states of the respondents are providing much lower minimum wages: in Bihar it is Rs.247 for unskilled, Rs.257 for semi-skilled, and Rs.313 for the skilled labourer, and in West Bengal unskilled labourers are entitled to earn Rs.255/day for zone A, Rs.230.7/day in zone B, Rs.280/day (zone A), while Rs.253.7/day (zone B) is allocated for semi-skilled labourers, and skilled labourers get Rs.309/day and Rs.279.16/day for zone A and zone B respectively (West Bengal minimum wage w.e.f., January 1st, 2018). My field experience at Rangpo and Singtam town reveals the fact

that migrant informal labourers enjoy the benefits of the minimum wage in most of the cases and there is a certain gap between the pre and post migration income (discussed in Chapter Four) due to the gap in minimum wage fixed by different state governments. In my study area I have also noticed that labourers make additional effort to earn more than the per-day fixed rate within a short span because most of them are seasonal or temporary in nature. Sometimes they negotiate with contractors or employers because unpredictable alteration between periods of idleness and job illustrates the insecure nature of informal jobs, though there is high demand for migrant unskilled, semi-skilled labourers in Sikkim.

Self-employment or petty commodity (PCP) has impact to more than three quarters of the national total GDP and the biggest part of the Indian informal work force (Harriss-White, 2010: 152-177, 2012: 109-160). This 'self-employed' group covers various production process, like- small business families (e.g. tailors, according to my research respondents), traders who employ their own labour, or self-employed wage labourers (e.g. porters according to my research respondents) etc. Self-employed daily wage casual labourers are not dependent upon the minimum wage fixed by the government; their rates are flexible according to the demand – porter as a case. Normally, in informal economy, there are different types of wage variations, not only among various types of jobs but also within the same job under same supervisors (if any), construction workers, hotel workers, and tailors as the cases show. Commoditisation of physical labour is the core ideology of informal proletariat groups and also represents the fragmented economic system. Globalisation picked up the skilled/semi-skilled labourers and generated international migration and flexible economy opening up the job possibilities of the unskilled, poor, and precarious people and encouraged the explosion of informality in the labour market. The heterogeneity of labourers and multiplicity of earning in the informal sector led the complexity of daily wage notions. The monthly income has been affected while wage has been calculated on daily basis but paid in monthly, because only six days of the week are taken under consideration and one day (compulsory holiday) has been unpaid for, though workers are working on that particular holiday as their normal working day. My respondents give first rank to the minimum wage parameter to validate the better work environment but the interesting fact is that they relate and compare the present earning standard with their pre-migration experiences, not with the state's fixed minimum wage for specific occupation. Due to this, in reality all of my respondents are not availing the state's fixed minimum wage for their work. In the field I have noticed that all migrants are not getting minimum wage of

Sikkim, though they have given the first rank to minimum wage variable which proves their adverse wage structure in native place.

Table no. 5.3 **Minimum Wage Paid by the Government of Sikkim and the Average Per Day Income of Respondents**

Occupation	Pay check India, Minimum wage in Rs. (Sikkim, with effect from July 1 st , 2017)			Average per day income in Rs.	
	Skilled	Semi-skilled	Unskilled	Rangpo	Singtam
Tailor	335	320	300	443.28±390.05	641.18±439.94
Porter	335	320	300	443.28±71.30	550.26±45.60
Hotel worker	335	320	300	282.00±105.22	245.00±114.23
Construction worker	335	320	300	509.20±139.54	546.30±148.63

Source: Field Survey 2016-17 and Pay check list of India.

5.3.2 Work Contracts/Recruitment and Wage Forms

The vast majority of migrant labourers in the informal sector and employment is obtained in this sector typically through three ways, though these ways are dissimilar for different activities. First is by the labour contractors, second is through family, friends, caste, community, and religion based network and third, by standing at the factory/institution gate (NCEUS, 2008: 37). There is no formal advertisement or publicity for employment, nor any signed contract during their job duration. Migrant network is continually a location-specific form of social capital (Massey et al., 2005: 176). On the other hand, Bourdieu (1985: 241-58) also stated that the volume of these types of network depends on the dimension of network connections and also on cultural, economic, or symbolic volume attained by the person with whom the migrant is connected. Permission to start the new job is often arbitrated by employees' kinsmen, village mates of the new migrants (Bremen, 2013:48). Newcomers are hardly allowed to bargain for their wage, though they find high value of their physical labour. Normally, they are recruited on primordial contracts. If capitalism encourages the mobility of labour force, liberalism hastens that movement, and globalisation deepens global competition (Evan and Gibb. 2009: 1-70) which pushes the 'flexibility' and its adverse effects on

labour market because nothing but a commercial risk tries to save casualised informal labour trends. It is strident to erode the employment nature and to contribute to the emergence of precarious work where job security is under threat and ‘minimum wage’ is an illusion. The elaborate occupation-wise recruitment processes and wage structure of my respondents have been presented below.

5.3.2.a. Tailor

In both of the towns, I have noticed that only the tailoring job has noticeable diversity of income among the respondents. According to my field data 1.71% and 2.28% of the total respondents are employers (own tailoring business) at Rangpo and Singtam respectively. In tailoring business, the labourers are paid by the tailor-employers on the basis of volume of work (number of finished pieces), not as daily wage. The concentration of these kinds of labour is quite high in my study areas (56.25% and 41.18% at Rangpo and Singtam respectively). There are also some monthly salaried employees in this occupation, especially those who have some experience. Calculating mean wage in this occupation is complex due to its expanded wage variety. Field survey computed that Rs.443.28 (Rangpo) and Rs.641.18 (Singtam) is average per day income with high deviation. Table 5.4. shows that some tailors (12.5% for Rangpo and 11.76% for Singtam) earn below minimum wage per day, while most of them (56.25% and 41.17% for Rangpo and Singtam) get minimum daily wage according to the latest revised wage and remaining tailors earn more than daily minimum wage, 31.25% and 47.06% at Rangpo and Singtam respectively. Recruitment of labourers in this field is totally dependent on the community and place (common origin) based network and it has also been found that these self-employed groups are continuing their business for last two generations.

5.3.2.b. Porter

It has been noticed in the course of field work that an extensive diversity of wage labour modalities controls the informal sector and that there are various propensities to define informal work as self-employed economy. The physiognomies of this self-employed nature of work has been identified by own account activities and with their own risk to struggle for subsistence (Breman, 2013: 360).

Informal sector workers in self-employed non-agricultural spheres are mostly engaged in trade and manufacturing. Self-employed men are predominant in the trade sector (42%), as mentioned in NSS 55th Round (1999-2000). Recent studies show that Indian economy has been dominated by ‘self-employed’ group of workers in the workforce with 56.5% participation rate (NCEUS, Govt. of

India, 2007: 49), though the nature of self-employment has totally changed from pre-capitalist time (*ibid*) onwards. The porters of my study areas are under the category of self-employed; this category, however, earns money through daily practice and wages are paid simply for their physical labour power. Here, the term self-employment is nothing but the mode of wage payment – totally depends on worker’s personal choices or towards self-exploitation. Most of the porters at Rangpo (87.09%) and Singtam (90.76%) earn more than the daily minimum wage by expanding their working hours and physical stamina, and to accumulate more money within small time span, because majority of the porters are temporary/seasonal in nature. According to my respondents, mean minimum wage of the porters at Rangpo is Rs.443.28 and Rs.550.26 at Singtam town. There is no certain fixed rate for the porters; due to the mountain terrain, the demand for porters in these (industrial and commercial) towns is very high. There is no provision of written contract or registration system in informal economy, but 2010 onwards, the local administration (Nagar Panchayat Office) and Rangpo and Singtam Police implemented the regulation for the porters that they need to register themselves at Police Station (for Rangpo, 2017 onwards the registration process is taken care of by the NPO) before joining their job in the towns and also have to buy one green jacket with specific number for their identification as ‘*Namley*’¹³. The major exploitation which takes place with the porters is that the police or administrative officials charge different amounts of money (Rs.250 to Rs. 1,500) to provide the jacket. Although the recruitment of these porters is completely dependent on the network system, the State (Sikkim) nevertheless acts as an agency to provide the permission to do job.

¹³*Namley*: local name (in Nepali language) of the porters.

Fig no. 5.1.

Porters Wearing the Jacket with Number



Source: Field Survey 2016-17 in Singtam town.

5.3.2.c. Hotel worker

Under the *North East Region Vision 2020*, Sikkim is intending and developing different services to promote tourism which could create employment opportunities in the state. During 2016-17, Government of Sikkim allocated US\$2.56 million for the development of the tourism sector in Sikkim. Central Government of India in 2016 (September) approved “Swadesh Darshan” project with US\$68.74 million (4,571.8974 INR) to develop tourist circuits in five states; Sikkim is under ‘North East Circuit’ (Sikkim, The Land of Peace and Tranquility, 2017). Department of Tourism, Government of Sikkim approved this project at a cost of US\$1.58 million (105.0858 INR). Sikkim Tourism Policy, 2015 has promoted a new dimension for the growth of tourism industry in the state. Rangpo-Gangtok has been identified as an industrial corridor – accumulation of hotel industry is also high in these two towns along with tourist interests. This industry generates different layers of skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled employments. Demand for labour in this sector is not being fulfilled by the locals, so, the demand for cheap migrant labour is always high. Hotel workers in small enterprises are recruited as wage labourers or monthly salaried labourers. Migrant wage labourers often face economic abuse, and the same is also noticed for those migrant hotel workers who earn their income on a monthly basis. Normally, they have been paid wages lower than what is received by local counterparts. Wage and salaried hotel workers earn on average Rs.282 per day at Rangpo and Rs.245 at Singtam, lower than the state’s notified fixed rate. During

field survey I observed that in this informal sector there is some participation (not respondents, through observation and interviews) of local people and this is the main reason for lower payment of the migrant workers. Table no. shows that all of my respondents who are working as hotel workers have been recruited through community based network. It is the most popular way to get entry into the informal job market in developing countries.

5.3.2.d. Construction Worker

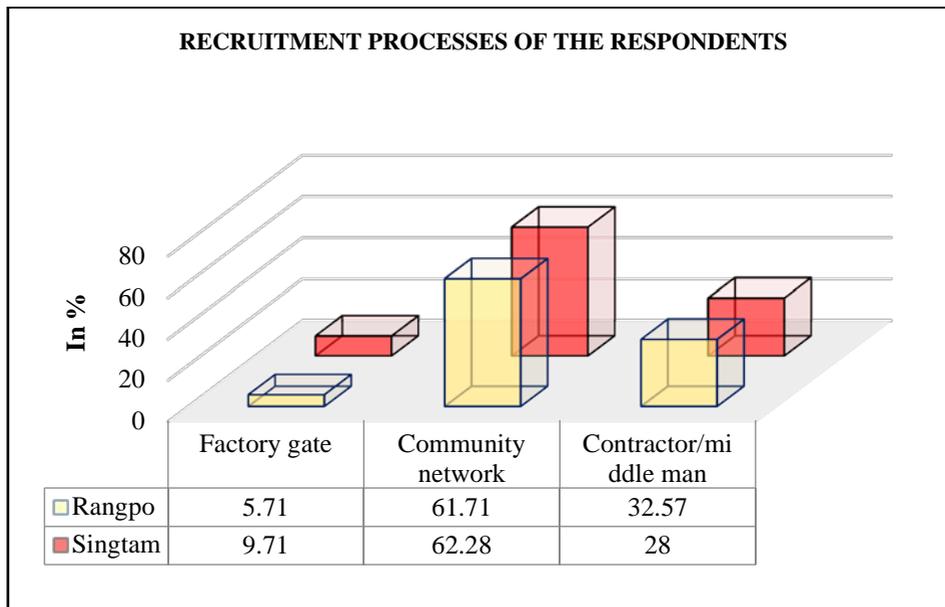
According to the Report on conditions of work and promotion of livelihoods in the unorganised sector, 2007, in the year 2004-05 there was nearly 53% of casual labourers working in the construction sector. As expressed by Wells (2007) “Informality is now the norm, rather than the exception, in the construction industry throughout much of the developing world” (Wells, 2007: 87-93). The construction industry is the major source of employment worldwide, possibly the second largest industry just after agriculture, and normally exploded in the urban areas. Studies estimated that inter-state migration is near about 80 million persons and out of that 40 million persons are working in construction industry. It is a labour intensive and burgeoning industry; this sector always generates many employment opportunities. A pivotal aspect of Sikkim’s neoliberal urbanisation has marked its turn toward creating her urban spaces into different logistic hubs with emphasis on Urban Development Projects (UDPs) or variously known as Urban Infrastructural Projects (UIP). The economics of globalisation creates a free-for-all climate in the global labour market. In these circumstances, capital becomes footloose and labour should obey the capital’s commands and conditions (Bremen,1996). Construction is the basic practice of infrastructural development. In Sikkim, especially in the East district, the influx of migrant construction labourers is more due to the infrastructural development in the state which creates job opportunities. Another important reason is that the Sikkimese people are not willing to get involved in lower segment of the labour market. Noticeably the participation rate and demand of the plains labourer, rather than the local proletariat is too high.

In the construction industry, contract labour’s share is noticeable and I have also found a small percentage of migrant workers who have got jobs at the factory gate (Fig.no. 6.2). Contract labourers are also engaged in large number in certain activities in the informal sector like, *beedi* rolling, stone quarrying, rice shelling, brick-kiln and construction (NCEUS, 2007: 38). There are nearly 10.7 million construction workers in India and out of that about 83% are employed through

contractors and also have not received any benefit or protection (Vaid, 1997: 99). Normally, contract labour in India is regulated by the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act 1970, but there is a disparity between reality and logistics. This Act is not applicable to those contractors who employ less than twenty workers; hence, this condition opens up all types of manipulations that are made by the contractors and employers (SNCL, 2002).

Contract labourers are not same as direct labourers in terms of employment relationship and wage receipt. The contractor or the middle man pays money one time or sometimes as per the requirement of the labour after redeeming the commissions. Sometime, contractors and middle men charge their commissions directly from the employer and also from the labourers. The rate of commission is not fixed; it depends on the types, days, and volumes of work. My respondents (contract construction labourers) stated they never signed any contract paper before joining. They got initial information from a village-mate who helped them to get the job in construction site and the middle man/contractor charged Rs.150-200 from each labourer for providing them with this opportunity. Apart from this, the contract labourer does not have any security or advantage. There are different types and layers of activities in construction industry (semi-skilled, unskilled etc.) like, mason, helper, floor *mistry*, plumber, electrician etc. and it is complex to calculate their overall average daily income. I have computed the daily income of my respondents who are working in construction sector as one unit. It is not possible to count the total skilled and unskilled participation rate because both categories are within migrant labourer category. As per my own field data the average daily income of construction labourers at Rangpo is Rs.509.20 and at Singtam Rs.546 with noticeable deviation.

Fig no. 5.2.



Source: Field Survey, 2016-17.

Table no. 5.4 **Wage Structure of Respondents in Rangpo and Singtam Town**

Wage category	Rangpo in (%)				Singtam in (%)			
	Tailor	Porter	Hotel worker	Construction worker	Tailor	Porter	Hotel worker	Construction worker ¹²
< Minimum wage	12.5	1.61	73.33	10.45	11.76	0.00	66.66	7.94
Minimum wage	56.25	11.29	26.66	35.82	41.17	9.23	26.66	47.62
>Minimum wage	31.25	87.09	0.00	53.73	47.06	90.76	6.66	44.44
Total	100	100	1000	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Field Survey, 2016-17.

The wage structure in informal economy has been characterised by different layers of the wage pyramid (Dewan, 2005). My field experience highlights the fact that the maximum number of migrant labourers at Rangpo (81.71%) and Singtam (84.57%) town get prescribed minimum wage and some get more than minimum wage; whereas, apart from the wage benefits, other healthy work environment's parameters are poorly met.

5.3.3 Working Hours

For people who are pursuing a livelihood of an unskilled and semi-skilled labourer, standardised working hours are an unknown luxury (Breman, 2013: 284). The casual use of physical power is characterised by an uncertainty as to when the working day actually begins and ends. It has become less important to discuss the working hours in considering the physical input given by each labourer to earn or to survive. Long hours of work in the informal sector have been noticed by numerous studies (Basu, Basu, and Roy, 1987: AN145-AN147+AN149-AN154; Anand, 1991; Acharya and Jose, 1991; Das, 1994:392-405; Swaminathan, 1998: 1513-28; Pais, 2003; Ghosh, 2004).

The prolonged working hours do not help in earning more money in the informal sector; rather exist as a common practice in this field. The work schedule has become more capitalist in informal work regime. Porters, coolies, labourers in fishing and tannery industry are worked for very long hours (NCEUS,2007:36), though different labour and industry regulations of India (Factories Act 1948, Minimum Wage Act 1948, Shops and Establishment Act 1948) put down rules that no adult labourer can work more than 9 hours a day and 48 hours per week. These regulations are not being followed in the real labour market. In Dharavi's leather accessories manufacture unit, it is common that labourers work 15 and 17 hours a day (*ibid*) but on an average, the established working hours is 8 hours per day for six days a week. The field reality is very much adverse in Rangpo and Singtam. The average working hours of my respondents in both the town is 10 hours a day and work goes on seven days a week and it increases with no fixed limit when they come to work as project driven 'contract labourer' (*thika*) on a short term basis.

This research noticed that among all respondents, those who are working on daily wage basis are more vulnerable in terms of working hours. Tailor's wage is determined by the volume of work for which they work for 10 hours per day, but if the worker is appointed on monthly payment basis, they work for 7 to 8 hours a day. Individualisation of labour force develops result-based employment relationships. Tailor staffing depends on the customer requirements which creates a "24 /7" Economy (ILO, 2007).

Self-employed porters who work in the open air on their own accord are free to fix their working time, but due to the nature of migration (temporary/seasonal), porters usually work for longer hours to accumulate money within a short period of time. However, due to mountain terrain in Sikkim market closes early and average working hours are less than that of other plain regions of the country. Still, porters work for an average of 8 to 9 hours a day. Hotel workers are residing at the

work place, so their working hours are beyond any fixed standardised hours. Hotel workers work for 12 hours on average in a day. Similarly, maximum construction workers are also residing at the construction site and they are appointed in any project for limited time periods, due to this pressure average working hours for the construction labourers are more: 11 to 12 hours are common mean working time at my study areas. Table no 6.5 explains the detailed mean working hours for my respondents from Rangpo and Singtam town which influences the respondents to rank ‘working hours’ at sixth position in Rangpo and at seventh position in Singtam.

Table no. 5.5

Average Working Hours of the Respondents

Occupation	Working hours per day	
	Rangpo	Singtam
Tailor	8.48±1.37	9.41±1.43
Porter	7.49±1.00	8.09±0.53
Hotel worker	9.42±1.44	10.23±1.04
Construction worker	10.15±1.36	10.22±1.41

Source: Field Survey, 2016-17.

So, the recent decades experienced the new economic trends – increasingly diverse, dispersed and individualised working hours. ILO, (2007: 1) stated that “They have also led to a greater tension between workers’ needs and preferences regarding working hours and enterprises’ business requirements”. These new realism creates time related social problems. While ILO is stressing and promoting the decent work agenda which includes better working time, the real practice is a blatant disregard to the international norms of decent work.

6.3.4 Compensation for Overtime

The labour and industry regulation offers some occasional overtime work – stipulating some facts that the labour should earn at twice the rate of normal wage he/she received, but there are very few provisions to obtain compensations for overtime. The wages are normally determined by the long working hours in the informal sectors. Dewan (2005) stated that the overtime did not increase the

wage but it only added to a normal work-day. The overtime wages are a little addition to the monthly income. The basis to calculate overtime rate is more exploitative in informal-undocumented labour group. In my research, I have noticed that only 20.32% (Rangpo) and 16% (Singtam) of construction labourers are obtaining overtime compensation. Although the overtime rate is not determined according to the law, those who are employed for more years with same contractor or '*thikadar*' are getting a few privileges in terms of overtime compensation. Other respondents are not getting any overtime compensation. Hotel workers can earn extra money from the tips given by the customers. These are the factors that the respondents have placed 'overtime compensation' in fifth rank in Rangpo and Singtam.

6.3.5 Employment Security

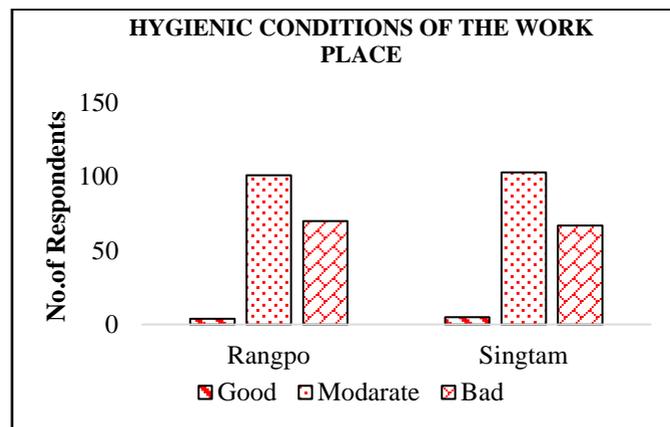
The fundamental challenge to estimating the causal impact of migration duration on the probability of working in the informal sector is the possibility of unobserved individual characteristics that might influence the migration decision, survival at a migration destination, and duration as well as the likelihood of working in the informal sector. Employment security is all about the protection of workers from the job loss which is related to various reasons of dismissals. There is one way of protection called employment protection legislation (EPL). For last few decades the growth of temporary contracts, dispatched work, marginal part-time work has flourished all over the world which led concerns about the workers' employment security. EPL is the set of laws leading the institution of temporary contracts, open-end contracts and also controlling the termination of contractual relationships – individually and collectively and has become the centre of arguments on the labour market reform. A well functioned EPL can be able to provide an impartial treatment along with income security of the labourers. Over the last decades, the importance of EPL has grown world-wide due to the competition in flexible labour market, especially during 2009-2015 global job crisis. The debate on the role of EPL has been studied in various contexts; some highlight its positive sides as to reduce unemployment tendencies among the vulnerable group and others are focusing on its undesirable aspects such as it discourages employment creations (Aleksynska, and Eberlein, 2016: 1-38). Betcherman, (2012: 1-57;2014: 1-34) has stated different arguments based on EPL's input on contemporary labour market. ILO, (2015), launched EPLex (Employment Protection Legislation Summary Indicators in the Area of Terminating Regular Contracts, Individual Dismissals) indicators. All these indicators are based on the legal information which is totally absent in the informal sector: no provision of written appointment letter or

employment contract is practiced in Sikkim as well. There is no legal provision to protect employment for once one leaves the working place in informal employment. In Sikkim there is a high demand for informal migrant labourers but none of my respondents have job certainty nor are assured that there is provision which they could avail to protect their current level of job. Hopefully, I have noticed that there is an ongoing practice of verbal commitment. Monthly salaried labourers are in better position with regard to economic security than the daily wage labourers. My respondents at Rangpo ranked this important decent work option at seventh (Table no. 5.1) and at Singtam at eighth (Table no.5.2).

6.3.6. Hygienic Condition at Work Place

The physical conditions (space, ventilation, hygiene, cleanliness etc.) of work place are very important components of study. Many studies have pointed out poor work environment in the informal sector in India – examples from leather industries (Nihila, 2002:134-166), fish processing units (Dewan, 2005), and other informal sectors like *beedi* rolling, textile industries, diamond cutting etc. (Labour Bureau, 2000) have proved this unwanted fact. Some attributes of hygiene conditions may not be easily measured – most data are based on subjective or qualitative paradigms while some of them can easily be measured (space, height, ventilation etc.). OSHA (Occupation Safety and Health Administration of America) sets some standard measures to provide better work place. In India organised or formal sector can enjoy some measures of better work place through the Factories Act (1948), but in informal sector, it is absent: workers are overcrowded in small work places (Pais, 2002; Breman, 1996). Fig no 6.3 shows that respondents from the construction sector are suffering more because their work place is same as their living place. Others are working in a modest work place with moderate hygienic conditions. My respondents have given third rank to the hygiene condition of their work place at Rangpo and Singtam.

Fig no. 5.3



Source: Field Survey, 2016-17.

5.4 Social Security

Social security may be defined as ‘freedom from fear and freedom from want’ and what broadens the surfaces of individual wellbeing in the security calculus. It is the genuine concern of individuals who opt for protection from the threat of political disability, social conflicts, hunger, unemployment, and other hazards in the society. Globally, neoliberal policies advocate social security mechanisms in the informal – flexible labour market. In reality, the state based social security has been transformed by the market based fundamentalism. “Insecurity” and “risk taking” have become the central theme of globalised capitalist onslaught (Sakthivel, and Joddar, 2006: 2107).

The root causes of the crisis in human security are deeply engrained in the history of human civilisation, and its immediate catalyst was located in post-cold war state. It triggers an obviousness which laced a fear of insecurity from the individual at local to the special groups called migrants, at national level, spreading especially across the global political system from the mid-20th century onwards. It encourages labour casualties, human movements from poor secured states to reasonably safe destinations. For example, several countries in the Middle East and South East Asia succumbed to political uprisings in this decade. So its central proposition – that the political system has gone haywire which often misrepresents and controls economy and results into widening inequality - damages human security, especially in informal economy. In most of the developing countries, the social security is not introduced for many working groups, especially in the most vulnerable - informal sector (Gupta, 2007: 99).

The Second National Commission on Labour had recommended that there should be an umbrella legislation to protect the work environment in the informal sector and also for social security. The National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector (NCEUS) had already asked for draft legislation on social security of the unorganised sector but it also became a whittled down version of previous attempts. There were many promises by the different governments of India with regard to introducing social security bill for unorganised sector, but somehow this has not happened. NCEUS has already conscripted the bill but no one is forwarding the next step. Hence, everyday labour in the informal sector is growing promptly but no one is making any attempt to provide any security to them. This sector is accountable for 92% of the employment which also absorbs the huge annual increase of national labour force (NCEUS, 2007) and generates more than sixty percent of the GDP (gross domestic product) of the nation (Bairagya, 2015: 35-55), but it has been documented as a post effect of liberalisation which has a very high pace (Vakulabharanam, 2010: 67-76).

The Unorganised Workers Social Security Bill, 2007 has been already passed by both the houses of the parliament. At the time of Union Budget 2009-10, the Finance Minister ensured that social security for some selected occupations – weavers, handicraft workers, plantation labour, construction labour, mine workers, rickshaw pullers etc. will be implemented at the earliest possible time. Even after this development, there is no initiative to ensure the implementation of this policy among large sections of Indian work force. Neoliberal economy is encouraged in many developing countries because informal labour force is fending for itself, and more and more workers are accumulated to the army of informal job market. Jenkins (1993: 3-20), has noticed that developing country's workers are more who are working without any formal protections (in Africa it is 90 %) than the developed countries. ILO and other Ministries of Labour have assumed that all workers would be transformed or end up in any formal sector, but recent labour market has shown the contrary situations all over the world (Ginneken, 2002: 49-69). Informal labourers are living on a day-to-day basis and are also bared to different risks and catastrophes which can push them under the state of permanent indebtedness and other obligations. According to Ginneken (2002), social security can provide three basic options for increasing people's control over their life and extending coverage to informal sector workers and other vulnerable groups in society: i) through specially and self-financed social insurance schemes, ii) through social assistance, and iii) through extension and reform of the existing formal sector social insurance. The ILO also experimented with these options

through some pilot projects in India, Benin, Tanzania and El Salvador. This project tries to reinforce the social security agencies, government, NGOs to build and implement different social security schemes for informal sector. This project also sets up all three proposed options; feasibility studies of these implementations for these countries have been done. The project also works on micro insurance schemes and its impacts on informal labourer's life – especially in health sector (Ginneken, 2001: 59-79). On the basis of the experience gained with these projects, the social security partners too can then be trained and helped to formulate their own policies and activities with regard to social security for workers in the informal sector; apart from so many projects or experiences, in reality the possibilities of implementation are acted as dream project in India.

India's workforce is categorised by labour segmentation wherein employment security and social security is totally absent in the informal sector. Considering the coverage of social security schemes, 55th NSSO, 1999-2000 shows that eighty-five percent of non-farm workers (SCs and OBCs) are not getting any social security, and for other categories seventy-five percent are under this sore situation. Among the informal economy, there is very minimal opportunity to get the benefit of social security (Sakthivel, Joddar, 2006).

All above discussions acquired importance as my field study showed the same experiences at Rangpo and Singtam town. My respondents at these two towns have ranked the social security option at ninth position which divulges the fact that in Sikkim migrant informal labourers are not getting any benefit regarding social security option, though neighbouring state of West Bengal that supplies a large chunk of informal workers to Sikkim has introduced "*Samajik Surakha Yojona Scheme*" in 1st April, 2017 for informal labourers. The scheme declares, after registration the labourers would get social security identification number which would provide them with provident fund, health care benefits, education benefits for children and accidental benefits. According to state labour office (West Bengal) only 5.3 million workers enlisted their name under this scheme, whereas the state had nearly two crores of informal workers who were working in construction sector, as *beedi* binding worker, casual worker etc. (Bartaman, 10th March, 2018). Unfortunately, my field work also found the fact that migrant labourer who have come from West Bengal (73.14% at Rangpo and 64.57% at Singtam) are not properly aware of this social security scheme. Only, 3.90% respondents at Rangpo and 7.07% at Singtam town have social security identification card number. However, these benefits are offered at the place of origin, not in the host state Sikkim. It is

not a unique fact for the migrant informal labourers in Sikkim: they are coping with the same situation in other parts of the country. Although migrant labourers are investing their labour for the production in the destination area, in return they are not receiving any social security benefits from the host area. The social security measures needed in the informal sector are extensive but in reality they are limited due to small funds and lack of readiness. Preclusion of different schemes create obligations to apply social security measures for vulnerable, precarious informal labourers, but on the other hand it is also true that many schemes that have evolved in India with the help of legislations and policies to protect informal labourers are mostly integrated with Rural Development Programme. In Sikkim too, the state government has promoted and followed different laws and policies to protect Sikkimese or local labourers, whereas migrant labourers are not able to access even the basic security.

5.5 Retention Strategies

Return of migrants is an unavoidable facet of any short term, temporary/seasonal and also of contract migration. The demand of unskilled and semi-skilled labour in Sikkim is still high due to the lesser participation rate of local (Sikkimese) people. The ‘trans-border’ (among states) movement of labour has challenged the ‘assimilation models of migrants’ integration.

Table no. 5.6

Different Reasons for the Return Migration

Reasons behind return migration	Rangpo Town	Singtam Town
Sikkim’s state policies	76%	73.14%
Different physical environment	6.68%	9.71%
Different cultural environment	5.14%	6.28%
Willing to start new occupation at native place	12%	10.86%

Source: Field Survey, 2016-17.

It has also challenged the modern political protocol of the nation-state and citizenship concepts, especially in case of Sikkim (Sikkim Subject or COI). Although the state is under the Indian Union

Territory but to enjoy the benefits from the state, a person should be of Sikkimese origin. De Hass, (2010: 247) rightly stated “The implication is that clear-cut dichotomies of “origin” or “destination” and categories such as “permanent,” “temporary,” and “return” migration are increasingly difficult to sustain in a world in which the lives of migrants are characterised by circulation and simultaneous commitment to two or more societies or communities.” In Sikkim most of the migrants are willing to return to their native place for various reasons. Table no. 5.6 represents the reasons behind their decision to return from Sikkim (Rangpo and Singtam).

I have already discussed Sikkim’s policy (Sikkim Subject/COI) of facilitating only the people of Sikkimese origin. So, the migrant labourers are not prone to stay back in their destination area even if they wish so; 76% and 73.14% respondents at Rangpo and Singtam have cited Sikkim’s state policies as the prime reason behind their decision to return home. Another set of respondents are eager to return to their native states due to comparatively colder environment in Sikkim with which they could not adjust. 6.68% (Rangpo) and 9.71% of the (Singtam) respondents are in this category. They frequently suffer from fever, cough and cold and even pneumonia. My respondents have come from the plains and their culture is totally different (will discuss in the next chapter) and at times it gets tough for the newcomers to adjust to the new culture. However, very few respondents, 5.14% and 6.28% at Rangpo and Singtam respectively return for this reason, that too because there is no other choice for the vulnerable informal migrant labourers in this contemporary globalised market. There is paucity of information on occupational structure, resource position, skill enhancement, and investment capabilities of the return migrant labourers. In my field study I have observed that 12% and 10.86% of the respondents have plans to return to their native place to start a new venture (small shop, small tea garden, etc.); they come only to earn more money, so that they can fulfill their wish in future. The respondents assign this to rank two (Rangpo) and rank four (Singtam) respectively. Although this return flows differ according to job structure and age group, in some cases (e.g. construction workers) by default the labourers leave Sikkim but move towards another destination. This has impaired the scope of formulating purposeful plans for retention strategy of the migrant labourers.

5.6 Union Rights

In the era of post-liberalisation in India, there have been numerous changes in labour landscape. Agnihotri, (2005) claimed that neoliberalism has a tendency to introduce privatisation and informalisation through casualisation and flexibilisation of labour (Bhandari, 2008). These

tendencies are also diminishing the power of traditional structure of unions and forming a new space to establish new eccentric constituencies in the informal labour market (Sunder, 2006: 903-918; Mohanty, 2009). There have been four remarkable divisions in the history of Indian trade unionism which passed through different ups and downs and crises. It starts from the state control over labour movement (first phase) to intense political and economic crisis (third phase) and last phase (fourth phase) has been characterised by the liberalisation, privatisation, and globalisation which facilitated high growth in tertiary sector (Mukherjee, 2013: 1-29). Susie Tharu and Tejaswini Niranjana (1996: 232-260) have mentioned this as “Mandal/Mandir/Fund– Bank years”. The neoliberal policies (1990s) are responsible in accompanying new arena of the labour management strategies. Different scholars have their own views to explain the impact of globalisation on labour market – with the fact that employers gained the power of bargaining. In this regard, Kalarivayil and Nair’s (2018: 48) observation may be cited: “The differential mobility of capital in comparison to labour and outsourcing of production to informal sector diminished the bargaining power of worker unions”. Moving towards labour flexibility through contract labour and renunciation of labour union power used to be the prime impact of globalisation on labour market (Sunder, 2015: 43-53) which is very much predominant in informal sector where casual labour intake is maximum. There are various forms of unionisation in the informal sector also which have been adopted by different groups of organisation. CTUOs [Central Trade Union organisations] took the initiative to organise labourers in the informal sector. Along with this there are other organisations such as TUCC [Trade Union Coordination Centre], CITU [Centre of Indian Trade Union], UTUC (LS) [United Trade Union Congress (Lenin Sarani)] etc. that have large informal labourers as members in their organisations. These units are organising labourers who are working in the informal sector and trying to secure their rights by dealing with their problems and demands (Sunder, 2006: 903-918). There are different NGOs also facilitating unionisation of informal workers like SEWA [Self Employed Women’s Association].

My field unfolds another truth, namely, the control of state on the formation of new union and even joining of migrant labourers in any existing labour union in Sikkim. They cannot get consent from their employers to take part or even to register their names in any existing local labour unions, whereas 90% of the state’s informal economy is based on the migrant labourers.

In reality workers’ collective rights were totally overlooked in the state of Sikkim for the migrant informal labourers. The Indian Constitution clearly recognised the relation between decent work

conditions and the promotion of informal sector. Article 39 and 42 of the Directive Principles give importance on the goals and humane conditions of work, but Article 43 emphasised not only the provision of minimum wage, but also for the “conditions of work ensuring a decent life”. Under the National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector, the government of India has provided various suggestive measures to transform the informal economy, though none of these suggestions can be interpreted as a suitable format for the development of a foundational framework when viewed in the light of migrant informal labourers’ standpoint at Rangpo and Singtam. The possibilities to get a minimum security through the unionisation have become very low in this state. They have been treated as foreign labourers, though Sikkim merged with India in 1975. There is no scope to be a citizen of Sikkim or getting Sikkim Subject or COI for these migrant labourers. Flecker (2007: 6-9) has rightly said in the context of foreign migrant worker’s condition in Canada (huge temporary, unskilled, semiskilled migrant foreign labourers are not eligible for permanent Canadian citizenship) that “Guest workers are fleeced by unscrupulous labour brokers who charge exorbitant ‘processing fees’ in exchange for work permit; workers are misled with false promises about wages and working conditions; they are exploited, intimidated and threatened with deportation by some employers unless they accept terms akin and to indentured servitude; they are faced with social isolation and separation from their families and communities; and additionally, they are sometimes exposed to sickening doses of racism and discrimination from the communities in which they work.” (Evans and Gibb, 2009: 23).

5.7 Can Policies Help Reduce Politics Over Informal Economics?

“The labour landscape in India has seen several changes subsequent to the introduction of labour market deregulation policies” (George and Sinha, 2018: 17). Different studies proved upsurge of atypical employment expansion of informal sector (Gupta, 1995: 1295-1311; Maiti and Mitra, 2010) and other ways of casualisation and informalisation of labourers (Golder, 2010). Labour disciplining and control strategies by enforcing laws by the state are the determining factors of the labour space in any country. Temporary/seasonal labour migration has often been regarded as a path to ‘square the policy circle’ (Winters, 2003: 111-146; Amin and Mattoo, 2005: 1-52; World Bank, 2006a, 2006b) because it does precisely that: it balances the economic needs on the sending and receiving sides while addressing the difficult goals of employment and stability creation for the more vulnerable sections of society.

The ongoing political experiments by the policy-makers between people (other than migrants) and bureaucracy would not be successful without considering the wellbeing of migrant labourers in the ever growing informal sector. Central Labour Ministry has introduced recently new social security scheme proposals to support social security and to cover different benefits for migrant informal labourers under the Employee Provident Fund [EPF] and Employee State Insurance [ESI] in different states of India. The basic need is to evolve an approach which is resolutely rooted in the sphere of work while recognising the contribution of the people in the informal economy. This is not only for the growth of national income but also for employment itself.

In reality, there is an ongoing, constant cross-state competition to attract investors, and it has become a leading concern in the role of government. If states want to retain or attract these investments, then they will have incentives to weaken their existing labour laws (Mostey and David 2015: 283-301). This propensity may lead states to fail in offering labour rights, individual working conditions as well as to enforce domestic labour legislations (Przeworski A and Wallerstein M. 1988: 11-29). Sikkim too has these possibilities. Moreover, there is a provision of exclusive privilege to 'Sikkimese only' in the economic, social and political arena on the basis of the Article 371 F. Sikkim government even tabled a bill – to reserve 95% of jobs for the Sikkimese in all private sector businesses operating (registered under Sikkim's Registration of Companies Act, 1961 or the Companies Act, 1956) within the state. The bill's target was to promote benefits to solely those who possess COI or Sikkim Subject status. In this regard, Bikash Ranjan Bhattacharya, a Constitutional expert stated "The bill will be considered as ultra vires to the Constitution and will be struck down by the judiciary" (The Telegraph. 08.03.2008: 1). Sikkim's state policies are always ready to promote and protect her local labourers. There is no room for the livelihood security of the migrant labourers except the minimum wage protocol.

Through a close observation of the spacio-temporal lattice of informal sectors in Sikkim, my research reveals the fragility of Sikkim's economy, as well as the migrant human resource value chains by the state's policies and also through market forces. While the entire informality is based on labour intensity, relative opacity, and embodied knowledge, it certainly, is able to create a 'bodily' experience for space and gives the power to informal economy to resist external forces and to subsume or transform them in formal sectors (Lindell, 2010: 1-229). Lack of job security and social protection in Sikkim also portrays that wage workers and micro employers live on a thin line between failure and survival. This renders them vulnerable and precarious. The upshot is that the informal labourers are in critical situation to maintain the quality of life. These workers are

regularly stigmatised, exploited, and made frequently invisible in policy decisions of the host as well as in the source states. It shows an enduring inequality that demands proper policy adjudication. Cities and towns are often considered as brooding places of imagination, creativity, innovation, and the ever new and different. However, cities and towns also hide in their underbelly perverse and pervasive processes of social exclusion and marginalisation and are rife with all manners of struggle, conflict, and often outright despair in the midst of the greatest affluence, abundance, and pleasure (Swyngedouw, Moulaert and Rodriguez, 2002: 547-582). This seems to be the case when one is to assess Sikkim's prosperity in the light of the concerns of migrant informal sector labour.

5.8 Regulations and Protective Measures for Informal Labourers

The overall improvement of informal workers depends on their own agency as well as on the state policy (origin and destination) and regulatory framework, different approached programmes and stakeholders who can help contouring their livelihood. There are three groups of central laws which are regulating the work conditions of the informal labourers. Especially two groups are truly applying those for the informal labourers for regulating and protecting their conditions of work. In Indian Constitution, labour is one of the concurrent positions and regulation of the condition of work is enlisted in entries No. 22, 23 and 24 of List III in the 7th Schedule. However, labour regulation and protection is the domain of central as well as the state government. Central government has passed different laws but the implementation and coverage of these laws are firmly dependent on the state government. I am considering following laws in in the context of the migrant labourers in Sikkim.

5.8.1 The Minimum Wage Act (1948)

This act has been applied for the agricultural and non-agricultural workers who are engaged in the scheduled employments. Broadly, this Act is regulating duration and timing of work as well as proper remuneration including night work, paid holidays during the week at workplace. Thus, it covers the “wage workers and homeworkers but not self-employed” (NCEUS, 2007: 159). Sikkim government is implementing this act in terms of minimum wage provisions even for the migrant informal labourers but other aspects like working hours, night work paid holidays, weekly holiday are not applicable for the migrant labourers. These are the focused areas – for the demand of migrant labourers and to avoid local labourer's temperament hampering.

5.8.2 Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act (1970)

This Act has been applied to every establishment where twenty or more workmen are employed or were employed in any day of the preceding twelve months as contract labourers. This Act does not apply to establishments that involve only an intermittent or casual nature of work. Under the Act, the appropriate government is liable to prohibit employment of contract labour in any process, operating or other work in any establishment, having regard to the conditions of work and benefits provided for the contract labour in that establishment and other relevant factors, such as whether or not nature of work is incidental necessary to the main operation, whether or not it is perennial in nature, that is to say, if it has sufficient tenure, whether or not it is done ordinarily through regular workmen in that/other establishment(s), and whether or not it is sufficient to employ considerable number of whole time workmen. For security of wage this Act provides for its payment by the contractor, and in case of failure by the principal employers. This Act also provides license to be taken depending on such conditions including, in particular, as to hours of work, fixation of wages and other essential amenities in respect of contract labour. This Act contains other welfare provisions related to health, canteen, drinking water, first aid facilities, and so on.

The Sikkim unit of Bharatiya Janata Party demanded the abolition of the labour contract system on 7th May 2018 alleging this as ‘discriminatory, inhuman and biased’. D.B. Chauhan (BJP state unit president) said in the submitted memorandum that “The labour contract system prevalent in Sikkim is highly discriminatory, inhuman and biased which needs to be abolished at the earliest.... We, therefore, give an ultimatum of one month to the labour department to end this cruel system” (Ravidas, 2018: 10). In 2005, on May Day, Sikkim Chief Minister had promised to abolish the contract system by amending the Sikkim Labour Protection Act, 2005, where he also ensured the direct employment of local labourers in the companies and factories functioning in the state. In the existing labour contract system in Sikkim, most of the companies/factories hire labourers via contractors. These hired labourers are not entitled to any employment benefits. Along with this memorandum, BJP also submitted a six-point memorandum including the demand of equal pay for casual workers and improved work environment and equal benefit for local (Sikkimese) as well as non-local (migrant) labourers.

5.8.3 Workmen's Compensation Act (1923)

This Act is applicable for few specific workmen by their employers to provide compensation for injury by accident at the work place. It considers those other than the casual and self- employed labourers. This Act offers employer's accountability for providing the compensation. In Sikkim, if the employee is a registered Sikkimese labour and if any accident happens, then after intimation to the state labour office, state government is also liable to provide compensation. In Sikkim if any labourer has been employed through a *thikadar* and gets registered under the project contractor, he is entitled to get the compensation. It is not maintained properly because the project contractor is getting certain number of labour license from the state and in practical field the labour participation rate is more than the license numbers and these extra labourers are not entitled to get any benefit from the Workmen's Compensation Act. Even those migrant labourers who are working in hazardous occupations (construction labourers, for example) are not entitled to any compensation for accidents happening during the course of their employment. According to a report published in newspaper, The Statesman (10.3.2006: 01), there were two casual labourers from Jalpaiguri district of West Bengal, engaged in construction site in East Sikkim who were killed due to the collapse of a three storied building. It was reported that more than 200 labourers from different parts of the adjacent states were employed in that project. Unfortunately, there was no allusion/intimation of any possible compensation for those dead labourers' families.

Fig no. 5.4

Migrant Labourer at Building Construction Site



Source: Field survey, 2017, Singtam town.

5.8.4 Weekly Holiday Act (1942)

This Act provides the grant for weekly holidays to the employees who work in shops, theaters, and restaurants. Every employee, other than the ones in managerial position is allowed to get one whole day holiday in every week – without any deduction of wages. According to my field survey in Sikkim, out of sixty hotel/restaurant workers (respondents in Rangpo and Singtam) none enjoy the benefit of this particular Act. Sikkim state government is implementing this Act only for the local people, not for the migrant workers.

5.8.5 Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act (1979)

It is an important Act for the migrant labourers for availing various security options in the destination area. This Act is applicable for those establishments where five or more inter-state migrants are employed and also for those contractors who employ five or more inter-state migrant contract/casual labourers – less than five inter-state migrant labourer employing establishments are exempted from this Act. This Act includes technical, clerical, skilled, semi-skilled or unskilled labour, but does not consider any personnel who are in managerial or administrative post. This Act is providing benefits of wage rates, working hours, holidays and other security (displacement allowance and journey allowance) as the other labourers are entitled to get for similar kind of work. It also ensures other important benefits like medical facilities, compensation for any fatal accident or severe injury to the workmen.

In real field these benefits are not implemented, and there is also a lack of awareness among the migrant labourers about their rights and the existence of laws. To avoid the application of this Act, establishments/contractors take small number of licenses and employ less registered labourers. Often they hide their real workmen strength. In Sikkim, the demand of inter-state migrant labour is very high but the registered number of employees is very small in every informal sector to avoid the implementation of the Act. The record of prosecutions has been weak because migrant labourers do not have proper identity proof as proposed by law and also their interactions with the employers have been very feeble.

5.8.6 Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act (1996)

This Act is applicable for those establishments that employ ten or more buildings or other constructions labourers. It has the provision to promote safety of health and other wellbeing measurers. This Act exempts those establishments that engage less than ten workers. With regard to this aspect, there is a discrepancy in the implementation of the act. In order not to provide the benefits of this act to their employees, establishments and contractors conceal the actual number of labourers enrolled, showing smaller number instead. Another malpractice is acquiring lesser number of labour licenses from the destination office than the actual number of labourers in a project, so that a very small number of labourers are actually provided with the benefits. This Act also has provisions for fixing working hours, weekly holiday, overtime wages and other benefits viz. drinking water, first-aid, canteens etc. Out of the 130 construction workers I have interviewed, none is aware of the benefits they can potentially derive from this act, which leads to their continued exploitation.

5.9 Development of Possible Coherent and Comprehensive Labour Migration Governance (in destination and place of origin)

The policy recommendation is beleaguered especially at migrant labourer, in terms of improving their living conditions and also the working conditions. Inequality is high between the Sikkimese and non-Sikkimese labourers in Sikkim, and only proper policy implementation would improve circumstances of the migrant labourers. The ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration offers various guidelines for governance and national policies (ILO, 2006). To improve the overall conditions there is need to establish different key elements and reformation and application of state policies. The foremost areas that need to be taken care of are as follows:

- a. Collection and analysis of labour market data should be improved.
- b. Formulation and appropriate implementation of state's labour policies (both at the place of origin and destination).
- c. Proper link among government, employers and workers to identify the actual needs of labour market as well as to collect the information regarding demographic and social aspects of the labourers in the destination and origin areas.
- d. Regulation and transparency of migrant labour recruitment processes.

- e. Orientation and information to migrant and potential migrant labourers regarding various rights, legal frame work, security options, working conditions, risk of irregular migration and different support systems to enhance better and decent work environment.
- f. Providing opportunities to incorporate migrant labourers into the unions and other community associations.

Along with the destination areas, the origin area also should take the responsibilities for ensuring protection for potential migrants or seasonal/temporary migrants.

5.10 Conclusion

In Sikkim, prevalent state laws for unorganised/informal sector workers are 1) The Sikkim Labour Protection Act, 2005 and 2). The Sikkim Shops and Commercial Establishments Act, 1983. These laws are applicable for Sikkim's local people and not for the migrant labourers. There is a provision for exclusive privilege to the Sikkimese in the spheres of economic, social and political arena on the basis of COI/SS, provided by the Sikkim government. Unfortunately, migrant plainmen labourers are not allowed to enjoy any benefits. Migrant wage labourers are rendered vulnerable as a group in terms of economic exploitation due to ineffective implementation of labour laws. The adaptation of different laws or policies by the Sikkim government to protect locals is quite common, but government does not provide COI or SS to those people who have migrated to Sikkim after merger with India. It has been noticed that plainmen labourers in contemporary times are treated like foreigners in terms of enjoying the logistical benefits provided by the government. Vulnerable migrant workers are clear beneficiaries of the minimum wage implemented by the government of Sikkim, but nothing else. This government introduced 'minimum right' (minimum wage) legislation to provide protection of the migrant informal labourers. Employers in Sikkim prefer to endorse temporary labour contract (without any agreement) to cut cost (Green, 2008: 153). There is a necessity for bringing various categories of informal sector under one umbrella for implementing any policy to assist informal labourers in true sense. The policy measures should take care of the existing rights of the informal labourers rather than creating 'parasite middle class' through bureaucratic and political support. Scaling up different Labour Laws and Acts for safety coverage of migrant informal labourers would go a long way toward reducing the degree and intensity of precariousness. There are different strategies which can confront different problems rooted in the informal workforce. Evans and Gibb (2009: 1-70), give emphasis on 'flexicurity'

(European context)¹⁴ and ‘community unionism’ to solve arising problems in neoliberal flexible informal labour market, though these strategies are already being introduced in various geographical, socio-economic context to solve the problems related with vulnerable precarious group of labourer in the world.

¹⁴Flexicurity: The concept of flexicurity has evolved in a European context. The attraction of this policies arguably originated in Denmark. It is a combination of flexibility and security and has aims to maintain labour market and firm based flexibility to diminishing precariousness. The policies which contributed to the broad concept of this are nothing but negotiated compromises. [Evan and Gibbs].

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CHAPTER SIX

ADAPTATION STRATEGIES OF THE MIGRANT LABOURERS

6.1 Introduction

Migrants include people like labour migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, victims of human trafficking, and others. Among such categories, labour migration is the “movement of persons from their home State to another State for the purpose of employment” (Library of Congress-Federal Research Division, 2007: 38) that has emerged as one of the most critical social and economic issues in the era of globalisation, constantly strengthened by ‘push’ and ‘pull’ pressures. Global migrants were estimated by the International Organisation of Migration (IOM) and UN to the tune of 175 million in 2000, out of which 81 million are migrant workers (ILO 2004). The ‘age of migration’ (Castles et al., 2014) has remained a land mark in the processes of its acceleration and adaptation followed by extensive diversification wrapped under mighty globalisation and eventually transcended all state boundaries in the globe. The internal and international migration covers almost all regions of the globe, the matrix of flow strongly following a complex regional system, grounded on the complementarity of place of origin vis-à-vis destination, and deeply linked with geographical proximity and networks of contact persons (de Wenden, 2016: 5-13).

South Asian subcontinent nation-states conventionally perceive themselves as countries of in-migration. As a part of nation building program, in-migration in these countries have been practiced since time immemorial and has become an inherent part or even coined as a social event. Series of unrelenting socio-political ripples brought about radical changes in human mobility on the entire subcontinent, that also induced population immigration in the Eastern Himalayan region irrespective of culture and religion, which has been represented through positive net migration rate (+0.21, total North East) during the year 1991-2001 (Rajan and Chyrmang, 2016: 96-154).

Under the light of neoliberal globalised economy around 90’s and early 2000’s, in most of the South Asian countries, especially in India, Government policy encouraged the migration of unproductive farmers from the overpopulated rural areas to urban ‘factory gates’ where cheap labour was in short supply (Chan, 2014: 1-9). Though cities and towns often ignore migrants who have come from neighbouring rural areas to the urban (Bayat, 2000: 533-557), in a majority of cases, restrictive public policy aimed at curbing unwanted migration fails to achieve its desired

effect and only leads to increased social exclusion (Ozcurumez & Yetkin, 2014: 442-457). On the contrary, these 'aliens' used to generate the multi label informal economy irrespective of their legal statuses, and based on that number many Global South cities moved towards growth and development (which happened in Sikkim as well). The flow of migrant labour from compromised agricultural livelihood regions to the infrastructural real estate zones has become prominent in every possible state of India. First of all, engagement of migrants in the labour market was started with zero-sum game. Second, there was no political, social, economic ripple thrown onto the awareness level due to the sheer ignorance of its implication. Within the prospective states like Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, (Borhade, 2016: 291-339) tourist destination state like Sikkim, union territories like Chandigarh, Delhi in particular, the steep rise of immigration has caused a great deal of informalisation process in Indian economy in tandem with the global counterpart. It turns out to come up with a reform policy response that is in line with existing inclusive coverage to migrant labour in the name of unorganised sector and labour policies also have succeeded to gain acceptance from federal states where inter-state migration flows also become a concerned approach. Whatever policies we have discussed in the previous chapter, the implementation of those policies creates confusion in the real and practical scenario. Many migrants suffer from considerable inequality in terms of status and security even within the national boundaries. So, to overcome the poverty and unemployment in the native place and also to have a better quality of life, all migrants need to make certain compromises and most of the time these compromises are related with their 'adjustment'. In this chapter the focus is on the process of adjustment in the new physical and socio-cultural environment.

6.2 Internal Dynamics of Adaptation

Adaptation is a process where individual is being embedded through gradual changes in social class relations (Reddy, and Olsen, 2012: 181-214). There are vast literatures on adaptation in social psychology, philosophy and economics (Frederick, and Loewenstein, 1999: 302-373). Early discussions on adaptation can be observed in Karl Marx's analysis of 'false consciousness' and John Stuart Mill's 'utilitarianism' (Bottomore, 1983; Qizilbash, 2006: 20-32; and Sen, 2006: 80-96). There is another concept proposed by Elster (1983: 22) on adaptation as a 'fairly broad and inclusive' way and he also stated that this process has been used in specific sense of someone's well-being (Clark, 2010: 21-42). This adaptation process is decidedly relevant in the case of migrant labourers in terms of physical changes of place and cultural changes of space. It has a

quality to reshape in ‘workers’ plans *ex post* just after reaching at the migration destination’ (Reddy, and Olsen, 2012: 181-214). Different researches can experience various aspects of adaptation of migrants involving their source and destination areas. There is a propensity of broad strategical changes after migration – depending on the time duration of the settlement, otherwise in every place a migrant need to adopt some socio-cultural and environmental aspects. Berry (1997: 5-34; 2001: 615-631) proposed migrant acculturation theory with more prominent theoretical frameworks to enlighten dynamics of migrant’s experiences – irrespective of origin or destination area. According to him “‘acculturation’ refers to the process of psychological change in a person (the migrant) resulting from contact and involvement with representatives of other cultures (usually and typically the host country culture). It invariably entails relinquishing elements of the person’s culture of origin (‘culture shedding’) and adopting (Soontiens, 2014: 1041). Adjustment with the host area in terms of culture and social practices is a demand of some situations where the migrant interfaces with representatives of the destination’s culture. Acculturation is a consequence of social meetings through which migrant experiences and adopts into the host community.

Different social encounters enrich the migrants about the similarities and dissimilarities of their own culture (culture of origin) and with the host culture. In this stage they also are surprised by ‘culture shock’ – intensity of this shock depends on the levels of compare and contrast. According to Brown and Holloway (2008: 34) ‘cultural shock’ is “...anxiety that results from losing the familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse, and their substitution by other cues that are strange”. It has been well accepted that this phenomenon is deeply rooted in the social perspectives rather than physical.

The work setting has become one important parameter to support or constrain the migrant after reaching the host area. It has already been discussed that informal migrants have a tendency to live together and the work setting acts as a community and help them to maintain the neighbourhood (in terms of social context). Other important factor which also promotes acculturation – integration process is the nature of work. It is the key factor to build the relationship between employer (host area) and employee (migrant). Moreover, ‘low road’ jobs depend on the first hand or direct relationships which also help migrant labourers to get acquainted with the new social and cultural practices of the host region. In this study the role of workplace on migrant’s adjustment and acculturation - is important than the other social or non-work settings. Many scholars have worked on the migrant’s workplace experience (cf. Bernardi et al., 2010:148-187; Fang et al., 2009: 472-

488; Van de Vijver and Phalet, 2004: 215-236) and justified through different perspectives of the growth of global migration which will turn into 405 million annually by 2050 (cf. Koser and Laczko, 2010).

According to my study, the respondents are not establishing 'transitional social field' (Schiller 1999: 96) when they are travelling and crossing the borders of states, and most of them do not settle down in the host area – using their livelihood strategy as informal labour in a temporary or circular pattern. Present day global migration has produced the circulation of culture, language, ethnicity and religion as well as information, technology, lifestyles, ideas etc. (ethnoscapes, technoscapes, ideascapes etc. by Appadurai, 1993). This chapter sets out to explore areas of adaptation to survive in the workplace in Sikkim and to focus on the non-work settings for migrant's adjustment and acculturation processes.

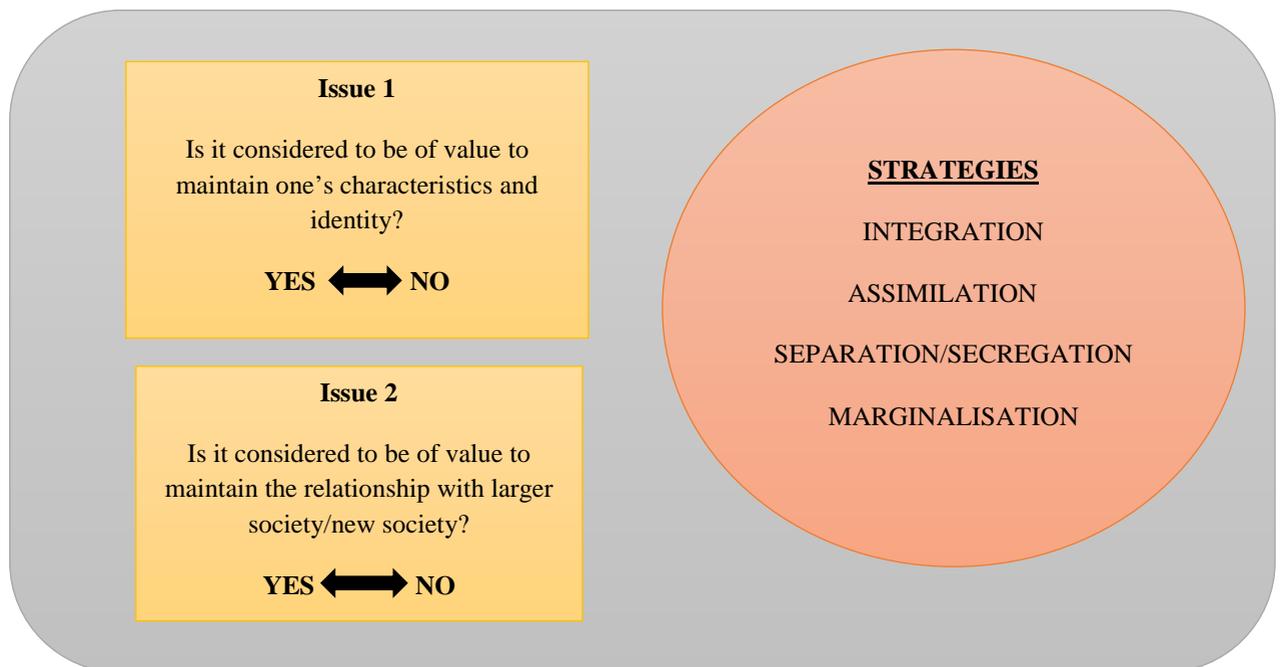
6.3 Different Propensities of Acculturation - Integration and Adaptation

The place where people are born or grow up, they get embedded with the culture of that place, but when they need to move out and settle down in a different cultural setting for job or in search of better livelihood, the need of acculturation study emerges (Fu, 2015: 121-128). The increasing tendencies of human migration in last few decades encourage researchers to unfold the facts which migrants experience at the new settings – community – culture and also within a new administrative boundary. This exploration inspired to study various acculturation strategies maintained by the migrants while adjusting themselves in that new socio-cultural and different environmental setting. Earlier acculturation study was based on the unidimensional linear process but over the course of time it has been understood that people's behaviour or cultural identity change along a single continuum. Moreover, migrants try to adjust with the new settings depending upon their necessity, willingness and sometimes by pressure of the dominant society and gradually relinquish their original culture (Ryder, Alden, and Paulhus, 2000: 49-65) but entire process depends upon the length of stay of the migrant people in the host area or how often the migrants visit that same place. The unidimensional model postulates that assimilation is the only outcome of acculturation process where migrants accept and absorb the culture of the dominant society and it is a continuing process (Lafromboise et al., 1993: 395-412). Other researches (Nesdale and Mak, 2000: 483-495; Sayegh and Lasry, 1993: 98-109) have opened up the concept of dimensional model of acculturation. The new approach considered that acculturation is a multi-faceted observation where assimilation may not occur. According to this approach, migrants have the

freedom to uphold or castoff their original culture in the new place while obtaining the culture of the host region. Berry (1992: 69-85), however states that, this method is the integration of two dimensions as an independent share rather than a mono-continuum. Hence, this bidimensional approach creates two concepts – acculturation in one hand and enculturation in other (Yoon, Langrehr, and Ong, 2011: 83-96). Kim (2000: 245-258) proposes that enculturation is the process which connects the norms of the origin culture of the migrants and collective acculturation is the process where migrants accept the culture of the host country (not necessarily by any compulsion). Both the concepts have practices in different rates – depending on the basic life domains – language, food habits, social interaction and nature of acceptance of the host area’s people. The entire decision depends on the reasons for migration, decision making processes of migration, the socio-cultural practices of the host and native area and the migrant himself. Migrants have to choose from: to what extent they are willing to preserve their own culture and identity, and how important it is to adopt new socio-cultural values from the new region.

Berry and Sam (1997) have proposed the inbuilt model to simplify the whole acculturation process with the help of four acculturation strategies.

Fig no. 6.1 **Different Acculturation Strategies Proposed in the Inbuilt Model**



Source: Acculturation Strategies by (Berry and Sam, 1997).

In the figure no. 6.1., both the issues are based on migrant's attitudinal standpoints and represented as bipolar arrows between their answers. This figure has clearly shown that the answers 'yes' and 'no' intersect to describe strategies of acculturation - integration, assimilation, separation and marginalisation. Integration refers to the process wherein an individual is willing to maintain his/her original culture and also shows an interest in learning the cultures of host area (Berry, 1992). Assimilation is the strategy, when people give importance to the new culture of the host region ignoring his/her native culture. In this case, an individual gets prepared to accept a new identity (*ibid*). Separation is a fact when people are not accepting new culture of the host community and eager to maintain their native culture. The important proposed strategy is marginalisation, where people are neither willing to maintain their native culture nor interested to accept the new culture (*ibid*). These four acculturation strategies proposed by Berry (1992) are being maintained by the individual or group of individuals and also can be rolled with one strategy or through many strategies in one time. It totally depends on the need of acculturation, acuties of migrants and role of host state. Herein, the need comes to discuss about the adaptation and the outcome of adaptation can range from the positive adaptation to acute negative one (Berry et al., 1987: 491). It is believed that migration leads to psychological and sociological changes. The consequence of any migration depends on migrant's individual characteristics and the rate of compatibility with the host area. Adaptation normally refers to the relative changes which migrants have to accept in response to the external environment demands in the host area (Berry, 1997: 5-34). Some of them have good experience while some deal with difficulties to adjust in the new environment. Adaptation may be either long-term or short-term – depending on the duration of migration and acculturation process. Short term adaptability normally occurs as an immediate effect during acculturation and the outcome can be negative (Tonsing, 2010: 5). Long term adaptation is often attained after spending a certain period of time in the host area (Segall, Dasen, Berry and Poortinga, 1990: 48-66). Berry (1997) has nicely stated adaptation as a level of 'fit' between migrants and the new environment and it triggers the acculturation strategies through which a proper system emerges in accordance with the circumstances applicable to endure in the host area (Tonsing, 2010: 5).

6.4 Contextualising Labour Adaptations

Migration might have unpredictable swings between situation and crisis, where the former conducts philanthropic management to the realm of human perspective and the latter one is to solving the

problem to avert ‘a humanitarian catastrophe’ (Akçapar, 2017: 1-34). It has given a drive to migrants for being victimised between situation and crisis by bearing the cultural shock and how their aspirations borne in the fluid state of political scenario in the destination area are also granted (Oberg, 1960: 177-182). Migration and adaptation is a microcosm of global discourse, which is related and controlled by the geo-political scenario of the host area, in this case, Sikkim. Different authors (Mansell, 1981: 93-108; Tailor’, 1994: 389-408) have characterised migration processes with ‘the adjustment to change’ considering physical and socio-cultural aspects.

Adaptation is a human strategy and social practice for being capable to face the life, for which people need to adapt with their surrounding environments. It is relatively stable change (Berry, 2005: 697-712) and has various functions in different cultural setup with multiple definitions as an outcome and processes (Hutcheon, 2006: 1-232). Adaptation and change – an important bimodal dimension of life practice creates changes in human expectations and also environmental adaptation towards the human vicissitudes (Asikin, Wulandari and Rukmi, 2017: 1-9). Adaptation process affects and controls human interaction with its new environment. Thus, understanding of various aspects of adaptation needs to pay care – physical and beyond physical environment should be viewed as a “process and product of humans’ interaction with their environment holistically” (*ibid*). Socio-cultural adaptation depends on the ability of migrants to survive in the host area’s cultural settings (Sümer, 2009: 1-34). The survival strategy is controlled by the communication skills, social skills, behaviour competence and other place based demands that help migrants to participate in everyday activities. Participation rate in day to day life depends upon the performing and understanding power of the migrants in terms of local language, making local friends, attending social activities in the host area etc. (Ward, and Rana, 1999: 422-442). All these affective parameters are also dependent on other variables like – length of stay, education, network system with the host people, nature of occupation etc. (Ward, and Kennedy, 1993: 221-249). Post-liberal world not only creates ‘flexible’ job market but also pressurises migrants to be more flexible and acceptable to survive in the host area.

The problems related with migrants’ adaptation in different socio-cultural and ecological environment have been studied empirically in large numbers, though it is the most complex one. Migration in a new socio-cultural area generates the need to reform personal and social space for the migrants and also for people of the host area. Systematic theoretical insights are thought to be essential for uniting various objectives of social conditions and adaption in polyethnic socium,

otherwise, individual interpretation of social reality through the adaptation processes are negatively reflected on the “required constructive stability in the polyethnic space of the hosting region. As a result, the adaptation subjects (ethnic migrants and hosting population) do not have an opportunity, first, to build up an identification model contrast “Us-Them” and secondly, using the interpretative strategies of social adaption, to construct the consistent images of social reality for themselves and others” (Khaliman, 2012: 187).

6.5 Physical/Environmental Adaptation of the Migrant Labourers in Rangpo and Singtam

Migrants’ need to adjust with the new physical environment, considering the fact that Sikkim has rugged mountain terrain while the migrant labourers are from the plains (West Bengal and Bihar). For their work they have to reside in a relatively cold sub-tropical/semi-temperate climate in Rangpo and Singtam. My field survey reveals the fact that the migration pattern has not only been controlled by spare agricultural time at source regions but also by the climatic condition of the host area. Sikkim is having average 18°C annual temperature and the temperature seldom reaches more than 28°C. In Rangpo and Singtam the minimum temperature has been observed in the month of January with 15.9°C and maximum with 27°C in the month of July and August. Migrant labourers find it comfortable to work in Sikkim except in winter months. In Rangpo and Singtam, the average winter temperature does not differ much due to physical location of these two towns. Environmental difference does not act as a vital barrier to control the volume of migrants and even does not have impact on physical adaptation process (except extreme climatic differences) because important phenomenon of adaptation process is firmly rooted in the socio-cultural aspects rather than physical/environmental context (Brown and Holloway, 2008: 34).

Fig no. 6.2

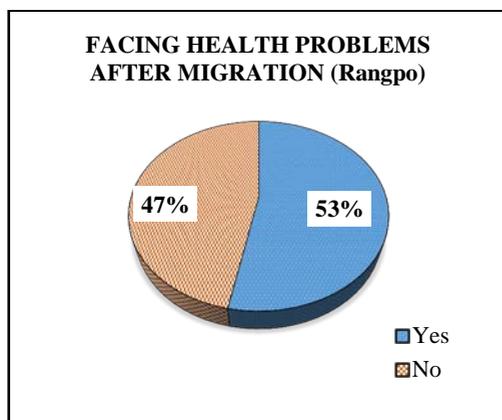
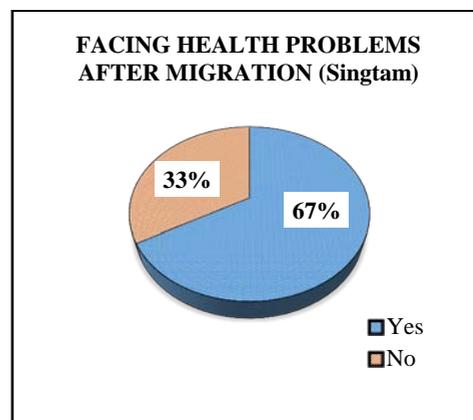


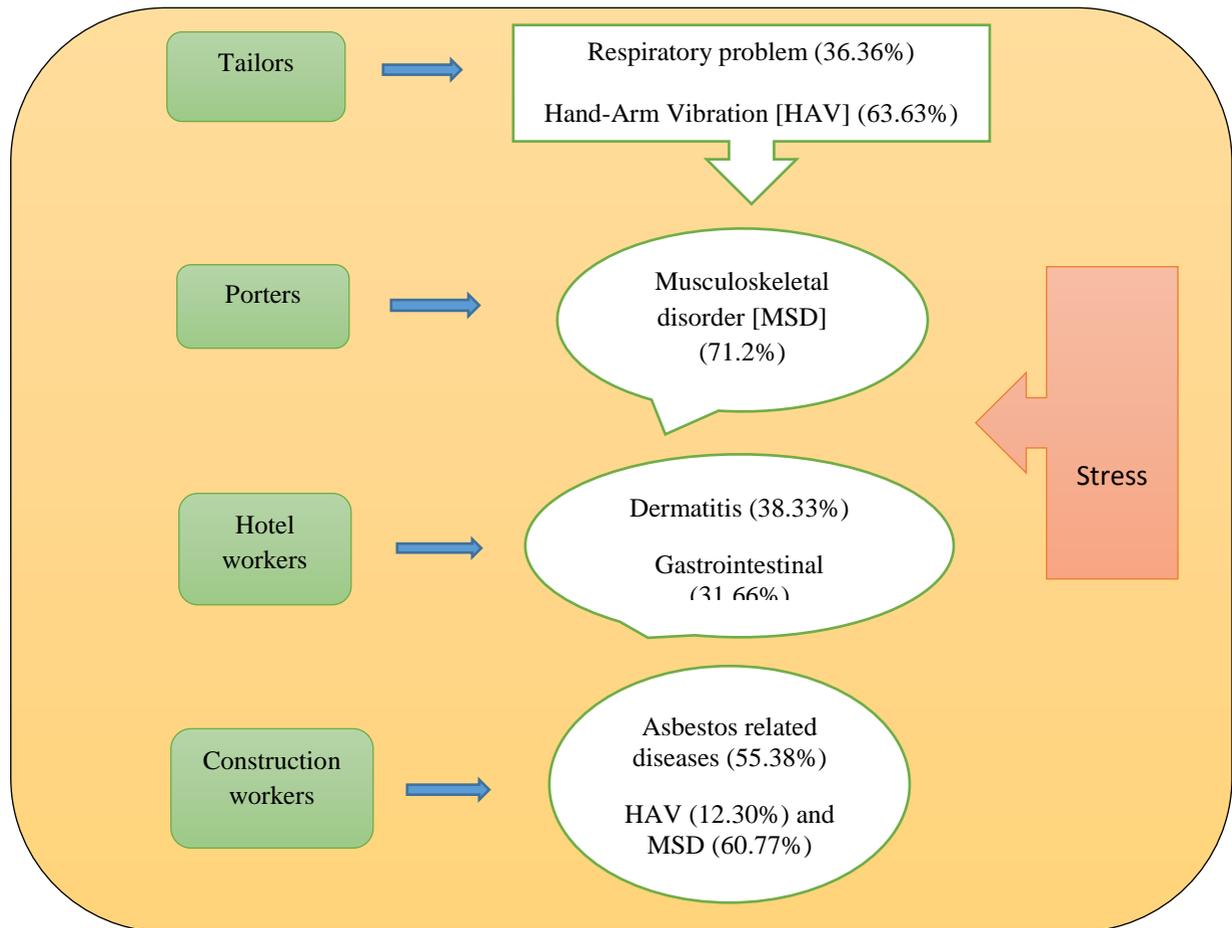
Fig no. 6.3



Source: Field Survey, 2016-17.

The migrants very often face health problems in Sikkim. The health problems are most recurrent among the newly arrived groups or individuals. During my survey 53% (Fig. no. 6.2) respondents in Rangpo and 67% (Fig. no. 6.3) respondents in Singtam town have admitted the fact that they have faced health disorder during migration process. Dermatitis, gastrointestinal illness, respiratory problem and hypothermia (few cases) are more frequent. The risks associated with their movement are psychosocial pressure, nutrition disorders, alcoholism and drug abuse which has increased their vulnerability to non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Suboptimal hygiene, unhealthy living conditions and deprivation during movement may lead to extremity of poor health conditions. Moreover, new physical setting exhilarates the causalities. When an individual migrates and enters in new environment he is likely to be accompanied by different health risks. Different researches indicate that morbidity or illness pattern among migrants are not same due to numerous interacting influences like, socio-economic and environmental conditions, common diseases in the host region, type of occupations and curative measures within the migration processes. In my research area, it has been noticed that environmental changes and type of occupation are the key factors behind migrant's health issues. As these respondents are ephemeral in nature they prefer to return home when they face any health problem. Migrant labourers are entitled to avail treatment in the nearby hospital with minimum visit, but only 12% from Rangpo and 31.43% from Singtam are willing to visit Government Hospital in Sikkim. The reason behind this reluctance is that the migrants are not keen to come out of their own curative measures and they allocate lowest expenditure for health care purpose. Percentage share of labourers willing to visit hospitals in Singtam is more because the distance of Government Hospital is only 1 km from Singtam bazaar but quite far (10 km.) from Rangpo. Though in Rangpo there are one Health Centre and one Family Welfare Centre but migrant labourers do not visit these places. Figure no. 6.4 shows dominant/occurrences of health problems according to migrants' occupations.

Fig no. 6.4. **Occurrences of Health Problems According to Occupations**



Source: Own Elaboration after Field Survey, 2017.

Migrant labourers in Singtam town are more affected due to environmental changes (Figure no. 6.2 and 6.3). In Singtam town 66.87% (approx. 67% in figure no.3) of the respondents have reported that they faced different health problems after migration due to different climatic condition. On the other hand, 53.14% (approx. 3% in figure no.6.2) migrants in Rangpo have suffered from various health problems. Figure no. 6.4 explains how occupation types are associated with various specific diseases. On the whole, all occupations are accompanied by psychosocial stress that aggravates other diseases.

6.6 Socio-cultural Adaptation

Urban informality is a process which incorporates various activities beyond the state control (Dovey, and King, 2012: 275-293). It is also an ordinary practice and a key component of the city-making process. The towns and cities of Global South have been experiencing the rapid rate of

urban growth (156.5% in case of Sikkim during 2001 to 2011 census) and influx of migrants (65.02% migrant population in East district – SSES, 2006) which manifest ‘assimilation of different cultures’. The pace of urbanisation process in Sikkim has become very rapid mostly in the smaller towns like Rangpo, Singtam, Namchi, Mangan etc. in last decade. The high growth rate of these towns is mainly due to a huge influx of employment-bound floating people. In general, people seek to relocate for different reasons, and frequently because of the perceived disparity which an individual experience in the area of origin (Goss and Lindquist, 1995). Besides, there are other reasons like labour opportunities, cohesive cultural experiences and other policy concerns (Ortega, and Peri, 2009). In case of labour migration people are subjected to follow the rules and regulations of the host area which have been imposed upon them to determine their migrant status, rights and labouring practices (Maloney, and Korinek, 2011: 317-351). This survey focuses specifically on labour intensive industries (Tailor, Porter, Hotel Worker and Construction Worker) as the respondents are mostly unskilled or semi-skilled. In my study area less educated people concentrate more and create unique challenges that need to be recognised and discussed systematically.

Socio-cultural adaptation (in a macro view) can be defined as the course through which a labour incorporates and alters his ideas and behaviors to adjust with the new environment. In this globalised society cross-culture practice is another challenge for the migrant labourers. However, incorporation of new people (for work) i.e. short or long term migrants generate positive and negative significances depending upon the adaptation practices done by the migrant labourers (Zlotnik, 1998: 429-468). There are two prolific and influential schools of thought in cultural adaptation study – Berry’s and Kim’s. Berry (1997: 5-68, 2001: 615-631, 2005: 697-712, 2006:719-734, 2007: 69-82; Berry and Sabatier, 2010:191-207) states that “acculturation is the dual process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members” (Berry, 2005: 698). These mutual changes take place over long periods of time and in case of Sikkim, labour migration from the neighbouring states is not a recent phenomenon, rather it is an age old practice since the time of Chogyals (erstwhile rulers). These prolong time made significant changes in various socio-cultural and institutional aspects. Berry (2007:69-82) particularly focuses on the adaptation processes, strategies the people choose to adopt and how they have become successful in their relationship with the taken strategies. His model shows four different acculturation strategies for migrants which identifies how influence of dominant society is more on the acculturation process. Kim (1987,

2001, 2005; Kim and Gudykunst, 1988), on the other hand, theorises the cross-culture adaptation process and also considers how over time migrants assimilate in the new environment and their speed of adaptation (2005: 275-400). Considering comprehensive communication framework Kim's perception is multidimensional in nature. In view of 'cross-culture adaptation' Kim (2001: 31) defined "the entirety of the phenomenon of individuals who, upon relocating to an unfamiliar sociocultural environment, strive to establish and maintain a relatively stable, reciprocal, and functional relationship with the environment in order to achieve "an overall fit" between individual and the environment to maximise the individual's social life chances". Kim refers 'three-pronged' psychological layers in his 'process model' as stress-adaptation-growth dynamic. These three movements might have "increased chances of success in meeting the demands of the host environment" (Y.S. Kim, and Y.Y. Kim, 2016: 63). He also observed that "the misfit and a heightened awareness in the state of stress serve as the very same forces that propel individuals to overcome the predicament and partake in active development of new habits" (*ibid*). In case of Sikkim the stage of 'stress' is psychosocial stress which is not extended for long time, because 77.14% and 74.86% respondents are temporary/seasonal migrants.

Kim's structural model of cross-cultural adaptation explains how over the time (length of time) adaptation movement differs from person to person as well as for groups. He also stated about the propensity of adaptation level of individual people. 'Personal communication' and 'host communication competence' are the structure of cross-cultural adaptation, where affective, cognitive and behavioral capabilities of individual pushed to move towards the adaptive path. Kim's structural model especially deal with the 'intercultural transformation' but in case of Sikkim there is some limitation to adopt migrant's culture by the Sikkimese people (this research is not considering the host people adaptation process). In macro view, Kim (1995) pointed out two levels of intercultural adaptation – 1) individual level and 2) group level. The individual-level study considered "psychological adjustment of a sojourner in a new or unfamiliar culture" (Chen, 2013:1) where the interpersonal interaction and interpersonal reaction depends on the coping process of the out-comers. This individual-level approach has been adopted by the communication and psychology disciplines scholars (Berry, 1992; Kinefuchi, 2010, etc.). In case of group-level approach, scholars are focusing on the "acculturation process of groups of people from different cultures encounter, which tends to result in the transformation of cultural belief or value orientation in either or both groups (Chen, 2013: 1). Group-level study mostly considered how migrants

integrate into the social, economic, and political systems of host society (e.g., Hegde, 2002: 256-65; Witteborn, 2008: 220-222, etc.).

Of the different models related with socio-cultural adaptation, in this study I refer to 'recovery model' and 'learning model' of intercultural adaptation. It is the process of long-term migrants or short-term sojourner as "a step-by-step psychological journey from the fringes to the centre of a foreign culture, from a state of denial or ignorance to a state of understanding and empathy" (Anderson, 1994: 295) with the help of various learning process (Katcher, 1971) and self-experiences. On the other hand, learning model tries to find out "the sociocultural conventions, including perceptual and behavioral rules, of the host culture" (Chen, 2013: 2). In case of Sikkim, all these theoretical perceptions are overlapping with each other. Kim's structural approach emphasises upon the personal communication and communication competence of host people. Personal communication skill of the newcomers with the people in the host area is explicit among the respondents at Rangpo and Singtam. The respondents who are coming perpetually (seasonal/circular and short term) have already acquired communication competence in dealing with the host people. Overall, the in-migrants in Sikkim are adjusting (Berry, 1990) themselves with the Sikkimese society to be well-fit for their livelihood strategy.

6.7 Consolidation of Socio-cultural Adaptation

The study on socio-cultural adaptation recognises the experience of migrant people (informal labourers in my research subject) and the migrant-receiving communities. If we consider that "immigrant-receiving societies and their native-born populations have been massively-transformed in the past decades" (Berry, 2001: 616), then we need to study how they have changed? What social practices are playing important role in the interaction? (Hoonard and Hoonard, 2010: 141-155) and what sort of areas have been offered to the migrants from the host people? (Padilla and Perez, 2003: 52) And lastly, what are those preferable subtleties that migrants want to adopt? Unfortunately, study on immigration and adaptations with the changes that take place in the dominant culture has tended to ignore this aspect but recent researches have offered different models and influencing factors on adaptation strategies (Berry, 1997, 2001, 2005). In this chapter I intend to focus on the ways how "people manage cultural differences in everyday life?" (Collie, Kindon, Liu, and Podisiadlowski, 2010: 209).

Sikkimese people are known for being friendly, generous and helpful. Some of the host area's people, however, are hesitant to mingle and apprehensive to talk to those people that speak another

language or who belong to different culture. In this perception, it is an essential to know and prepare a structure for some intercultural encounters. Different arguments may emerge during the course of discussion as adaptation process involves various parameters which may not have same matrix in every field. It is a two-way process – interaction between the in-migrants and host society where both undergo or endure adaptation changes through different levels. In this study, I am considering the process of adaptation from the views of migrants only. Another possibility of this study is that, in the process of adaptation, every respondent may not essentially experience assimilation with the host culture and society. This has become fundamentally true when the host country itself is multi-ethnic in character (Sikkim as a case) and most of the in migrants are sharing common cultural, social, linguistic, religious and geo-spatial background (mostly from West Bengal and Bihar). So, the socio-cultural diversity may not lead to the development of completely or partially homogeneous socio-cultural setting in the host region. This insight tries to prove that “breakdown hypothesis” (Nair, 1978: 3) and “melting pot” ideas are not considered well enough as these are prominent variables in the theoretical discussion of social change. As an alternative, we may observe the process of adjustment and adaptation – referred as a process whereby a community’s or group of people’s cultural, social and economic practices (everyday) have been modified only to adjust the needs of the host place. In this respect I have observed to what extent migrant labourers have adopted or adjusted at Singtam and Rangpo and to what extent changes have taken place in terms of socio-cultural institutions (language, religion, cultural practices etc.), norms and values. I have noticed that the integration of the migrant labourers in Sikkim’s small towns is mostly on the basis of economic interest and this is because most migrant labourers do not stay for long time. Along with this, Sikkim’s policy (Sikkim Subject) is also another reason that the migrant informal labourers prefer to stay for short term/temporary or in a specific season.

Adaptation and Cultural Continuity and Changes

Most of migrant labourers in Sikkim’s informal sectors have migrated from rural areas of West Bengal and Bihar (as far as my respondents are concerned), and so, there is a scope to find out how rural migrants are adopting or adjusting with semi-urban life in Rangpo and Singtam for their economic survival. The notion of adaptation as I have observed here matches the statement “a growing consensus among anthropologist that the nature of man is best described as neither totally active nor passive but interactive. Operating within the many constraints which his physical and social environments impose, he seeks to overcome the problems confronting him by choosing among perceived available options” (Graves and Graves, 1974: 117).

Rural migrant community in urban area tends to settle in a group. Considering the structural-functional perceptions they have certain differences in specific socio-cultural aspects of the host areas. These groups of people are involved in the adaptation and adjustment process in their socio-cultural changes in general. Adaptations of migrant informal labourers in small towns like Rangpo and Singtam can be discussed by using several sets of indicators or variables. I have used following variables to deal with the adjustment or adaptation processes of the migrant labourers – occupational mobility, internalisation of most used language of the host area, contact with the local people, preferences for and attachment with neighbourhood, food habits and social cohesion. Different demographic structure (age of migrants) and number of years staying in the host area are the common controlling grounds of acculturation strategies (Jackson, 2006). Different generations (length of stay) of migrants are having different level and own ways of acculturative style (Joy, 2017; Hsu, 2010). Migration for limited time period to a new place for work generates different adaptability pattern – Sikkim is a case where migrant labourers are interested to learn host area’s language to sustain in their workplace and also to build further network or acquire information regarding forthcoming work. In this research, I have variation of migrants on the basis of length of stay. I have also noticed different levels of adaptability among them and application of various acculturation strategies, because the persons who have relocated to sell their labour are always being subject to be dominated and regulated by the host community/area. This host area also determines the migrant’s status, privileges, rights and also the labouring practices (Maloney and Korinek, 2011).

Table: 6.1 **Application of Adjustment Strategies Among the Respondents**

Adjustment strategies	Rangpo	Singtam
Occupation mobility (completely + partially)	85(48.57%)	81(46.28%)
Internalisation of mostly used language in host area	155(88.57%)	158(90.28%)
Preferences for and attachment with neighbourhood	165(94.28%)	159(90.85%)
Food habits changed	3(1.71%)	4(2.28%)
Social cohesion with host people	5(2.85%)	3(1.71%)
Contact with local people	99(56.57%)	102(58.28%)

Source: Field Survey, 2017-2018.

Cultural adaptation has been achieved through social interactions, participations in different socio-cultural events of the host communities and other involvements that immerse the migrants into their new environment (Stack and Iwasaki, 2009: 239-259). Stake (2009) observes that migrants can easily connect in the host society when they have betrothed in 'leisure pursuits' in the host area – that facilitate connections and create social network also. In Sikkim, very few (5.15%) migrant labourers (respondents) are found to integrate themselves in the host society. Migrants are mostly seasonal and temporary (especially construction workers, hotel workers) and short term or cyclic (tailor, porter) labour, therefore, they adopt and practice those strategies which are very much required for their economic activities. On the other hand, migrant labourers spend their leisure time with their own people and are rarely accompanied by host community, which could have impact on particular facets of migrant's social life. In Sikkim, migrant labourers are free to practice their native culture. Migrants are not found to internalise Sikkim's indigenous culture in their everyday life except learning the local language.

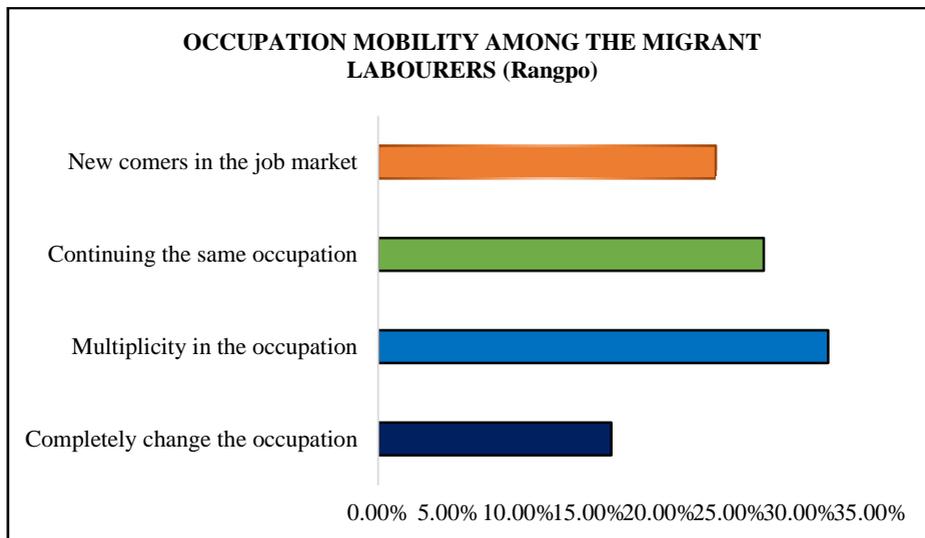
Socio-cultural adaptation in neoliberal 'age of migration' (Zolberg, 2006: 222-253) actually is an enigma where economic and political concerns merge together with the social and cultural insinuations to create a new environment for the migrants and also for the host people. In this new environment both look for a balanced situation. It can be seen that liberalisation of trade in all aspects are not being followed by the open labour migration policies which create a challenging situation for the migrant workers in the social and financial imbalance system. Though this imbalance system is a macro approach in international migration, it is very much predominant within the national or inter-state migration also. Sikkim's government has faced challenges when it comes to migrants (informal labourers) flows, especially in terms of policy protection but creating policies which address Sikkimese social, economic and political needs have been already in motion. This system too has impacts on the adaptation strategy practiced by migrants because individual migrant informal labourer contributes to Sikkim's work force system in a positive manner.

6.8 Occupational Mobility

Migrant labourers in Sikkim are mostly engaged in different informal sectors. This study has found that a good number of migrants, 16.57% (Fig. no.7.4) in Rangpo, has completely changed their previous (native place) job structure. In Rangpo, 32% migrants have changed their occupation in the host area but once they return to their native places they get engaged in their previous job.

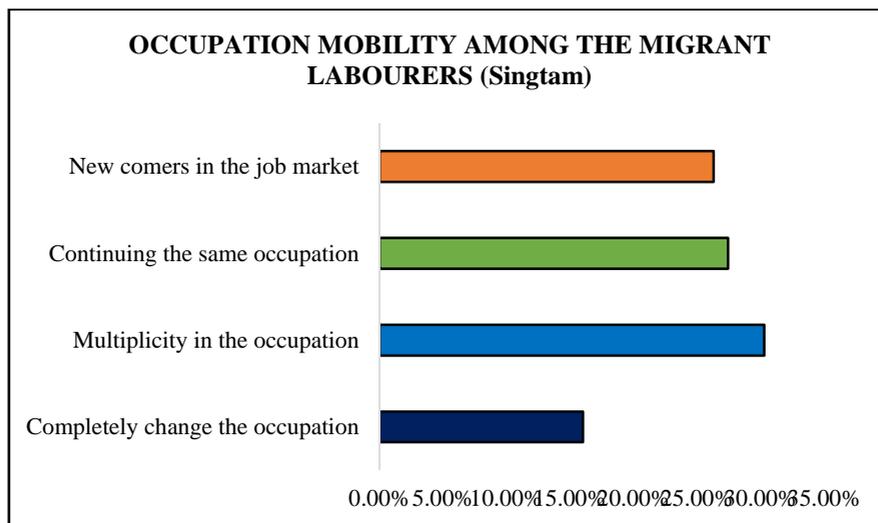
Generally, they work as agricultural labourer at their native place. In Singtam, 16% labourers have completely changed their livelihood process. It is accepted by the migrant labourers that they may have to discard their native job patterns according to the availability and demand in Sikkim's job market. However, it has been found that 26.28% and 28% (Fig. no. 6.4 and 6.5) respondents could continue with their previous job pattern at Rangpo and Singtam respectively. Among all respondents in Rangpo 24% migrants are fresh migrants and highest (50%) intake is in construction sector followed by 35.71% as porter. Singtam is experiencing 25.71% new comers and again most (46.66%) of these fresh unskilled labourers are engaged in construction sector. Sikkim's government policies always offer and protect jobs for the Sikkimese in formal sectors. There is a huge scope to intake migrant labourers in Sikkim's informal sector, especially as tailor, porter, hotel worker and construction worker. Thus, Sikkim has created a wide corridor and pulled the in-migrants from the surrounding areas. Occupation mobility signifies the way of adjustment of migrants in the host area because of the fact that the migrant labourers are not getting any option to continue their previous job in the host region.

Fig no. 6.5.



Source: Field Survey, 2017-2018

Fig no. 6.6



Source: Field Survey, 2017-2018.

6.10 Language

It has been noticed that within the adaptation processes of the migrant labourers in Sikkim the integration process plays the main role to sustain in the host area. The idea of integration as a two-way process is also important and is an indispensable element to ensure any sustainable result. Integration is a process where migrants and receiving area's people are considered as equally important. In this process both the parties are open to create a new common space for living together and respecting each other's identity. This also gives migrants a scope to make use of skills and resources they have carried with them, acquiring new ideas and languages; at the same time host area is also accepting and enriching with other languages. This is a process which cannot be completed during the first arrival of the migrants. Though, integration aims at giving the opportunity to migrants to be a part of social, cultural, political and economic life of the host area, in Sikkim this process has its own geo-political limitations. It is normally accepted that the aptitude to speak the language of host areas plays a significant role in the process of adaptation especially in the labour market, because it acts as a precondition to peruse through a sustainable relationship in the new society as well as in Sikkim's informal labour market.

6.10.1 The Linguistic Status of the Migrant Labourers

Migrant labourers are mostly willing to learn the language which is commonly used in the host area (Nepali in case of Sikkim). However, migrants are just able to communicate with the host people to

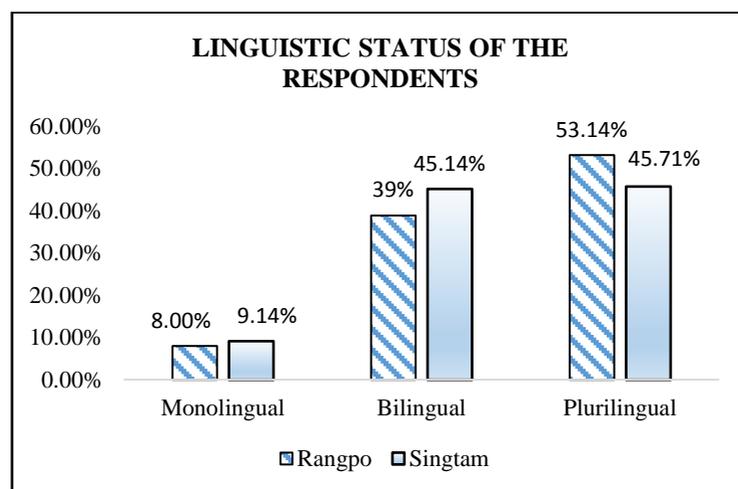
build the network and sustain easily in Sikkim. There are many migrants who can use more than one language because they have come from the multilingual states or they have experience to work in states other than Sikkim where they have learned different language to sustain in that particular area. Therefore, they have had connections with other languages during the course of migration and are also aware of similarities and dissimilarities between languages, different linguistic issues and also regarding the various existing communication contexts. If the migrants are not plurilingual by origin, they came to know other languages and became bilingual or plurilingual – depending on different other factors – opportunities to learn other language, psychosocial context, relationship between employer and employee, length of stay and future possibilities and so forth. In this study, the respondents are mostly plurilingual. Following table no. 7.2. projects the linguistic status of variables used.

Table no. 6.2 **Linguistic Status of the Migrant Labourers in Rangpo and Singtam**

Town	Monolingual	Bilingual	Plurilingual
Rangpo	14(8%)	68(38.86%)	93(53.14%)
Singtam	16(9.14%)	79(45.14%)	80(45.71%)

Source: Field Survey, 2017-2018

Fig no. 6.7



Source: Field Survey, 2017-2018.

Researches show that the language identity of migrants is very complex due to various reasons. Language as a habit, language as a capital and the attitudes towards language learning of the host area may be determined by lots of concealed factors which cannot be streamlined into a simple relation. Migrants consider their first language as their own identity; they link up this first language with their roots, cultures, religion and the persons who are staying back at the native area. To acquire communicate skills in the host area it has been essential to inhale new language for the migrant labour. Migrant labourers normally communicate in their mother tongue among themselves. Regarding the psycholinguistic approach, it has been observed that mother tongue plays an important parameter to learn any other language properly because it develops cognitive competences to learn any second language (Cummins, 1991: 75-89). Cummins also mentions that migrants can easily adopt basic interaction communication skills which are much different from the cognitive academic language.

In Rangpo and Singtam Hindi-speakers constitute more than three-fourths and remaining small part included more than a dozen linguistic communities jointly (Sharma, 1991: 152). Surjapuri, Bhojpuri, Maithili, Bengali, Rava are the various dialect groups among my respondents, but to survive in the labour market (informal), migrant labourers are willing to learn *Nepali*, which is the lingua-franca of Sikkim as a whole. Among the respondents 8% and 9.14% in Rangpo and Singtam (Fig. 6.7) are not able to speak *Nepali* or any other indigenous languages of host areas, because these migrants have left their native places first time and they have a poor social-network system with the host area. However, these people are trying to learn *Nepali* as early as possible. It is recalled by old informants (one porter in Singtam) that initially migrants communicated with the local people in *Hindi*, and eventually they picked up *Nepali* and use that as a mode of communication. Other migrants can speak the local language due to frequent visits and proximity. It is also to be noted that *Nepali* and *Hindi* languages are very close kin, and both the languages use *dev nagri* script, which is an additional advantage for *Hindi* speaking migrants. It does not take much time to pick *Nepali* language for basic communication.

There is no denying that languages play an important role in the process of integration. There is no specific language programme in my study area, especially when we are talking about informal labour group. They are absorbing new languages through migration process. Learning a new or second language has become more effective when it builds upon the current linguistic identity of migrants and to treat them as plurilingual or bi-lingual person. This way of learning a new language

does not create any problem towards the use and status of the first language(s) or mother tongue of the migrants and also to promote adaptation process in a sustainable manner.

6.11 Participation in Associations

Participation in different socio-economic associations or institutions at individual or group level as well as at societal level can represent an index of adaptation or adjustment level of the migrant labourers in the receiving area. This study reveals that very few (2.85%) migrant labourers (among respondents from Rangpo and Singtam) have transferred their voter card or epic card from native places to Sikkim. Such migrants are residing in Sikkim since last few years and are attached with different local associations and also availing some benefits proposed by Government of Sikkim towards the Sikkim epic card holders. *Sikkim Bihari Jagaran Manch* is an important Bihari association in Sikkim. There are 32 wings of this association in Sikkim. Field survey reveals the fact that in Singtam there are 440 members of this association but very negligible percentage is from informal labour group (Source: Dilip Prasad, President of *Sikkim Bihari Jagaran Manch*, Singtam. Interview taken on 7.2.2019). Rangpo is also experiencing the same. Swaminath Prasad, the president of *Sikkim Bihari Jagaran Manch* (all Sikkim) also states that migrant informal labourers are not transferring their epic cards to become a member of this association as ‘having Sikkim’s epic card’ is the basic criterion. In chapter six it has been discussed that without Sikkim Subject and Sikkim Residential Certificate the labourers cannot become a part of any labour union. So, in reality there is wide gap between migrant labour communities and other migrant people. This gap creates ‘social identity’ crisis among the labourer community and instills in them the neighbourhood feeling. They do not “lose their culture but rather retain ‘their culture’ and join the liberal political culture....” (Samers, 2010: 324). My respondents are not even members of roaming credit associations; neither do they get help from these associations in any social or economic crisis. If they face any problem their brethren (especially migrants) and the Sikkimese employers help them to solve the problem.

6.12 Interaction with People Outside the Group

The degree of interaction of migrant labourers outside their own group is another key factor in measuring the level of adaptation. Migrant labourers interact more often with those people who belong to the same geo-spatial region (Nair, 1978; Punekar, 1974). Herein, the caste, religion, etc. have very less priority for interaction within the migrant group. It has been observed long ago by

Robert Park, (1914), best known as melting pot theorist, that there are different important webs of the whole process when diverse cultures, languages come into contact with each other. His pioneer ‘ecological framework’ has become a hallmark of Chicago school of sociology – identified as three-stage model. It has been observed, “contact between people from different cultures forces them to seek ways to accommodate each other to minimize conflict” (Padilla, and Perez, 2003: 36). In this research ‘contact’ between migrant labourers and host people has been limited within the economic periphery. Cultural assimilation is a “progressive and irreversible” (*Ibid*) process – it takes time for amalgamation with new people. Respondents in this research work do not actually spend their time (most of them are here for short period or they are seasonal in nature) with the Sikkim people to be into Sikkim’s cultural practices. They hardly participate in Sikkimese cultural, social or religious functions. Table no. 7.3 shows the participation rate of my respondents in various occasions of the host communities.

Table no.6.3 **Percentage Share of Respondents in Various Occasions of Host Culture in Rangpo and Singtam**

Occasions	Rangpo	Singtam
Participation in cultural functions	7(4%)	4(2.28%)
Visiting each other for meals	0(0%)	1(0.57%)
Visiting religious occasions	1(0.57%)	3(1.71%)
Marriage party	0(0%)	2(1.14%)
Mourning	2(1.14%)	4(2.28%)
Total	10(5.71%)	14(8%)

Source: Field Survey, 2017-2018.

Table no. 6.3. summarises the fact that only 5.71% (Rangpo) and 8% (Singtam) of respondents attend and also receive invitations on different occasions of the host people. Highest participation rate (4% in Rangpo and 2.28% in Singtam) is observed in case of common cultural functions like *Maghe Sankranti*, *Bhimsen Puja* etc. Respondents attend only those family’s rituals that are related with their economic domain (employee, trade license holder and landlord etc.).

6.13 Food Habits

Food and migration has a definite framework of study with numerous factors that have impact on the population movement and food culture of the host area and the area of origin. Caracciolo, L. (2014: 12) has mentioned that “Food has increasingly become a distinctive element of the identities (including religious identities) of individuals and communities”. It is therefore, become a risky affair to support the ‘cultural determinism’ or the ‘ecological determinism’ theory. Food habits of migrant people depend on the traditional food habits, availability and the price of their food items in the host area. Migrants are willing to maintain certain food behaviors, norms, culinary traditions from their place of origins (Parasecoli, 2014: 415-439). They also try to recreate a sense of their native place through food preparation and consumption. “In fact, the solidification of these practices and the norms and ideals that develop around them is not just a by-product of the relationships within already existing dynamics, but actually constitutive of their emergence” (*ibid*: 416). The experiences and habits of migrants can be identified through conceptually different but often overlapping categories like collective, communal, institutional and personal. Parasecoli (2014) identifies these categories as the phenomenological perceptions of migrant’s experiences which may not be found in “exhaustive taxonomic spanning discrete spheres of social life” (*ibid*). These categories move together and change in terms of time, space and experiences. In this research ‘collective experiences’ are more effectual than the ‘individual’. In Rangpo and Singtam the respondents have shared their views on different aspects to maintain their traditional food habits and have made sense of changes of it in the host regions.

Respondents have also expressed their difficulties regarding unavailability of ingredients and the high price of all raw food products. Migrant informal labourers stay together either in a rented house or in a work place and they always cook group wise. They try to minimise their budget in the host area but due to the high price of ingredients they are bound to invest more money on food consumption. In this study it has been observed (Field Survey, 2017-2018) that most of the respondents (92.57% in Rangpo and 89.71% in Singtam) are non-vegetarian but due to the high price of non-vegetarian food items in Sikkim they have switched over to vegetarian diet in the host place. Moreover, the migrant labourers are not very familiar with easily available local vegetables, and so, sometimes they have to compromise with their choice of foods.

6.14 Overall Perceptions of Adaptation in the Study Areas

Above discussions reflect various mode of adaptation process. This processes depend upon individual strength as well as ethnic proximity of migrants in the host region. The strategies adopted by the migrants are also controlled by the socio-political parameters, geo-political conditions and political economic diameters of the host state (Sikkim). Subjective adjustment has become the key approach among the respondents of this study.

Table no. 6.4 **Research Variables to Understand Adaptation Level**

Variables	Rangpo		Singtam	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Knowing common host language	5.344	1.949	5.937	1.930
Cultural knowledge of host area	2.205	1.854	3.760	1.134
Adaptive motivation from host people	1.120	.5896	1.191	1.098
Behavioural competence between migrants and host people	1.514	1.55	1.394	1.286
Preferences for and attachment with neighbourhood	6.742	1.105	6.640	1.213
Food habit change	1.278	1.030	1.325	1.089

Source: Field Survey, 2016-17.

In this regards Torbiorn (1982) argued that “the degree of satisfaction/dissatisfaction sojourners perceive of the experiences in the host culture will change the relationships between their frame of reference, their behavior, and the environment. In other words, satisfaction of the sojourner tends to lead to the internal balance which will in turn result in the attainment of the goal of intercultural adaptation, and vice versa” (Chen, 2013: 2).

Overall demand of adaptation is ‘space’ where the interactant of various cultures perform as group to define and redefine the boundary through cooperation. In case of Sikkim this boundary acts as an invisible line which demarcates two broad categories – Sikkimese and non-Sikkimese on the bases of social-economic-political differences (already discussed in previous chapters). To identify the level of adjustment/adaptation in Rangpo and Singtam, I have considered six parameters and

computed their mean values, and standard deviation values (table no. 6.4). These values helped me to identify the level and area of migrant's adaptive competences.

The results of the descriptive analysis related with adaptation competence among the respondents have been based on seven-point-scales. The overall means of respondents (Rangpo and Singtam) on various observed measures (consisting of three items adaptation from Gao and Gudykunst (1990: 301-317) measure of intercultural adaptation and other three from the field observation) are 5.34 (SD = 1.94) [Rangpo] and 5.93 (SD = 1.93) [Singtam] on knowledge of common host language (*napali*), 2.20 (SD = 1.85) [Rangpo] and 3.76 (SD = 1.13) [Singtam] on knowledge of the host culture, 1.12 (SD = .589) [Rangpo] and 1.19 (SD = 1.09) [Singtam] in adaptive motivation, 1.51 (SD = 1.55) [Rangpo] and 1.39 (SD = 1.28) [Singtam] on Behavioral competence between migrants and host people, 6.74 (SD = 1.10) [Rangpo] and 6.64 (SD = 1.21) [Singtam] on preferences for and attachment with neighbourhood, 1.27 (SD = 1.03) [Rangpo] and 1.32 (SD = 1.08) [Singtam] on food habit change. These results clearly show that the adaptive levels of migrants are generally same in case of Rangpo and Singtam. Migrants have adapted host area's language in both the towns to sustain their livelihood practices. Singtam is experiencing more mean on cultural knowledge of host area because Singtam has more pull factors (as a commercial town) from the long past (population growth trend is one of the best example). Overall dimension of the adaptation study reflects the invisible border between host and migrant people and also indicate that respondents are attached with the host area only for economic reason.

6.15 Perception of the Host Communities

Migrants influence the society and culture of the place they move in. Likewise, the host societies too both influence the migrants and get influenced by them. This two-way interaction is not always benign. Sometimes social tension develop which may not always take violent turns, but their presence is felt psychologically at both individual and collective levels.

Migration of culture and ideas and their transformation or adaptation in the new land is always there. One of the most fascinating aspects of the migration saga is the movement of cultural forms but it is not at all seen in the case of Sikkim. Most of the respondents (nearly 83% at Rangpo and 74% at Singtam) found the towns 'tougher than expected' and opined that they felt 'more insecure' and 'more excluded' in Sikkim. Right from the climate, food habits, customs – everything in Sikkim is different. Majority of the respondents reported that the root of insecurity lies with the attitude of

the host society towards to migrant informal labourers. It is visible that here the issue is that of a 'cultural gap'. The land and the people of Sikkim differ drastically from the source areas of migrants (Bihar and West Bengal, here as a case) in every aspect (climate, culture, food habits, social systems, physical features etc.). Due to cultural difference, quite often host community find the migrants strange and their social behaviour non-confirming to accepted 'social values'. Sikkimese are not ready to include migrants 'in' Sikkimese space at all. Here is the question of nationalism and citizenship, equality and liberal democracy. Sikkim's policy and benefits of COI (Certificate of Identification) are always establishing one distinct line between the migrants and host people. All these aspects lead to the formation of faulty notions regarding the everyday life in terms of social and cultural of migrants from the host region, which inter 'alia' are used for labelling them as socially inferior. In Sikkim, migrants labourers are treated as ghetto (though in a different form of USA and more disposed to Chicago).

Geographer Tom Slater (2009) identifies three factors to distinguish a ghetto from an ethnic enclave (e.g., Italian, Irish, Polish) and to distinguish this urban form from other marginal spaces that emerge from different societal processes. First, ethno-racial control and containment by external overarching powers explain it. Second, social and spatial segregation is extreme and rigid. Third, these urban forms become permanent and structural. In short, a ghetto here is "a space deployed by discriminatory authorities to isolate, contain, and exploit a single ethnoracial group a place to cast out a group outcast from society" (here as Non-Sikkimese low wage labourers), (Slater, 2009: 492).

6.16 Conclusions

This chapter focuses on how migrant labourers are trying to adopt and become a part of cross-cultural and environmental changes. Different response strategies are important to understand the level of adaptation of migrant people. There are ostensible but often ignored limits to these strategies. Background of the migrants and length of stay always play a reverse role for complete assimilation. If a specific difference (e.g. Sikkim Subject, Residential Certificate for Sikkimese) is present, then residual differences will always become prominent. "But even if such remaining differences could be accommodated, it remains unclear how migrants could identify what exactly they should assimilate – they could choose between assimilating to working class culture, metropolitan lifestyle or, in some areas, to pre-existing ethnic minority communities". (Rudiger, and Spencer, 2003: 4). There is no social-cultural, political, economic (state level public sector) and

policy benefit inclusion of migrants in Sikkim. Respondents who have settled down for long time are still excluded from political and civic participation. Physical adaptation is also another important factor for respondents because they come from different physiographic location (plains topography). This locational transformation sometime creates individual adaptation problems. The relationship between adaptation and migration always focus beyond physical adjustment. This chapter has assembled the experiences based on lessons learnt from respondents. It has dealt with various conceptual analysis related with the process of adaptation – acculturation, integration, assimilation, adjustment etc.

Integration is a normative concept and “if measured in relation to an existing social order with its hegemonic practices and values, then its focus will always be on adaptation by migrants rather than steps that may be necessary to facilitate the inclusion and participation of new comers” (*ibid*: 5). This entire adaptation process by migrants can be possible when existing structure of the host region is not rigid. Integration can be successful when it is conceived as a two-way process. In Sikkim, local people are not xenophobic in nature but regarding the inclusion process there is one invisible line based on geo-political perception and migrants are not allowed to cross the line. There is not any definite paradigm for integration process that migrants and host people need to follow, rather it takes place in various forms in different parts of society. In Sikkim it has been noticed that migrants are integrating in informal labour market but inclusion is prohibited in political and civil society. So, migrant labourers are more likely to adjust with the host area for survival rather than assimilate in the new society.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

This dissertation has the objectives to explore the reasons for labour migration in Sikkim's informal sector from the neighbouring plain areas. It discusses the work environment, socio-economic status and the overall space of the migrant labourers in host regions. This dissertation also analyses the mechanisms and strategies adopted by the migrant people to adjust physically, culturally and socially in Sikkim.

To comprehend the reasons, trend and intensity of labour migration in a clearer way, it is very much essential to understand the geography of the place where people are willing to move. In recent time the geographical account has become an important approach for critical study to identify the reasons behind migration. This research paper starts with the important question why people (labour) are migrating towards a high altitude area (Sikkim) from low altitude areas, here (West Bengal and Bihar). The great Himalayan range always has always been an interesting area to explore in terms of its physiographic and demographic attractions and perceptions. Sikkim's demographic structure has been highly affected by the in-migration rate (43.42% according to the Indian Census, 2011) which calls for migration study on Sikkim. The towns of Rangpo (an industrial town in Sikkim) and Singtam (a commercial town in Sikkim) have acquired extraordinary geo-spatial importance in reconstructing its demographic and economic structure in the last decades.

This research starts with the significant research question on why people migrate or the reasons for migration. In order to understand the contemporary labour migration trends and to find out the reasons why people do migrate needs a thorough study. Different migration theories have revealed the fact that labour migration has been controlled by demand-supply nexus which is completely linked with the process of economic betterment and development. In this dissertation I have reviewed the theoretical approaches based on migration and observed that in case of labour (informal) migration 'considering migration' and 'actual behaviour' are important domains to discuss, because informal labour migration is not voluntary in character, rather enforced by geo-political economic factors in the contemporary neoliberal time frame. So, people (informal labour)

migrate when their opportunities, assets are limited in the native place, when they are not able to support their families, when they observe others in their social network who have already migrated and created ‘migration inequality syndrome’ in the source area.

The macro-level analysis of migration theories contributed to the classic macro level migration model that explain migration as a result of the geographical differences in the supply and demand of labour, mostly between from rural agriculture sector to urban manufacturaing sector. migrants are attracted to cities by higher wages, where labour is scarcer and migration continues until wages are equalized. Other theories place migration in a broader framework: for instance, Zelinsky’s hypothesis of Mobility Transition (1971) argue that migration is part of the demographic transition any area undergoes when mordernising, here Sikkim also acts as a case.

Various arguments are there on why do people migrate, but in this research, I prefer to consider the state of conjunction of different theories to establish the actual reasons to migrate. Labour migration is not a product by mono factor rather multiple reasons are controlling the volume, direction and intensity of the flow. Moreover, not all arguments/theories are related in all area (international, national) contexts. In the first part of my research work, while discussing different macro, meso, micro and other contemporary theories – it has been realised that these theories are not able to explain any philosophical perception of migration, nor are they well-demarcated as a complete theory of migration. This research is not able to depend on any specific migration literature like Marxist, *neo*-Marxist, Neoclassical, Neo-Malthusian, Neo-liberal etc. to find out the reasons for labour migration in my study area, rather attempted to discuss all possible theories and their perceptions to identify the reasons for labour migration in Sikkim. In this context, I have found that migration as a dynamic process is always assimilated and affected by multivariate concepts/arguments and cannot be implemented singly in any situation.

This research work investigates possible reasons for informal labour migration in two new-born towns in Sikkim - Rangpo and Singtam, which seems comparable on the surface: they are at the lead of post-liberal economic transition and structural transformation situation as border towns between the states of West Bengal and Sikkim. The reasons behind migration in these two towns converge – the urge for economic betterment being the obvious and leading cause. In a macro view, migration decision is influenced by the dualism of costs and benefits of migration. In Sikkim, the importance of wage differentials (income consideration) is the most important cause (neoclassical

approaches) to attract labour from different states. This study reveals that decision making process on a household level (in the case of my respondents) is also appropriate (NELM) because few people are isolated personalities who take the decision in a social vacuum. I could not consider any isolated structural factors to describe the reasons behind my respondent's movement because the individual actor creates a discrete and unique cause to migrate in Sikkim's labour force. So, it has become essential to consider the various levels of migration where this micro-study represents a microscopic view of structural macro factors. Pull factors (Dual-Labour Market theory), economic transformation (Marxist and neo-Marxist view), economic development (NELM, World Systems theory), great transformation (neoliberalisation) - all influence the migrant's decision making process. Hence, migration decision should not be considered cross-sectionally, because this is similar to the beads of a necklace where all reasons are interconnected to each other, however having their individual/own space.

So, to answer the question on why do people migrate, it has been mentioned and established that how most of mentioned theories can be linked and that they should best be treated in a complementary fashion. The different actors are not isolated but often affect one another at one point of time (through social capital) and over time (through cumulative causation). It is therefore important to consider the different levels (meso, micro and other) of migration. This research has studied two tiny towns in East district of Sikkim state that similar on surface as well as in economic activities as their evolution being a town was in same time (2010). Nevertheless, the motivation behind migration of these two towns and amongst different groups of migrants seem to diverge, because it is more valuable to consider migration theories in conjunction. Moreover, all theories are not applicable to all spatial circumstances. This research investigated two new born towns that are similar on the surface. They are in transition from a central to market economy and a bordering towns. Nevertheless, the motivations behind migration in these two towns and amongst different groups in terms of occupation, sex, level of poverty and bondage etc. seems to diverge. Therefore, it is impossible and undesirable to give a general answer to why people migrate and it is utmost importance to consider the specific migration motives in different areas or amongst distinct groups of migrants.

The great dogma of neoliberalism creates four superimposing trends which are coalesced together in the world economy - globalisation, free market, formal and informal dichotomy and migration. These are strongly linked with the restructuring process of economics as a tool of government, roll

back process of the emergence of business schools as the centers of political and social reproduction (Samers, 2010:180-238) as well as promoting an array of rural development opportunities (rural tourism). Sikkim as a state of North Eastern Region (NER) has been prioritised for different investments, especially for service and infrastructure development. Investment in urban or peri-urban infrastructural sectors are ubiquitously conceptualised in a geographical process, a form of governmentality, a political project of institutional change, a development policy paradigm and an economic ideology - seeking to promote 'free' trade and informal sector by a greater extent of market deregulation (Breman, 2013:139). Consequently, the Government of India requested Asian Development Bank to assist in the development in North Eastern Regions. NERUDP (North Eastern Region Urban Development Programme) is the prevalent result of this collaboration. Focusing on the existing political economic circumstances - Sikkimese dichotomy, JNNURM (Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission), pluralism and societal influences, the introduction of FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) is imperative to address an individual agency to play an important role in (re)producing, circulating and facilitating neoliberalism. Sikkim's economy clings to privatisation of tourism, health, education, transportation, construction, the opening of FDI business through eliminating trade barriers which determined the state as a quasi-form of neoliberal state. All these processes are opening the possibilities of various 'low-road' occupations and blue collar jobs in Sikkim's economy. The seeds of episodic movement of labourers from adjacent plain areas have bloomed due to enormous development and transformation processes in Rangpo and Singtam town. The rapid and steady rate of migration serves and acts as long term contributing factor to the ubiquitous phenomenon of urban labourers. It is also a result of rapid growth of ancillary industries in Rangpo and commercial development in Singtam as a by-product of various developmental (infrastructural) projects. I have observed that migration and job opportunities are inseparably intertwined and also supposed to be the symptoms vis-à-vis a factor contributing to the international and internal labour migration. This paradox of migration facilitates the pattern of increasing the urban informal sector in interstitial spaces in Sikkim. Therefore, it has become undesirable and difficult to consider the specific migration motives among various distinct groups of labour migrants.

The second section of this dissertation is purely based on an empirical and descriptive study. This part is intended to explore the changing fabric of migrant's socio-economic status after taking the decision of migration in Rangpo and Singtam town. The new-age of transformation has encouraged

this research to give emphasis on migrant's socio-economic conditions and also get into the facts of their livelihood conditions in the host areas. Different demographic, socio-economic parameters along with statistical and cartographic applications helped to determine the reality of migration-development discourse. Sikkim's informal migrant labourers are overwhelmingly precariat (French Sociologists, 1980) in nature since competitive market economy creates global precariat group of people and Sikkim is not beyond this. It has become an urgent need to address the rising context of precarious work in this 'flexible' labour market and also subsequently the urge to imply the overarching objective – moving towards decent work from precarious work – as a part of the present political-economic environment. Sikkim is experiencing multiple episodic visits of individual migrants (excluding construction labourers) which indicate adequate opportunities for employment in the informal sector of Rangpo and Singtam town, though the propensity of the informal job market has to accept the neo-classical economic fact that structural reform of the labour market (flexibility) ensures systematic employment insecurity. In the present work, the respondents are influenced by the demand-supply nexus. As De Hass (2010: 227-264) observes, the inter-link between development and migration is embedded in the context of economics, society and politics and cannot predict the effectiveness in terms of negative or positive sense. In Sikkim, labour migration is destined to maximise basic amenities and minimise negative impacts with a common objective of fostering labourer's daily life in the native place. Labourers are shifted from low-productive, labour-surplus and low-waged source regions to high-productivity, labour-scarce and high-wage destination. This research has considered the migrants' demographic structure, individual changes in terms of livelihood options, social status in the host areas and to what extent the migration process helped to provide a better life. It has been found that the socio-economic condition of the migrant labourers is similar in Rangpo and Singtam and significant positive economic development has been observed in both the towns.

Many theorists designate remittance as a major solution for various material and social complications in poor source areas. Migrant labourers from the adjacent plain areas have also adopted the means of remitting money to solve different livelihood problems in their native places. In this research there is a positive correlation between the income and amount of remittance among the respondents. It is difficult to ascertain the motivations to remit because these motivations are extremely dynamic in nature. This research has explored the motivations and mode of remittances by reviewing existing works of literature specifically considering the case of Rangpo and Singtam.

However, the current methodology to determine the motives to remit does not lead to a meaningful and strong result. It requires farther investigation.

In India participation rate of women in the informal sector is more but contrastingly in case of informal self-employed own-account worker¹⁵ the women's participation is very less. In this research, most of the respondents are self-employed own-account workers. There are large gender differentials in seasonal/temporary/circular migration rate between North Indian states and South Indian states due to the difference in the status of women. Normally, North Indian states' migrants leave behind their entire family members at their native place. In this research this disparity has been strongly noticed which is reflected on the sex composition of the respondents (absence of plains women migrant labourers) in both the towns. The obvious reason to remit is to provide succor or better livelihood status to the family members in native areas. It is not essential that migration will promote a better life, but in this empirical research, there is a positive association between income and remittance.

India is experiencing steady growth in informal employment. Nevertheless, an important part is to identify the work conditions of this employment. This thesis argues on different parameters related to decent work perceptions. Here, the work environment has been analysed for a particular occupation sector – namely the informal sector in Sikkim. There are different sets of constitutional rules and regulations to manage migration in Sikkim and this makes Sikkim a unique case – unparalleled compared to other states of Indian Union barring a few exceptions of some North East Indian states – for reviewing the concerns of migrant informal labourers. National citizens are free to migrate in Sikkim but citizens of Nepal and Bhutan need to register them and should possess the permission letter while entering Sikkim. Like other urban and peri-urban centres, Rangpo and Singtam have welcomed migrants. My study shows that maximum flow of informal labourers is from neighbouring states of West Bengal and Bihar – they flock in, often in slums, in small rented rooms, at workplace etc., to become a part of Sikkim's informal labour force. Migration in Rangpo and Singtam has boomed in recent years and seemingly negligent enforcement of migration control attracted people from outside Sikkim. Here migrants are not 'of' Sikkimese space rather being 'in' Sikkimese space. To identify work environment in Sikkim's informal sector, this research has taken

¹⁵ Self-employed own account worker: According to ILO Resolutions Concerning International Classification of Status in Employment Adopted by the 15th International Conference of Labour Statisticians, January 1993, para. 10. Own-account workers are those workers who hold self-employment jobs and do not engage 'employees' on a continuous basis.

a few indicators like minimum wage, job security, social security, working hours etc. The outcome of this analysis brings about the real space and situation of informal labourers in Sikkim and gives a microscopic view of migrant labourers' conditions.

The field survey and empirical data confirm that most of the migrants (excluding hotel workers) avail the standard minimum wage for informal occupation, while regular monthly or weekly salaries are obtained by the workers in manufacturing and food service activity – viz. tailoring and hotel work. Daily wage is highest in case of construction workers. There are other modes of payment for other activities, such as porters. Sikkim is providing the fundamental need of economic migrants by reinforcing revised minimum wage to unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled workers even in the informal sector. It transpires that Sikkim is neither promoting decent migration agenda in a true sense, nor demonstrating the new formula of neo-liberal economic format because low-skilled, semi-skilled migrant labourers are always accepted in terms of their labour power, but their social entitlements are strongly limited. Due to these reasons migrants are not entitled to claim or enjoy any other security options introduced by the state. In reality it has been observed that migrant informal labourers are accepted as a commodity (existing literature evidently separated labour market from other markets). Social security is a dynamic subject. There are various social security measures (PF/Pension, Gratuity etc.) which play an important role to secure worker's future wellbeing. This research unfolds the fact that migrant informal labourers are not allowed to avail the state's labour security options. The state is not taking any responsibilities for the migrant informal workers in terms of job security, protection facilities at the work place and other kinds of social securities. The presence of unions in informal sector could promote successful negotiations in the labour market but in Sikkim, the non-Sikkimese people are neither entitled to be a member of any existing labour union, nor eligible to form any labour union. Migrant workers' collective rights have been totally ignored and controlled by the state of Sikkim.

Dynamics of globalisation creates various economic arguments (poverty reduction, capital investment, labour reform etc.) related to labour wellbeing and policy implementation. On the other hand, in contemporary economic political experiments - promoted by policymakers between bureaucracy and people - will not be successful without considering the wellbeing of labour migrants. But in reality, this perception has become an irony/fallacy in the flexible economic world. Sikkim is enforcing domestic labour legislation only for Sikkimese people, but non-Sikkimese labourers are denied the existing labour legislation benefits. Unfortunately, there are no laws which

can cover the base of the social security system for the whole informal sector. The Unorganised Sector Workers (Employment and Welfare) Bill, 2003 has been enacted to create one-umbrella legislation for the welfare of informal labourers in India. This Bill is only the extended version of all existing Bills which can never be implemented in reality even under the labour reform protocol. The wellbeing concerns of informal labour have been depleted and Sikkim is not beyond the fact. The respondents of this research are greatly affected by this system. This research includes self-employed informal workers along with wage-based and casual worker, and only the self-employed people remain excluded from the purview of the Minimum Wage Act, 1948. So, the lives of the migrant labourers in Sikkim do not meet the decent work parameters.

Common marketisation process, move towards the neo-liberal state form free trade, harmony of political interest, etc. have become subsequent development blocks in Sikkim's economy which encourage neo-liberalisation, informalisation and bottom up labour market between Sikkimese and migrant informal (non-Sikkimese) people. Policy top-down dichotomy and rising inequality for the same group of people (labourers) have also been important features (Special Job Reservation for Sikkimese – The Telegraph, 08.03.2008). All these situations have created an individual zone or space for migrant informal labourers. Sikkim, like other Indian states with growing economics, has some sort of leniencies in regulating migrants to facilitate the mobility of informal labourers into their socio-economic paradigm. Though these economic migrants have a tag of non-Sikkimese people, most of them are citizens of India. The respondents in this study are economic migrants and not necessarily seek the permanent settlement. It may be mentioned that there is an absence of right to settle down in Sikkim territory as 'Sikkimese' and logistically they are not able to be a part of special citizenship called 'Sikkimese' (Sikkim Subject, COI and Residential Certificate).

Coming to the concluding remarks, first and foremost, the demographic structure of a potential labour migrant's family and needs influence a person to make the decision to migrate. There is always some invisible force which pushes people to leave the native place for better livelihood option. In this study, maximum respondents are individual migrants and so, the strength of family ties and social networks become a strong inspiration for migration decision.

The second major fact is, there are significant differences between pre and post-migration socio-economic status among the respondents. Per capita income has increased as an effect of migration and a larger fraction of respondents declare that the decision to migrate in Sikkim has given a

positive financial return in terms of remittance. This research highlights that short term, seasonal/circular migrants have a modest expectation and maximum retention strategy proves that migration is a practice for future investment.

There is no doubt that in Sikkim there is an existing as well as growing divide between economy, policy and form of common citizenship (Indian) which has impacts on the wellbeing process of migrant informal labourers in Sikkim. It is interesting to note that migration has been a highly politicised issue in Sikkim and due to Sikkim's special status in relation to the Union of India (Art. 371 F) many spheres of Sikkim's socio-economic opportunities are managed to keep in view the concerns of the insiders' vis-à-vis the outsiders. Populist-style politics is also popular in this state. Other unavoidable causes are also important, but due to unawareness and poor educational background coupled with their fragmented nature of work participation and mobility, the informal sector labourers fail to secure the advantages of whatever little statutory measures are there at native or host place. The situation is such that the working class population employed in the urban informal sector in Sikkim is susceptible to be more vulnerable if they are outsiders (i.e. non-Sikkimese unregistered informal labourers) and are not in possession of the administrative or official shields like labour union, and also not able to enjoy any benefit promoted by Sikkim Labour Protection Act 2005. This condition of migrant labourers' lives has challenged migrant integration and assimilation context with the host's social-cultural and modernist political systems. There are clear cut dichotomies of 'destination/host' and 'native/origin' which leads migrants towards second social living. Furthermore, in contemporary time maximum migrants are practicing circular migration, even in Sikkim. This study has observed that the nature of precarity controls the simultaneous commitment to host society. This research also noticed that migrants are welcome to sell their labour power in Sikkim's informal economy but excluded from civil, cultural and political society. Therefore, migrant labourers are more likely to adjust with the host areas rather than assimilate/adapt in the new society.

This research analyses the reasons for migration and livelihood situations of informal labourers, exclusively focusing on individual migrants living in the host areas. The term 'informal labour' is carrying its own unique characteristics in case of every economic practice. Labour migration in the microcosm of geopolitical scenario in Sikkim's state-of-affairs is to be managed humanely as a situation and not to be dealt with as a crisis or in other words a problem to solve. Sikkim's labour policy as an important argument over how to handle serial migration rattles the state. The state

policy should be accommodating, if not encouraging, for the dignified and safe stay in the destination towns for the migrant labourers.

On the other hand, overall space of the migrant labourers is still under the threat, especially in an informal economy. Construction of informal labour space starts from poverty, negotiations and sometimes through conflict. This study examines all possible processes which create important discourses on the economic and social space of informal migrant labourers at the phase of post-capitalist time. In the epoch of globalisation if the migrants are not considering their own rights then they may exist in their economic space but social space will become untouchable for them because:

“It isn’t that they can’t see the solution. It is that they can’t see the problem.”

G.K. Chesterton (Cohen & Cohen. 1975)

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APPENDIX I

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND ADAPTATION STRATEGY OF MIGRANT LABOURERS FROM THE PLAINS TO SIKKIM'S INFORMAL SECTOR: CASE STUDIES OF SINGTAM AND RANGPO TOWNS.

Questionnaire for Socio-Economic Survey

Types of occupation:

Status of occupation: self employed / wage labourer.

Date:

- 1) Respondent No. : _____ 2) APL/BPL..... ** EPIC card.....
- 3) Religion: Hindu/Muslim/Buddhist/Christian 4) Caste: Gen/SC/ST/OBC
- 5) Sex: Male/ Female 6) Marital status: Unmarried/Married/
Divorce/Separated.
- 7) Mother Tongue: _____ **) Types of the work:

Migration Details about the respondent:

- 8) Permanently uprooted/ Seasonal visit/ Circular
- 9) Length of stay: Max..... Min.....
- 10) How many times in a year.....
- 11) Migration from: Distancekm.
- 12) Migrated alone / with family.
- 13) Do the Respondent can speak, understand and/or write a language other than mother tongue?
a) Yes (state which language)..... b) No
- 14) How long have you been living here as household/family? years.
- 15) Have you -as a household- ever lived in another place, such as another village, another town or abroad for three or more months at one time? If yes, where have you lived before?
a) Yes (state which city/district/village) b) No

16) Why did you move here?

(push factors with rank)

- a) Low wage
- b) Escape violence
- c) Escape drought/ famine d) Escape a family conflict e) small land holding
- f) landlessness
- g) burden of loan
- h) jobless after harvest
- i) lack of alternative source of income
- j) agricultural insolvency

Pull Factors: (with rank)

- a) employment/better employment
- b) higher wage in their present occupation c) regular availability of work
- d) better living condition
- e) security of present work
- f) better social overhead facilities g) attraction of urban life
- h) Variety of informal work
- i) present work access to their health condition
- j) proximity

17) Occupational mobility: Formal to informal / formal to formal / informal to informal.

18) Had any of your relatives/friends lived here before you came?

- a) Yes / No
- b) specify.....

19) Did they help you with your settlement?

Yes (state how)/ No

20) Are any possibilities to settle down permanently?

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- a) Yes / No
- b) specify.....

19) Did they help you with your settlement?

Yes (state how)/ No

20) Are any possibilities to settle down permanently?

Yes/ No Specify.....

21) After migration what kind of changes happens in terms of socio-economic status?

.....

22) Migrated alone or with family.....

23) Family members are facing any problems regarding socio-cultural adjustment? (Specific problems)

.....

24) Demand for migrant labourer is low / moderate / high.

25) Ranking for Decent work parameters.

a. High wage

b. Compensation for over time c. More working hrs

d. Employment security

e. Hygienic working place

f. Bullying by senior coworkers g. Retention strategies

h. Protection facilities at working place

i. Social security

j. Union rights

SOCIO-ECONOMIC DETAIL.

25a) Educational status: illiterate/literate (Primary/ UP/Hs/UG)

a) Studying & working

b) Only working

c) Dropout if yes then specify (poverty/ family problems / provocation for earning livelihood/)

26) Any informal education: Yes/No Specify.....

27) No. of migrants from family:

28) Family Member Details: a. (no.....) b. Family pattern: nuclear/ joint

Member No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Age									
Sex									
Education #									
Present * Occupation									
Occupation (10 years Ago) *									
Mobile Ph. (Yes/No)									
Others									

#Education: L: Literate; P: Primary; S: Secondary; H.S: Higher S; G: Graduate; PG: Post G;T: Technical; O: Others.*Occupation: C: Cultivator; AL: Agri. Labourer; W:Industrial Worker; HIW: Household IW; B:Business; S:Service; HT: Hotel/Tourism; T:Transport; O:Others

28a) Dependent members:

29) Height of the respondent: Weight:

30) Amount of land at native place:

LIVING CONDITION AT THE HOST AREA/ WORKING PLACE

31) House ownership: owned/rented/factory quarter/others.

32) Type of settlement: permanent/seasonal.

33) House type: pucca/ kachcha /semi pucca.

34) No. of rooms: bedroom_____;drawing room_____;kitchen_____.

35) Bathroom and toilet used: own/community/ open.

36) Source of drinking water: _____.

37) Do you have any problems with water supply? Yes / No

38) Fuel used for cooking: LPG/Kerosene/Cow dung/Fuel wood.

39) Electricity connection: Present/Absent.

40) Modern appliances used:

.....

41) Common staple diet: Vegetarian / No vegetarian

a) Detail

42) Other habit: smoking/ drinking/ other (Details):

43) **Civic Amenities:**

Amenities	Yes/ No	Good	Moderate	Bad
Electricity				
Drinking water				
Health Service				
Waste Disposal				
Drainage				
Sanitation				
Security				
Road maintenance				
Communication				
Transport				
Educational				
Commodity Prices				
Entertainment				

ECONOMIC:

44) Monthly income:

a) individual: pre..... post.....

b) family: pre..... post.....

c) total: pre post.....

45) Monthly expenditure:

a) house rent

b) shop rent:

c) fuel

d) electricity

e) mobile:

f) food:

- g) medical services:
- h) entertainment: others:
- i) Under debt / not Amount: Source:
- j) purpose of lone:
- k) savings:
- l) remittance:
- m) Total:

WORKING ENVIRONMENT

- 46) Occupation:
- 47) Work type: daily wage / MONTHLY / weekly payment
- 48) Working Hrs:
- 49) Availability of local skilled labour: present/ absent
- 50) Why local people are not taking interest to do this type of work?
.....
- 51) Why do you have chosen your present occupation in informal sector?
.....
- 52) Have you notice any growth in informal sectors development at your working place?
.....
- 53) Do you have any permanent agent to get job in Sikkim? Yes/ no
- 54) Do you think that you will have good relationship with the inhabited people at your working place?
Yes/ No Specify if no

HEALTH DETAILS

- 55) Height: Weight:
- 56) Any problem faced by the respondent regarding health issue after migration? Yes/ No
Specify

57) Medical facilities avail by the respondent:

Factory Hospital/Dispensary/Govt. Hospital Dispensary/Health Centre/ Sub Centre /Private Doctor / Local Quack / Traditional Medicines

58) Common diseases in the family:

a) normal.....

b) chronic

59) Psychosocial stress:

1. low wage, 2. Job insecurity, 3. Repetitive of the work, 4. Not satisfied of the work, 5. Separation related stress 6. maximum working hrs., 7. Career developmental prospects, 8. Hygiene

SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND COHESION

60) Source of local news:

61) Do you face any difficulties for religious practices? Yes/ No

Specify

62) Do you participate in local cultural events or festivals?

Yes / no / sometimes. Specify:

63) Do you face any barrier to practice your own religious practices? If yes, how do you over come with this problem?.....

64) Do you face any discrimination between host workers and migrant workers: yes/ no

If yes:

65) Wage hiking:

66) registration of job:

67) any cooperative.....

68) any union:

69) any other govt. help:

REMARKS:

APPENDIX II

GARRETT RANKING CONVERSION TABLE

The conversion of orders of merits into units of amount of “soces”

Percent	Score	Percent	Score	Percent	Score
0.09	99	22.32	65	83.31	31
0.20	98	23.88	64	84.56	30
0.32	97	25.48	63	85.75	29
0.45	96	27.15	62	86.89	28
0.61	95	28.86	61	87.96	27
0.78	94	30.61	60	88.97	26
0.97	93	32.42	59	89.94	25
1.18	92	34.25	58	90.83	24
1.42	91	36.15	57	91.67	23
1.68	90	38.06	56	92.45	22
1.96	89	40.01	55	93.19	21
2.28	88	41.97	54	93.86	20
2.69	87	43.97	53	94.49	19
3.01	86	45.97	52	95.08	18
3.43	85	47.98	51	95.62	17
3.89	84	50.00	50	96.11	16
4.38	83	52.02	49	96.57	15
4.92	82	54.03	48	96.99	14
5.51	81	56.03	47	97.37	13
6.14	80	58.03	46	97.72	12
6.81	79	59.99	45	98.04	11
7.55	78	61.94	44	98.32	10
8.33	77	63.85	43	98.58	9
9.17	76	65.75	42	98.82	8
10.06	75	67.48	41	99.03	7
11.03	74	69.39	40	99.22	6
12.04	73	71.14	39	99.39	5
13.11	72	72.85	38	99.55	4
14.25	71	74.52	37	99.68	3
15.44	70	76.12	36	99.80	2
16.69	69	77.68	35	99.91	1
18.01	68	79.17	34	100.00	0
19.39	67	80.61	33		
20.93	66	81.99	32		

THE MAKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMERGENT DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD OF MIGRANT LABOUR: CONTESTED REALITY IN SINGTAM, EAST SIKKIM

SOUMYA MITRA*

Abstract:

As a probable and valuable outcome of economic transformation, the issue of migration is considered to be a universal phenomenon in any country. No society can claim to be an isolated social hole that defies flows of individuals from outside. Structural transformation necessitated by globalization increased the spatial mobility of individuals in relation to the demand and supply for labour in any fledging economy. In case of Sikkim's unorganized sector, migration seems to have been of crucial importance. In all the eight major towns of the tiny state of Sikkim migration secures the unorganized sector workforce. India has been trying to maintain a rights-based approach through formulating various policies and flagship programmes to promote decent work and social security measures for the unorganized sector workforce. Sikkim's progress in this regard is plagued with several intricacies of its own. Maximum participation rates of the workforce in India are engaged in informal sectors (92.40% as per 61st NSS 61st round 2004-2005 data). Due to unawareness and poor educational background coupled with their fragmented nature of work participation and mobility, the unorganized sector labourers fail to secure the advantages of whatever little statutory measures are there. In the light of SDGs, migration is an important contributor for sustainable development and shown to have a synergistic effect upon economic growth. This seems to be an utmost necessity especially in case of Sikkim where the

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unorganized sector workforce is almost entirely based upon the migrant labourers coming from different corners of India.

The present paper proposes to examine the synergies between emerging development approaches, labour migration and driven vulnerabilities of the urban informal sector labourers in Singtam town of Sikkim.

Keywords: Migration, Informal Labour, Sustainable Livelihood.

1. Introduction:

Migration is a “survival instinct that drives humans to seek better prospects” (Sundari 2005: 2295), though the Census of India is defining migration in a different way. The prime purpose of migration, recorded by the NSSO and Census, is a significant indicator of how migration processes are influenced by the state of labour market of the nation. Scholars have identified various perspectives of labour migration. Most popular perceptions are the Marxist model (Mosse. et al, 2002: 59) and the dual economy model (Gidwani and Sivaramakrishnan 2003: 350), both are considering the notion of migrant labourers mostly from rural areas to urban sectors. Structural changes, demographic changes act as a drive forces as well as cities lure, by proving job in the lower end labour market act as a new dimension of neoliberal economy. The major function of the labour migration is in fact as a ‘safety valve’, especially in poor areas (Srivastava and Sashikumar 2003: 1). Migration may initiate for a variety of reasons. Although the obvious truth holds that the economic and other opportunities normally play a key role in migration decisions, which individually can’t explain the root causes, patterned and regionally clustered morphology of migration. Structural forces – a natural and unavoidable catastrophe that interrupts the expected course of events – in the political economy such as colonialism conquest, occupation, labour recruitment, communal culture and geographical proximity frequently play a vital role in the labour migration processes (Castles and Miller 2009; Massey et al. 1998; Skeldon 1997).

Neoliberal scenario became a nationwide system in the last decade of the present century, which demonstrated in the fruition of urban informal economy. ‘Urban informality’ is a system of

norms that emerged through liberalization and was promoted by globalization as on organizing logic (Roy 2005: 148; Roy and Alsayyad 2004: 26). Urban informality is not only a part of poor societies and informal sectors, but rather, it has become a continuum ‘way of life’ (KudyaNeema 2009), that bridges duality between formal and informal sectors. The word ‘informal’ is used extensively in academic and policy texts but there is no consensus on its meaning. If ‘informality’ is considered to be attached with different kinds of arrangements, networks, activities and providers, the fuzziness of the term widens. When (irregular) economic activities (Hart, K 1973, 1992, 2001) are practiced by workers of any kind, not covered by formal arrangements are also considered to constitute informal economy (ILO 2002, 2011; Hussmanns 2004). These formulations make one thing clear that informality ‘sits uneasily in law’ since it traverses boundaries that underpin the analytical apparatus of labour regulation. Notwithstanding the cause and effect relationship, formality and informality are primarily intertwined. The application of informal economy is habitually encouraged by punctuated inconsistencies between widespread scholastic models and perceived actualities. Urban in-migrants in the informal labour market are by and large perceived as a remnant of the pre-modern mode of production that unwaveringly disappears into the modernisation of societies (Geertz, 1963). The ever-increasing growth of the informal labour market across the global South deserves a work out on re-theorisation (Chen, Venek and Carr 2004; Rakowski 1994). The international community has thus recognized “a shared responsibility to manage large movements of migrants in a humane, sensitive, compassionate and people-centered manner” (UN General Assembly, paragraph 11) from a long-term development perspective. Migration scenario in the global South is mostly lying within the nation-state borders and opens up scope for internal migration to have wider currency both at the policy level as also at the level of local politics. As a matter of fact, internal migrants are not only looking for social and economic opportunities within the nation-state but often raises the claim to attain inclusion and a sustainable livelihood in the destination areas (MOST 2015).

2. Study Area:

Sikkim, the 22nd state of India (1975, 26th April), is well known as an important centre for Himalayan trade and politics ever since the late nineteenth century. We know that the role of geographical features determines the economy of any country and in this sense Sikkim cannot be

considered as an exception. Land locked Sikkim is bounded in the north by the vast Tibetan plateau and in the east by Bhutan and Chumbi valley of Tibet. To its west Nepal and in the southern boundary stretches the Darjeeling district of West Bengal. Sikkim is situated with the 27° 5' North to 28°10' North and 88° 4' East to 88° 58' East with the area of 7096 sq.km. Sikkim has a steady growth rate of population over the last three decades. The population of Sikkim has grown from 316385 in 1981 to 607,688 persons in 2011. The demographic pattern of an area reflects the level of development in that particular area. The growth, distribution, density, and migration of population of a place indicate the economic status of the same. Sikkim has four districts- North, South, East and West. Out of these four, East district has the maximum population due to the presence of Gangtok, the capital of Sikkim.

2.1. Singtam:

Singtam, a small Nagar Panchayat town (Class V, area 0.18² kilometers), located in east district (Sikkim). It is located 30 km away from Gangtok city (capital), roughly within 27°15' North and 88°38' East with total population 5874 person (Census of India 2011). Singtam has five wards within its territory. Teesta River and Rani khola bounds this town in the west and south respectively. Elevation of this area is 1396 feet above the mean sea level; area of this town is 0.176 sq km. Decadal growth rate of population is very high, with 8.14% (2011 Census of India). I consider Singtam to be a vital place of research in Sikkim – as a rapidly urbanizing state in the eastern Himalayan region. Ze'rah and Denis argue, “understanding the nature and form of ‘small town urbanism’ is imperative to unpacking the role of small urban settlements as an interface functioning at different scales, without trapping them in a dominant and hierarchical view of the world ...” (2017: 5). Singtam (Nagar Panchayat Town, 2010) provides a case of small town urbanization with its own scale of development. Its geographical location has accelerated the rate of urbanization and also the economic significances, which help to act as a junction town - nicely communicated with different districts of the state itself. It is the second nearby boarder town, after Rangpo- sharing the border with West Bengal that connects the state with the rest of India. Singtam is an important transit point for legal and illegal goods crossing the border, and the other parts of the different districts. Thus, this town occupied an extraordinary space in Sikkim economy and polity as well as firmly controlled by state’s laws and regulation, but, also in a

grave situation in the production of a transgression zone at the southern edge of the ‘model development’ (Mona Chettri and DuncaunMcDuie-Ra. 2018: 1)

Fig no. 1.

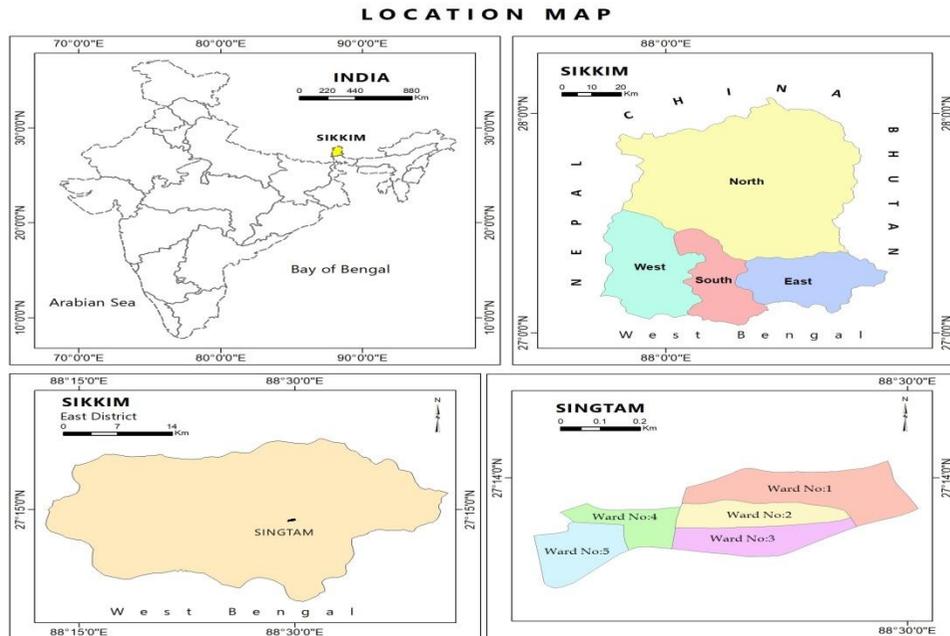


Fig 1: Showing the location of Singtam and its different wards.

3. Labour Migration in Sikkim:

Labour migration is an important livelihood strategy in India. There is a very significant migration flow, in some regions with considerable impacts primarily on individuals, followed by households and regions. Sikkim is constituted overwhelmingly of migrants from multi ethnic, multi-language speaking states. Of course, the main migratory movements were apparently rooted in its historical past and cultural links as well as economic associations, because according to the Article VII (1) of Indo-Sikkim Treaty, 1950, citizen of both countries were provided free movement on each other’s territory and also the Article VII (2) (a) (b) allowed the citizen of both countries to carry trade, commerce and right to hold property on each other’s territory. Post-merger scenario was completely different; Article 371-F was included in the Constitution of India through 36th Amendment Act in the year same. It was the condition and an agreement between the Sikkim and Indian Union for the purpose of merger (The Sikkim Darbar Gazette 1961). In a same way, Article 371- F (k) also protecting the old laws of Sikkim. It

segregates locals (Sikkimese) and non-Sikkimese in terms of Government jobs which falls under the state list of the seventh schedule of Constitution. Non-Sikkimese are not allowed to hold property and few more safeguards to protect their own identity separately, regardless of the fact that Sikkimese and non-Sikkimese both are allowed to pursue any Central Government jobs, carry out trade or business, run a company and the like. It is true that Indian Constitution part III “Fundamental Rights” provides equal rights to every citizen of India but at the same time part XXI of the Constitution also provide some special provision under Article 371-F, for Sikkim. Thus, Sikkim is maintaining its own layers of territorial control, and in some cases beyond the laws as promulgated in other states of India.

The implementation of different policies by the Sikkim Government to protect locals does not allow permanent settlement for those who migrated recently (during post-merger period). Migrant labourers hailing from the plains are found to be persons without any rights and security and at best be treated as the marginalized lots in contemporary Singtam (East Sikkim). These migrant lots have been absorbed mostly in the informal sectors – working as construction labourer, porters, hotel boys, and tailors – and also considered as a seasonal folk in the town to do work as casual wage labourers. Another reason for the high consumption of migrant labourer is that the Sikkim COI (Certificate of Identification) or Sikkim Subject¹ holders are mostly engaged in the State Government official posts or other secondary or tertiary sectors and the remaining other poor locals are reluctant to engage themselves in labour intensive, degrading, precariously informal works in view of dignity, pride and social status (Piore, and Sabel. 1984).

4. Who are Urban Informal Workers in Singtam?

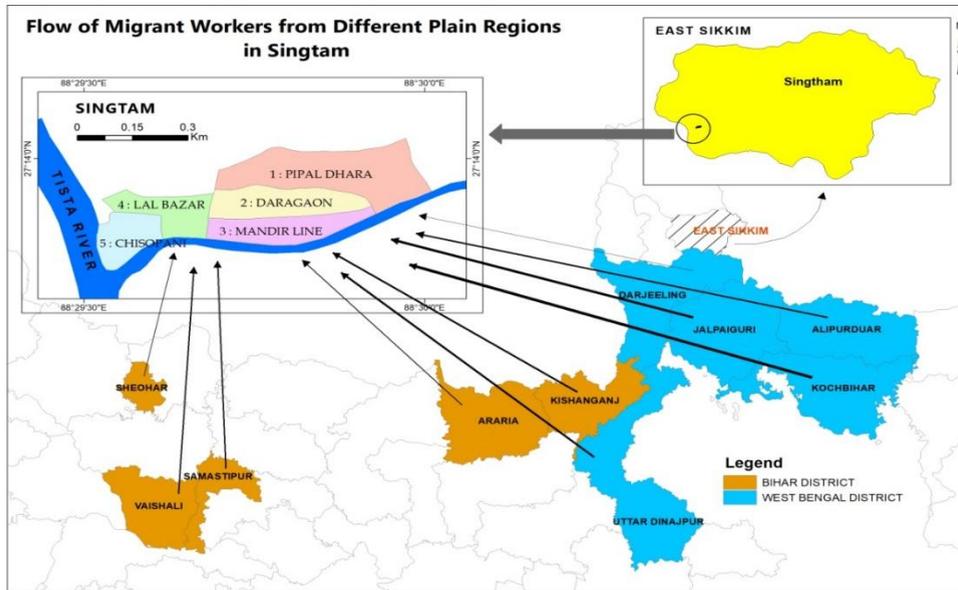
The textbook theories on economic development always envisage the transformation of labour from feudalistic to modern economy. At present, developing countries are experiencing the presence of huge pool of informal sectors outside agriculture. This transition is a long term process. There is a continuous debate in India on the participation rate of informal workers on the benefit of economy’s total growth. Informal workers are consisting near about 92% of the total workforce in India [National Commission for Enterprises in The Unorganised Sector, Govt.

¹ Sikkim Subject or COI: Sikkim Subject Regulation Act 1961 has been enforced at the time of Chogyal of Sikkim. Certain persons domiciled in Sikkim Territory at the commencement of the Regulation to be Sikkim Subject/COI, and the persons, though not domiciled in Sikkim but if he is a person whose ancestors were deemed to be Sikkim Subject prior to the year 1850. Home Department. Notification no 156/S-61. Gangtok, The 3m July, 1961. Published in the Sikkim Darbar Gazette, Extraordinary, dated the 3m July 1961.

of India (2004-05)]. Mostly, they are living with utterly awful working conditions and with very limited livelihood options. These squalid pictures are coexisting with a 'shining India'-perspective, where it has successfully confronted the issues of globalization and perpetual increasing of economic competition locally and globally. Buoyancy in the economy has created a sense of euphoria but most of the India's informal economy is far away from this euphoria (*ibid*: 1). In developing south, work is the key component of social recognition, participation in society and self-identity. It is the core platform which helps to locate individuals within the system of social structure. But, the standard employment model and work process already being changed due to the processes of intensified global competition, globalization, cooperative reform and technological revolution. Employers are continuing with 'flexibilize' employment strategies which in turn create an adverse effect on the workers by eroding the standard of employment. As a matter of fact, the total risk factor has been shifted away from firms to workers. States, by using various policies, tried to increase deregulation of the labour markets through the transmutation of employment relationship. These processes resulted in the significant growth of precarious work in the last few decades. There are different drivers of precarious work, especially; 'low-road'² (Evans and Gibb 2009) approaches lead to achieve the cost cutting perceptions at the cost of job quality, working environment and wages. The increase in precarious work indicates the heterogeneity of labour market. It is significant to note that all these are symptomatic of Singtam as well. Migrant labourers seem to be engaged reasonably in a prolific range of different earning categories. Migrants from Bihar and West Bengal adapt themselves as pro-urban poor in Singtam. Their incomes are irregular and uncertain but in quantitative terms they are earning much higher than their native place but at the cost of high exploitation rate. In this paper, I have attempted to examine these issues by considering the workers of different expenditure classes (like construction labourers, porters, tailors and hotel boys) to portray the reality of informal economy of the town.

Fig. No. 2.

²Low-road 'is a term used throughout the employment literature. Low road as represents as ' low-skill, low-pay job which are unsafe , insecure and unsatisfying in marginally profitable industries' –“ used in the conference '21st century work: High road or Low road?"



Source: Field work (2017), Fig 2: Flow diagram showing different rate of migration.

5. Sustainable Livelihood at Singtam - Reality Check:

My research ventures in Singtam were composed of a set of qualitative and quantitative research methods – using interviews, schedules (175 respondents), secondary documents and visual documentation and analyzing data through statistical measures. I approached Singtam and its neighbourhoods, unorganised sectors, peri-urban fringes, market areas, public sectors, besides government offices and trade unions. Carried out field work for several months and made multiple visits during 2017-18 to document the flow of migrant labourers' life in different occupational fields. As we know that there are different sets of regulations and rules to control migration in case of Sikkim and this makes Sikkim a unique case – unparalleled to other states of Indian Union barring a few exceptions of some North East Indian states – for reviewing the concerns of migrant informal labourers.³ Indian citizens are free to move towards Sikkim for work, except in all public sector jobs, but citizens of Nepal and Bhutan require registration before entering into the state. Much like other urban centers of Singtam welcomes migrants from other parts of the nation – mostly from West Bengal and Bihar – to flock in, frequently station in slums, build network with people of the same faith and seek out employment in the informal economy. Singtam's boom and seemingly negligent enforcement of migration control

³ Generalizations are difficult. Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Nagaland have restrictions on entry and settlement under various constitutional provisions, while particular districts and autonomous territories in Assam, Manipur, and Tripura have restrictions, though enforcement is uneven and is a constant source of tension and—in some cases—violence.

also attracted people from outside Sikkim. Here, migrants are not ‘of’ Sikkimese space rather being ‘in’ Sikkimese space. There are multiple rationales to make use of migrant labour in the host areas. While, shortage of local labour (Sing and Lyer 1985) in ‘low road’ economy is very much predominant in Sikkim, other available evidences show that the recruitment of migrant labour is motivated by the existing strategies of labour control and wage cost reduction. Migrant labourers are always preferred because their workforce is easier to control, as well as to extract labour from them in any arduous conditions. On the other hand, flexibility of the migrant labour is reinforced due to the role of middlemen and contractors. The labour market outcomes have been generated by the labour migration strategy facilitating some kind of growth and accumulation in the host areas, though this can be described as a ‘low road’ to capitalism. Breman (1996) has also stated that the basic rationale for the growth of informalisation depends on two-way mobility of labour and segmentation is also being observed by him in the mercantilist capitalist development. This process is nothing but a microscopic view of the international migration, which is strongly depended upon the structure of international capitalism. It is well known that neoliberalism changed resolutely the balance among labour, capital and policy practices and also the global South is believing in the ‘development friendly’ regime, it has become very essential to promote and execute the ‘decent work’ approach in India. In February 2010 the Indian Government and the Indian employers and workers’ organization have agreed to a decent work program with the ILO. The Decent Work Programme (DWP) was given reasonable space in the Indian Five Year Plan (2007-2012), which focuses on various skill development programmes, extension of social protection policies in the informal economy and also provisioning the elimination of ‘unacceptable forms of work’. It is very essential, in this context, to know migrant’s (labour) livelihood in the host area to understand the entire policy regime and the perception of decent work in any particular state.

6. General Profile and Livelihood Approach -Field View.

This study covered 175 (male) subjects (composed of construction labour, porters, tailors and hotel boys) from different dominant informal sectors of Singtam town. Selection of the sectors was made on the basis of the presumption that all migrant labourers are not experiencing the same set of vulnerabilities as are the cases with the four sectors. Semi-permanent or long term circular labour migrants and short-term or seasonal labour migrants require more attention as

most of these types of labourers are engaged as casual or semi-permanent basis and maintaining their livelihood without any security of employment (Srivastava, 2011). Sikkim's informal economy is not only experiencing short term, seasonal and circular migrant labourers but also several forms of long term labourers and their exchangeability. There are also plenty of temporary labourers, working as a group without knowing each other or sometimes coming from the same place and thereby knowing each other while sharing the common destiny. Following table is showing the relationship among different socio-cultural parameters with the occupation types.

Table no 1. **General profile of the migrant labourers in Singtam, East Sikkim.**

Types of occupation	Mean age	Religion maximum participation	Caste maximum participation	Education level in %				Types of migration in %			
				Ill	P	S	H	Long term	Seasonal	Short term	Temporary
Porter	27.29 ±6.05	Hindu 69.23%	OBC 37%	6	69	25	0	0	97	3	0
Tailor	27.24 ±6.18	Muslim 88.24%	OBC 53%	6	12	82	0	18	6	76	0
Hotel boy	18.40 ±3.59	Hindu 80%	OBC 36%	7	27	56	10	0	30	70	0
Construction labour	24.67 ±7.25	Hindu 76.19%	SC 38%	2	55	27	16	5	0	0	95

Source: field survey, 2017. Ill-illiterate, P- primary, Sc-secondary, Hs- higher secondary.

It is claimed that the sustainable work approach is to be viewed as an important means of achieving inclusive, equitable and sustainable development (ILO 2013). Open Working Group's (OWG) proposed SDG8 target has heavily stresses on promoting decent work for the migrant labourers. It includes various aspects and emphasizes on "the need to respect and promote

international labour standards as appropriate, and respect the rights of the migrants in their workplace” (International Migration and Development, 2013). Following table (no.2) is showing important (10) parameters of the decent work and there ranking, which helped to determine overall aspect of the decent work situation of the town.

Table no. 2. **Parameters of Decent Work**

Factors	Total	Average Score(total/total respondents	Rank
Wage	13632	77.9	1
Compensation for over time	9729	55.59	5
Working hrs.	7022	40.13	7
Employment security	6622	37.84	8
Hygienic working place	10927	62.44	3
Bullying by superior	11516	65.8	2
Retention strategies	10328	59.02	4
Protection facilities at working place	7543	43.1	6
Social security	5502	31.44	9
Union rights	3216	18.38	10

Source: field survey, 2017 (computed after Henry Garrett ranking conversion).

According to the table 2 migrant labourers are giving rank one to the wage structure, considering the facts that they are getting at least minimum wage from the town. One of the significant issues, which have been focused on the context of work condition of labour, is the issue of minimum wage.

Table 3: **Pre and post migration income structure of the migrant labourers.**

Particulars	Previous individual income				Present individual income			
	Tailor	Porter	Hotel boy	Construction workers	Tailor	Porter	Hotel boy	Construction workers
Observation	17	65	30	63	17	65	30	63
Mean \pm SD (range)	3333.3 3 \pm 7985.2 3 (0.00- 33333.3 33)	2692.3 1 \pm 911.55 (1333.33 - 4666.67)	1816.6 7 \pm 2765.1 9 (0.00- 8000)	5243.39 \pm 4727.03 (0.00- 16666.67)	12431.3 7 \pm 9228.40 (0.00- 33333.3 3)	11005.1 3 \pm 911.91 (9333.33 - 13333.3 3)	7350.0 0 \pm 3426.9 5 (4000- 22000)	10925.93 \pm 2972.66 (6666.67 - 20000.00)

Source: field survey, 2017

There are large numbers of countries in the world; along with the developed economies have minimum wages. Unfortunately, there are still strong conformations/advocates of the position that wages in the labour market should not be regulated, mostly in the informal economy. Individual states trades can set up higher minimum wages carefully - bearing in mind their feasibility. Sikkim government proposed to revise the existing Minimum wage rate as per their policy decision adopted in the year 2014. According to revised Minimum wage unskilled labourers are getting Rs.300/day, semi-skilled are able to get Rs320/day, skilled labourer are allowed to received Rs335/day and highly skilled labourer are entitled to get Rs365/day. Legislative protection for labourers to be given a minimum wage can be considered as the hall mark of any progressive state, as well as it is one of the primary premises of securing decent work conditions. My field experience highlights the fact that migrant informal labourers are enjoying the benefit of the minimum wage; they have a certain gap between the previous income and post migration income (table 2); whereas, apart from the wage factor other decent work parameters were poorly met in the field situation.

The labour and industry regulation offer some occasional overtime work – stipulating the facts that the labour should earn at twice the rate of normal wage received, but there is very less provision to obtain compensation for overtime. Only few (57 respondents) construction labourers are receiving overtime compensation as because most of them are appointed in a contract basis. Different labour and industry regulations in India (Factories Act 1948, Minimum Wages Act 1948, Shops and Establishment Act 1948) put down rules that no adult labour work more than 9 hours a day and 48 hours per week. On an average, the established working hours is 8 hours per day for six days' week. The reality in this town is too adverse since an average working day for all my respondents was 10 hours a day and it increases with no fixed limit when they come to work as project driven 'contract labour' (*thika*) on short term basis.

Table no. 4 **Average working hours of respondents.**

Occupations	Working hours/ day
Tailor	8.41±1.33
Porter	7.09±0.63
Hotel worker	9.23±1.04
Construction worker	8.22±1.41

Source: field survey, 2017.

Normally the vast majority of migrant labourers fall in the informal sector and employment is obtained in this sector mostly through three ways, though the ways did vary on case to case basis. First, is by the labour contractors, second is through a family, friends, caste, community and region based network and third, is the standing at the gate of the job structure. A migrant network is always a location-specific form of social capital (Massey et al. 1998). Bourdieu (1985) also stated that the volume of these resource network depends on the dimension of the network connections and also on (economic and cultural) or symbolic value attained by the person to whom the migrant is connected. My field experiences also revealed that maximum number of workers (108 cases) were recruited through various network systems. Second

maximum way of recruitment was through contractors (57 cases), especially in construction sector. Contract labourers are not same as direct labourers in terms of employment relationship and wage receipt. Normally contract labour in India is regulated by the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act 1970, but the Act is not applicable to those contractors who are employing less than twenty workers. Hence, the condition opens up scope for all types of manipulations to be made by the contractors and employers (SNCL 2002). Though this Act is meant for informal labour but its scope is very limited both in words and spirit. In Sikkim, there is a demand to abolish the labour contract system within one month because these workers are not entitled to get any benefit which are due to them (Rajeev R Das, The Telegraph, 2018). Third way is very insignificant in terms of the migrant labour recruitment because they would be in a disadvantaged situation if they are getting their jobs through third way and in Singtam (10 cases) such cases were noticed. Most of the time there were no fixed working hours and they are bound to work all the days in a week and sometimes in intolerable working conditions. The provision of different labour laws are not observed and migrant labourers are always subjected to different malpractices. Though, the Inter-State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1979 was already enacted to control the work conditions of the migrant labourers, but all my respondents were not at all aware of such legal entitlements.

Employment security is another important target of decent work approach. We have many labour laws in our Statute books but they are not covering workers engaged in informal economy. In spite of the existence of few beneficial laws (The Factory Act, 1948, The Minimum Wages Act, 1948, The Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, The Payment Gratuity Act, 1972, etc.) in informal sectors, but none of them are able to form the bottom line of the income as well as social security system that covers entire informal sectors. There is no provision of written appointment letter or employment contract in the informal economy. In Sikkim, this practice is also followed by the occupations of tailoring, hotel jobs, casual daily wage construction labourers and porters, but, 2010 onwards, local administration and Singtam police implemented one regulation for the porters that they need to register themselves at police station before joining their job and also have to buy one green coloured jacket for their identification as 'Namley'⁴. One of the most

⁴Namley: local name (in Nepali language) of the porters.

active exploitation which takes place most of the times with these porters is – the police or administrative officials are charging different amount of money to provide the jacket. This registration system is not a part of the state’s labour department and it is not even providing any security to the migrant labourers. These are the reasons why the employment security parameter was ranked 8th by my respondents.

The social security needed in the informal sectors is extensive but the reality is limited within the small funds as well as lack of readiness. Preclusion of different schemes create constrain to apply the social security measures for informal labourers, on the other hand, numerous schemes have been evolved in India with the help of legislations and policies to provide social security to the informal labourers – some of them are integrated with Rural Development Programme. In Sikkim, there are various policies to protect local (Sikkimese) labourers under different acts, but in terms of migrant labourers, they do not have access to even the most basic security norms. Field data suggests that the respondents have ranked the social security measures as the lowest possible working condition available in Singtam. Above all, migrant labourers are not allowed to form any union in the state of Sikkim. They cannot even get consent from their employers to take part or even register their names in any existing local labour unions even though 90% of the state’s informal economy is based on migrant labourers. In reality workers’ collective rights were totally ignored in the state of Sikkim for the migrant informal labourers. The Indian Constitution clearly recognized the relation between decent work conditions and the promotion of informal sector. Article 39 and 42 of the Directive Principles give importance on the goals and humane conditions of work, but, Article 43 emphasized towards not only for the provision of minimum wage – also for the “conditions of work ensuring a decent life”. Under the National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector, the government of India has provided various suggestive measures to transform the informal economy. Though, none of these suggestions can be interpreted as a suitable format for the development of a foundational framework when viewed in the light of migrant informal labourers’ standpoint working at Singtam.

7. Conclusion:

In reality, there is an ongoing, constant cross state competition to attract investors, and it has become a lead concern in the role of government. If states want to retain or attract these

investments, then, they will have incentives to weaken their existing labour laws (Mostey and David 2015). This propensity may lead states to fail in offering labour rights, individual working conditions as well as to enforce domestic labour legislations (Przeworski A and Wallerstein M. 1988). Sikkim is not beyond these possibilities. Moreover, there is a provision of exclusive privilege to Sikkimese only, in the economic, social and political arena on the basis of the Act 371 F. The Sikkim government tabled a bill – to reserve 95% of jobs for the Sikkimese in all private sector businesses operating (registered under Sikkim’s Registration of Companies Act, 1961 or the Companies Act, 1956) within the state. The bill’s target was to promote benefits to only those who possess COI or Sikkim Subject status. In this regard, BikashRanjan Bhattacharya, a Constitutional expert stated “The bill will be considered as ultra vires to the Constitution and will be struck down by the judiciary” (The Telegraph. 08.03.2008: 1). Sikkim’s state policies are always ready to promote and protect her local labourers. There is no room for the livelihood security of the migrant labourers except the minimum wage protocol.

Through a close observation of the spatiotemporal lattice of informal sectors in Sikkim, I reveal the fact that how these economies are fragile, with its maximum migrant human resource value chains by the state’s policies and also through market forces. While the entire informality is based on labour intensity relative opacity and embodied knowledge, certainly, able to create a ‘bodily’ experience for space and gives the power to informal economy to resist external forces and to subsume or transform them in formal sectors. Lack of job security and social protection in Sikkim also portrait that wage workers and micro employers live on a thin line between failure and survival. This render them as vulnerable and precariat. The upshot is that the informal labourers are in critical situation to maintain the quality of life. These workers are regularly stigmatized, exploited and made frequently invisible in policy decisions of the host as well as in the source states. It shows an enduring inequality that demands proper policy adjudication. Cities and towns are often considered as brooding places of imagination, creativity, innovation, and the ever new and different. However, cities and towns also hide in their underbelly perverse and pervasive processes of social exclusion and marginalization and are rife with all manners of struggle, conflict, and often outright despair in the midst of the greatest affluence, abundance, and pleasure. This seems to be the case when one is to assess Sikkim’s prosperity in the light of the concerns of migrant informal sector labour.

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