Chapter 6

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The present study is an enquiry into rural-urban migration to Guwahati city. This issue is been addressed using secondary data and conducting a field study. The magnitude of R-U migration to the city is examined through the type and flow of migration to the city. Sex selectivity of migrants and their reasons for migration into the core gives an idea of dimension of migration in the city. However, the objectives of the study could not be achieved through secondary data alone therefore; a field study was conducted to give a detailed description of the social status of the migrants disclosing the ground reality.

Based on the findings (from secondary data as well as primary data) presented in part 6.2, conclusions are drawn and their implications have been discussed. Policy recommendations have also been made in part 6.3

6.2 Summary of Findings

6.2.1 Findings on the Basis of Secondary Data

- The size of migrant's population in Guwahati in 1991 was 27.68 lakhs which increased to 37.86 lakhs in 2001. It reflects a growing trend of migration into the city.

- Migration of different groups of people to the city leads to community centric settlements. It is thus evident that migration has been highly responsible for the changing demographics at large.

- Immigration status of Kamrup Metro (in the absence of data on immigrants to Guwahati city) shows that the highest percentage of immigrants is from Bangladesh. However, the percentage declined from 73.8 % in 1991 to 71.1 % in 2001. This could be an underestimation of the size due to false information about the status of the migrant.

- In case of Inter-state migration migrants from Bihar proved to be the highest for both Guwahati as well as Assam. In 2001 migrants from Bihar to Guwahati constituted 37.8 %. These migrants usually belong to the unskilled labour engaged in various petty activities.

- In case of migrants from the other North Eastern states to Guwahati, migrants from Meghalaya and Tripura form the highest volume. In 2001 migrants to Guwahati city from Meghalaya constituted 57.4% and Tripura constituted 21.8 %.

- Intra-district migration pre dominated the type of migration in Assam with 61.2% in 1991 and 70.66% in 2001. However, in case of Guwahati city Inter-district migration pre dominated the type of migration with 51.77% in 1991 and 49.91% in 2001. The fall indicates urbanization in other nearby areas as well.

- In Assam, rural to rural migration pre-dominated all the three streams during 1991 to 2001. However, the highest was intra-district R-R migration with 90.17% in 1991 and 82.06% in 2001.

- The Intra-district rural to urban migration dominated the two streams in Guwahati during 1991 with 83.54 percent of migrants. On the other hand inter-district rural-urban migration increased from 56.47 % in 1991 to 68.80 % in 2001. The increasing percentage of inter-district migration is a fall out of increasing urbanization and development in the transport sector that made migration worthwhile.

- In case of R-R migration in Assam the total decadal drop was - 4.04% with males by

  -19.36% and Females by an increase of 3.92%. Marriage could be a possible fall

  out of the decadal rise of migration among females.

- In case of R-U migration in Assam the total decadal increase (1991 to 2001) was

  22.70% with an increase of males by 21.42% and female by 24.16%.

- In case of U-R migration in Assam, there was a total decadal drop by - 8.23% with

  males by -18.47% and females by -0.34%. Thus reverse migration is not so

  significant.

- In case of U-U migration in Assam the total decadal increase was 59.54% with an

  increase of females by 61.57% and males by 58.30%.

- In case of R-U migration in Guwahati city there was a total decadal rise by 45.44

  % with an increase of males by 45.19% and females by 45.83 %. This was higher

  than the decadal rise of R-U migration in Assam at large.

- In case of U-U migration in Guwahati city, the Magnitude of U-U flow declined

  both in relative as well absolute terms by -32.15% in total with a decadal drop of

  males by -34.66% and females by -29.21%.

- In case of reasons for migration to Guwahati city in 2001, the overall decadal rise

  due to reasons cited by the Census 1991 and 2001 was 36.8%. There was a

  decadal drop only in case of education as a cause to migrate to the city by -32.5%.

- There was a decadal increase in terms of business by 47.6% higher than

  employment that rose by 29.1% as reasons for migration to Guwahati city.

- There was a decadal increase of migrants by 10.7% due to marriage as a reason for migration to Guwahati.

- There was an insignificant decadal rise of migrants by 0.8% due to 'family moved' as a reason for migration to Guwahati.

- Natural calamities as a cause of migration was however replaced by moved after birth in the Census of India 2001.

- Guwahati experienced rapid urbanization with 89.18 % of the district's urban population in 2001.

- The informal sector in Guwahati city absorbs 85 to 90 % of the total employment which Indicates diversity in informal sector activities in the urban core which is absent in the rural areas.

- 26 numbers of slums have been identified in Guwahati city with 1.6 lakhs persons (18%) of the city's population in 2001. This indicates the growing squatters and illegal encroachment in the city.

- The volume of illiterate migrants in case of both males and females dropped during the decade 1991-2001 in Guwahati. This is a result of the growing literacy drive undertaken by the Govt.

- Short-distance migration among females proved to be larger than the males. Males covered longer distances and hence inter-state migration among females is insignificant.

6.2.2 Findings from the field Investigation

- From the total migrants enumerated 88.7% belong to the intra-state category. The rest belong to different states of India like Bihar (10.2%), Bengal (3.4 %), Rajasthan (3.9%), and Meghalaya (3.1%). It shows that distance and cultural differences play a major role in a migrant's decision to migrate.

- The highest number of migrants is from Nalbari district followed by Barpeta, Nagaon, Kamrup, Darrang, Dhubri and fourteen more districts of Assam.

- Males migrated more (81.3%) than the females (18.8 %). This indicates bias in sex selectivity of the migrants in case of migration from one place to another. Migration among females usually takes place due to marriage.

- Percentage of married migrants constitutes a larger volume than singles. It indicates associational migration in the near future.

- Most of the migrants have minimum qualification (lower primary or upper primary). A large volume of the migrants are illiterates as well. This shows availability of diverse activities in the urban core providing livelihood opportunities to the migrants.

- Most of the migrants belong to the general caste followed by SC/ST/Others.

- A large volume of the migrants got to know about their current work from their friends (38%) and relatives (36%) and the rest from other means. This indicates chain and associational migration of the people engaged in almost similar kind of activities with similar living standards.

- Most of the migrants are temporary migrants showing short distance migration due to good roads and shorter distances.

- Larger volume of the migrants moved to Guwahati in search of livelihood/employment opportunities (57%), 25% for business, 3% for marriage,

3% as their families moved and 12 % for other reasons. Lack of employment opportunities in the villages act as the push factors.

- A large volume of the migrants stayed back in Guwahati as they were expecting better opportunities in the coming future. This reveals flexibility of migration to places with better opportunities.

- A very big percentage of migrants (77.3%) had no earnings in the villages. However, 68.2% migrants managed to earn Rs 251-350 on a daily basis in Guwahati. Zero income in the villages act as a distress factor that pushes the migrants out of their villages in search of work.

- Only 29.9 percent of the migrants reported that their children received proper vaccination, 8.9 percent migrants experienced infant mortality in their families, 3.6 percent had cases of maternal mortality (during delivery) and only 51.3% migrants had an idea of family planning. This indicates lack of awareness about the policies of the Govt.

- 82.6 percent migrants live in rented accommodation (indicating cheap accommodation and poor living conditions), 9.6 percent have their own residence (most living on illegally encroached lands) and 7.8 percent avail provided accommodation by the owners where they work.

- 67 percent of the migrants reside in kutcha houses, 24 percent live in pucca houses and 9 percent live in semi-Pucca houses. This shows deplorable living standards of the migrants seeking attention.

- 57. 6 % migrants have no vehicles, 40.4 percent own bicycles, 0.5 percent had their own two wheelers (motor bikes etc), and 1.6 percent owned four wheelers (including, rickshaws, auto rickshaws and battery rickshaws). This indicates good access to transportation facilities within the city.

- Only 74.2% migrants hold bank account which shows awareness of the migrants about savings.

- 59.6% migrants send money home. This is a spread effect in the form of remittances to their respective villages.

- 54.6% migrants take money personally to their families in the villages indicating short distance and temporary migration. 34.1% use banks as a mode of transferring money mostly in case in interstate migrants. The rest send money through relatives and friends.

- 90.6% of the migrants have their families in the villages which prove the pre dominance of rural-urban migration flow into the city.

- Most of the migrants have huge number of dependents (either 4/5/or more than 5 in number) depending on the main migrants indicating future possibilities of associational migration into the city.

- 46.4 percent of the migrants own houses in their respective villages, 27.9 percent own agricultural land along with houses and 25. 8 percent of the migrants have no property. Most of the migrants have no farm lands and those who own agricultural lands have fragmented land holding not viable economically.

- 52% of the migrants did farming in their villages (mostly for consumption purposes), 44% gave land on Adhi and 4% hired paid labours (possibly because of dearth of labours in the working age group due to migration).

- 73% of the migrants did seasonal agriculture both for commercial and subsistence purposes. Seasonal farming acts as a distress factor leading to migration during the off season.

- Findings of the application of a Logit Model on the dependence of a migrant's willingness to migrate to a city core on factors like age, education, caste, earnings,

property, and ownership of agricultural lands: **(a)** considering illiteracy as a reference category, Secondary passed migrants are (1.2 times) & higher secondary passed are (1.7 times) more   likely to migrate than the reference category. However, lower primary, upper primary, Graduate &Post graduates show lower willingness to migrate. **(b)** Considering General caste as a reference category, OBC/MOBC are more likely to migrate than the reference category whereas, SC/ST are less likely to migrate than the reference category. **(c)** Considering age within 5 years at the time of Migration as a reference category it is observed that higher the age more is the willingness to migrate. Migrants above 30 yrs of age are more likely to migrate than the reference category. It indicates backwash effect creating dearth of people belonging to the working age group in the villages. **(d)** Migrants without earnings are more likely to migrate than those who had an earning source in the villages. Lack of work opportunities act as Push factors. **(e)** Migrants without farm lands are more likely to migrate than those with farm lands. The model explains that socio economic factors have an influence on the willingness to migrate.

- Findings of the application of a Logit Model on a migrant's decision to return back to their villages if opportunities are made available in their respective places of origin: **(a)** males are more likely to return back than the females, indicating a gender based variation in risk appetite resulting in males showing greater likelihood to migrate **(b)** Married migrants are more likely to go back than their unmarried counterparts. This indicates temporary migration with families in the villages. **(c)** Secondary passed are more likely to return **(d)** SC are 0.75 times more likely to return & OBC are 1.03 times more likely to go back **(e)** Higher the age more is the willingness to return back. It indicates that there is a progressive

decline in the level of optimism in the ageing migrants. **(f)** Interestingly Property owners in the city are more likely to return. It indicates illegal encroachment of Govt. lands in the name of property ownership. **(g)** Migrants with higher income also wished to return back to their respective villages if opportunities are provided to them. This indicates that the income growth is not high enough to keep pace with the growing cost of living in the urban core.

- Application of the Logit model in both the cases has proved appropriate to provide a clear idea of the status of the migrants. The findings can be fruitful in framing policies for the welfare of the migrants. Suggestions based on the findings have been forwarded in the next unit-6.3 (Conclusion and Policy recommendations)

6.3 Conclusion and Policy recommendations

The issue of rural-urban migration has been discussed in details considering some important parameters in the previous chapters. Findings based on secondary data provide a macro view of the issue to the study. Field survey on the other hand, reveals some interesting facts on ground reality. Effort has been made to analyse the dimension, causes, issues and policies of migration. The dimension of migration has been stated using the data base on the type (Intrastate, Interstate and international) and pattern (R-R, R-U, U-U and U-R) of migration and sex selectivity of the migrants. Causes cited by The Census of India 1991 and 2001 have been discussed (causes remaining the same only with replacement of 'natural calamities' by 'moved after birth' as a cause of migration in 2001) . Issues of migration are manifold. However, only a few major issues like unauthorized colonies and its related issues have been addressed and a few issue related policies (flagship programmes of the Govt. on rural and urban welfare) have been discussed.

It must be admitted that non-availability of adequate data pertaining to migration has proved to be a serious limitation to the study. Although the study covers a period from 1991 to 2015, it had to depend on secondary data base only till 2001. Migration data for the next decade were not released by the Census of India 2011.

The study reveals that although there have been ups and downs in the rate of increase in migration yet, migration shows a positive trend. With increasing urbanization, migration has been a contentious issue in Assam at large and Guwahati city in particular leading to the growing informal sector in the city absorbing (85-90%) of the city's total employment for the last many years. If such a situation continues to prevail, the urban informal sector would reach a point of saturation and face utter chaos. There would be over congestion in the urban core adding fuel to the existing slums and squatter settlements. The consequences of migration would shape up into grim issues.

The actual status of the migrants in the urban core through field investigation (though limited) reveals deplorable living conditions of the migrants in the city with limited earnings and poor dwellings. Govt. intervention through its manifold policies seemingly lack proper orientation and direction in this regard.

Some recommendations may be forwarded in the light of all the above.

- Migration cannot be stopped once for all. However, steps should be taken to control the flow of migration by incorporating measures leading to reverse migration. Decision to migrate is affected by parameters like age, gender, education, caste, property and income. While structuring the policies care should be taken to consider the factors that affect a person's decision to migrate.
- A large volume of skilled and unskilled migrants of working age group move into the city every year in search of employment opportunities due to lack of

livelihood opportunities in their villages. This not only creates congestion in the city but also causes dearth of working people in the rural areas. Policies should be create alternative economic opportunities to retain them in their places of origin. During agricultural slack season the intending migrants should be encouraged to engage in other vocations as alternative opportunities.

- The concept *'One tambon one product'* (OTOP) used in Thailand and *'One town one product'* used in Philippines, inspired by Japanese *'One village one product'* (OVOP) where the focus is to encourage the village communities to improve the local product's quality and markets selecting one superior product from each *tambon* (village) c*an* be fruitful for rural development. The idea is to support the villages to specialize in the production of one particular product only. Here we can cite examples of Sualkuchi in Kamrup district (for *'Assam silk'*) and Rantholi in Nagaon district (for *'assamese ornaments'*).Once the village is known for its product, it creates good market as well. Here the Govt. can provide funds, provide vocational training to the rural folk to sustain in the competitive market and also improve the quality of the local products. In this regard an idea of *clustering of villages* may be prescribed centering around production of one particular product/ products looking at the comparative advantage. Here, the concept of 'one family one component' of a product may be thought of.

- Most of the migrants enumerated in the study claimed to have fragmented land holdings. Therefore, instead of mechanization of farms (not feasible for small land holdings) diversification of agricultural activities or practices to higher valued horticultural/cash crops can be profitable for the farmers at large. That might even lead to reverse migration.

- Poverty stricken rural folks migrate to the urban centres in search of livelihood opportunities. It is observed that almost all the state run programmes go with an agenda of poverty alleviation in most of the programmes for rural development yet, until recently these rural development programmes could not achieve much success and hence need to pay direct attention ensuring mandatory participation of the persons concerned.

- It is observed that most of the migrants enumerated lack social awareness. Therefore, mass and participatory awareness regarding social and economic parameters like; provisions for basic or elementary education, health care, housing, connectivity such as; all weather roads, markets, banking and insurances (life and product) in the rural areas and such others should be created in the rural areas. **The *PURA* Model** (Provision of Urban Amenities in Rural Areas) a scheme, introduced by APJ Abdul kalam should be implemented throughout the country. The rural areas that lag behind almost all the parameters (drinking water, sanitation, education, health, electricity, transportation, social institutions) should be taken care of.

- The policy makers may think of creating *'Rural-Economic Zone'* focusing on production and marketing of products produced in specific rural areas by considering cost-effective measures with competitive advantage. Those rural zones should also be prepared for market linkages equipped with all amenities including exports. In this context existing special economic zones in the country or export promotion centres may be referred to. Standardization of products should be looked into and traditional marketing management/strategies should be replaced by modern system of marketing by even having access to e-marketing or online marketing. Production and marketing polices should be framed keeping in

view the objectives of '*Act East Policy*' which basically focuses on expanding trade linkages with South-East Asian countries. In this regard '*Act East policy*' may also consider promotion of items produced in rural areas.

- Intending migrants may be issued work permit to work abroad based on their skill for a particular period of time preferably in labour deficit countries. If done it will have lot of positive consequences like earning remittances, exposure to world labour market, skill acquisition etc. It will also positively affect internal migration.

- During poor economic conditions, the cost associated with migration is higher. These higher costs are due to more intense job search activities. However, during an economic boom, work opportunities become easily accessible and average quality of the migrants deteriorates. This lower quality is manifested in labour force participation patterns in the ever increasing urban informal sector at the urban core. Therefore, Govt. intervention in the unorganized segment of the informal sector is the call of the hour. Thus, implementation and monitoring of the development programmes are equally significant as framing appropriate policies.

- Lack of understanding of the reforms creates hurdles in the path of execution of the policies. Therefore, it is very important to simplify the schemes to the largest possible extent. A common critique of most of the rural development programmes is that they fail to reach the most vulnerable and deprived groups in the rural areas. The programmes require better understanding of poverty and more participatory approach of the commons.