

Chin Ethnic Migrants from Myanmar to India

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Abstract

Migrants move away from their place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, for a variety of reasons. If an area has a movement of in migration because of positive conditions (pull factors), this will generally increase the population or human resources. Similarly, an area with a movement of out migration due to negative conditions (push factors), will lose their population or human resources. Sometimes it causes negative impacts and potential challenges for sustainable socio-economic development of the area. The movement of persons is away from their place of usual residence, either across an international border or within a State. For several decades, migration has become ever more significant in Myanmar and a major issue for socioeconomic development. If more job opportunities can be found in this area, migration can be controlled. Chin ethnic migrants from Falam area constitute the majority of this workforce. This study focuses on how and why the people are migrating from one place to another country. The research questions are why and how Chin ethnic migrates to India? What are factors of the migration for in this area? The study finds that political and economic conditions are the key factor of migration from the study area and its effect on the socioeconomic condition of this area.

Keywords: migration patterns push factor, pull factor

Introduction

Migration is defined broadly as a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence. No restriction is placed upon the distance of the move or upon the voluntary or involuntary nature of the act, and no distinction is made between external and internal migration (Lee, 1966, p.49). "Migration is shifting of people or an individual or group of individuals from one cultural area to another, which may be permanent or temporary". Migration has been defined as "the act or an instance of moving from one country or region to settle in another". Secondly it is defined as "an act of moving from one area to another in search of work." Everett S. Lee (1966) asserts that the factors which enter into the decision to migrate and the process of migration may be summarized, as follows: 1. Factors associated with the area of origin. 2. Factors associated with the area of destination. 3. Intervening obstacles. 4. Personal factors (p.50).

Different scholars have tried to define the concept of migration distinctly, based on their different approaches. Because of the complexity of human life and fast changing socio- economic conditions, human migration is gaining importance day by day. A basic factor that has influenced the mobility of man from one region to another was uneven distribution of population and resources, unbalanced utilization of resources and variation in economic and cultural development. David Ndegw (2016) stated that "the 2014 Census reported two million Myanmar people living abroad: distribution is shown in figure 1" (p.5).

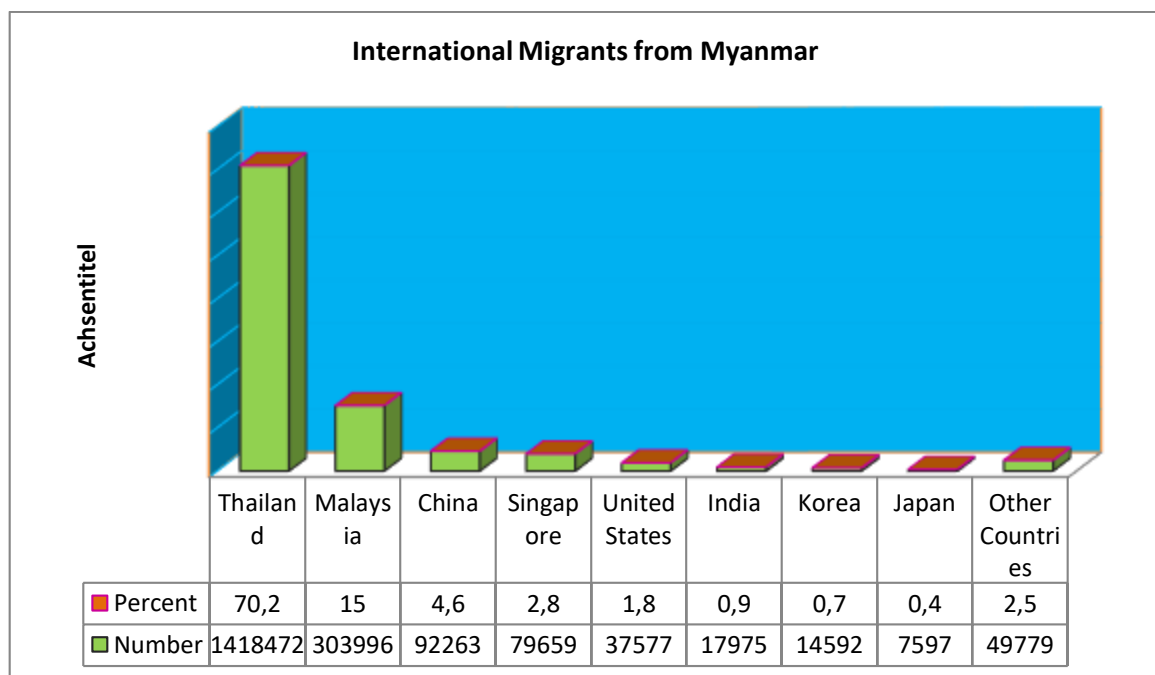


Figure 1: International Migrants from Myanmar, Copyright 2016 by David Ndegw

As seen in figure 1 the major corridors of international migration from Myanmar are focused on three destination countries, namely Thailand, Malaysia, and China, which account for almost ninety percent of the international migrant stock from the country. During 2019, the Ministry of Labor, Immigration and Population announced that over 305,000 people went overseas for work. Of the 53.9 million people living within Myanmar, seventy percent live in rural areas. According to Kyin Lam Maung (2015), from 1962 to 1988, the peasants in northern Chin State had many terrible challenges. Most peasants grow maize and other vegetables, cultivated sweet potato, pumpkin, because of food insecurity. The soil quality was gradually deteriorating and maize - one of the Chin's people staple foods - was often in short supply. Furthermore, the government forced the peasants who grew upland rice by shifting cultivation to change to terrace cultivation. The peasants spent a lot of time and labor making terraces. The peasants were starving because of wrong instructions from the top. Some peasants worked on the India border as hard labor and filled their rice pot by purchasing rice from the low-land cultivation. In addition, transportation is very difficult from place to place in the state.

Chin people's livelihoods in the country became harder and harder every year. Job opportunity was less and less. Government institutions were the main source of employment for new graduates. The government was gradually unable to fill its job vacancies. There was a big demand for employees in many government departments. But for years the government failed to recruit for government institutions at all. Some Chin graduates migrated out to Mizoram State in India because lives became harder year after year and some young Chin men also went to the infamous Phakant Jade mine in Kachin State to seek jobs for survival (Kyin Lam Maung, 2015). The push factors encouraging out-migration were the economic hardship and complex politics. On the other hand pull factors were present from neighboring countries too. With both push and pull factors operating, Chin people had many reasons to look elsewhere for better jobs and a better life.

Purpose

The main purpose of this study is to explore the migration patterns of this area and to point out the main push and pull factors for this migration. For some decades, migration becomes more significant in Myanmar and becomes a major issue for socioeconomic development. Migrants from Falam area constitute the majority of this workforce as a result of unprecedented economic and political change in Myanmar. I have chosen this topic because most of the papers focus on other destination countries like Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and Korea. Moreover, their immigrants are from different states in Myanmar - Mon, Kayan, Shan ethnics. Against this background, study area of Falam was selected. So I chose another aspect of this topic. This study focuses on how and why people are migrating on from

one place to another country. The research questions are why Chin ethnic migrate to India and how do Chin ethnic migrate to India border? What are factors for the migration from this area?

Research Methodology

The objective of this paper is to point out the main push and pull factors for migrations. In this study, to obtain the relevant data, field observation was firstly done in Falam area. Before starting this study, field observations and open talks with local residents were conducted. Then, reliable information about the migration was sought by systematic structured interview survey method. In-depth interview survey method was applied to the local authorities, local experts and local residents. The field visits involved rapid and intensive two-week expeditions to the selected study site, where a number of various stakeholders were interviewed. These included migrants in origin and destination areas, including migrants' families in origin areas, labor agents (who facilitate migration process), township officials, and private sector migrant employers, farmers, civil society and other key informants. This survey was done in Falam Township on 4 January 2020. Some of the facts from the interview data were assessed by the analysis.

Literature Review

The article *The Situation of Burmese Migrant Workers in Mae Sot, Thailand* written by Dennis Arnold (2004), discusses the situation of Burmese worker support organizations to operate effectively in Mae Sot; Thailand-based labor organizations or trade unions working specifically on labor or trade union rights in Tak with an office and staff located there on a full time basis in mid-2004. The workers are in an extremely vulnerable situation and greater organizational and protection efforts are needed. Winston Set Aung, in his book *Illegal Heroes and Victimless Crimes Informal Cross-border Migration from Myanmar* (2009), points out that Malaysia and Thailand have been popular destinations for most Myanmar unskilled and semi-skilled workers, who have migrated. Moreover, students and professionals also live in these countries. Between Myanmar and Thailand Shan, Mon and Karen have had strong social connections for many years, which have resulted in a situation where the mobility of people between the two countries has been very significant, mostly illegal. Another work on migration is from Khin Soe Kyi (2015), *The Social Relationship of Myanmar Migrant Workers in Malaysia: An Ethnographic Study*. In this paper, he explains how Myanmar social organizations and ethnic-based organizations are giving support to Myanmar migrant workers in addressing their needs and problems in Malaysia. Although officially not recognized, approximately seventy social organizations and social groups are currently running in Malaysia. It is therefore interesting to study

how they interact within their social networks and how social organizations help in meeting the needs of migrants in Malaysia. Most articles, papers and books are focusing on migrants going to Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Korea and they are Mon, Karen, Shan ethnics (Reeves, 2015: *Falam Immigrants in America: Motivations for Language Use Maintenance and Shift*): her research was conducted among twenty-five immigrants to the United States who speak Falam, a language from Myanmar. How motivations result in language shift and language maintenance, specifically among immigrants who speak a minority language as their mother tongue. Also, language shift is providing a better understanding of the extent that individual motivations can predict, explain, and alter language shift. Khin Saw New (2015), in her paper *Socio-Cultural Factors of Falam in Chin State, Myanmar*, points out that a socio-cultural study of Falam Townships - Lonpi, Many kheny, Zar Linen, Laizo, Lomban Parthe and Cizaymul villages - was undertaken in 2014. Kyin Lam Mang, (2015) (*Ethnic Chin People Today: Livelihood, Migration, Internal Displacement and Exile*), recommends that Chin people today should keep migrating out to escape the multiple hardships in their native land not only for their own better life but also so that they are able to support the remaining family by remittances. In order to fill this gap, this study explains Chin (Falam) ethnic migrants from Myanmar to India.

Findings and Discussion

Geography Location

Myanmar is composed of fifteen Divisions: seven states and eight regions. In this research, the study area is situated in Falam town, Chin state. Chin state is situated in the Western sector of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, 13, 906.97 square miles in area, and consisting of three districts; Mindat, Hakha and Falam. Mindat district includes Mindat, Matupi, Kanpalet, Paletwa; Hakha district includes Hakha and Thanhlang; and Falam district includes Falam, Tedim, Tuanzang (Salai Vanni Bawi, p.2). In Myanmar, the Chin predominantly inhabit Chin State, which is located in the Northwest of the country, the bordering Bangladesh to the west and India to the north. Chin state is bordered at Mizoram state (in India) in the northwest, the Chittagong hill tract of Bangladesh in the southwest and locally with Sagaing Region in the east and north east, Magwe Region in the east and south east; and Rakhine State in the South. As seen in Figure 2 map of Chin State in Myanmar



Figure 2: Chin State in Myanmar

Chin State is over 300 miles long south to north; east to west it is 100 miles wide at the widest point and over thirty miles at the narrowest. The land is primarily forest and the climate includes three main seasons: summer, winter and rainy. April and May are the warmest months of the year, with temperatures reaching ninety degrees Fahrenheit. Most Chins live at higher elevations in the Chin Hills. The capital city is Hakha which lies at approximately 6,000 feet above sea level. The Chin people live primarily in Chin State but also inhabit areas of the Chittagong Hills tract of Bangladesh and in Mizoram

and Manipur states of India.

In the British Colonial period, Chin State was divided into two divisions. They are Northern and Southern Chin State. These areas are composed of different physical and cultural components. Northern Chin Hills was divided into three subdivisions, Tidim, Falam and Tonzaung. The entire state is formed of mountain ranges and most of the towns and villages are 5000-7000 feet above sea level. Chin state is a mountainous region with few transportation links. The township is also the location of Laiva Dam, the largest dam in Chin State. The dam produces hydroelectric power for Falam and neighboring cities such as Hakha and Thantlang. It situates beautifully on a plateau, built on the slope of a mountain range, in multiple steps. According to the census 2014, the population of Falam Township is very sparse, about 41,457 people (The 2014 Myanmar Population and Housing Census Report, 2015). Chin State is sparsely populated and remains one of the least developed areas of the country. Poverty is endemic in the whole state.

The name Falam originated from Fa-hlam, from Taisun language of one of the tribes in Chin. Falam was a village created and founded by the Taisun tribe. Taisun was one of the strongest tribes in northern Chin Hills and was the leading tribe that collaborated with other tribes against the British rule in Chin history. Falam Town is mountainous, running east-west from the foothills above the Neyinzaya and Myittha rivers to the high peaks of the Chin Hills in the Arakan Mountain Range and down to the border with Mizoram State, India. The highest peak in the township, Mount Zinghmuh is also the second highest mountain peak in Chin State. The Manipur River runs south through the center of the township. People who travel to the city take the Kalay-Falam-Hakha Road. The township is famous for its heart-shaped lake called Hri (Rih or Yi).

Falam town is one of the cities of Myanmar, located within the township of Falam. It is located in Chin state. Falam was the capital city of Chin State until it was changed to Haka. Within the township of Falam there are many sub-groups: Zahau, Zanniat, Ngawn, Sim, Laizo, Tlaisun, Hualngo, Tapong, Hlawnceu, etc. The township is bordered by Kalay in the east, Hakha in the south, Thantlang in the west, Tedim in the north and it is a town in north-western Myanmar near Myanmar's western border with the Indian state of Mizoram. Falam town is located 5,280 feet above sea level. The total land area of Falam Township is 988.9 square miles. Falam is the headquarters of several important organizations: there are a total of three High Schools, Basic Schools, Religious School, department of traditional medicine, Public Health Foundation, non-governmental Organizations, Religious associations, Myanmar Post and Telecommunication office, courts, office of auditor-general, churches, a general hospital, a diploma nursing school, Department of Public Health, Department of agriculture, Department of forestry, Department of fisheries, fire, three High Schools. Ninety-seven

percent is Christian and three percent Buddhist, Muslim and Hindu in Falam. The Chin Baptist Convention (CBC) has its head office in Falam. Many of the buildings in Falam reflect the British occupation and its former status as the state capital. Falam Town is the administrative town of the district. The town is clean, tidy and resembles old towns in Europe having some two and three storied brick buildings beautifully set in the slope and a large and grand Baptist church in the center of the town. There is a statue of the Buddha built high on the hill from where one can enjoy an overview of the entire plain below. There is the Independence Pagoda at the entrance of the city (Field Survey, 2020). The township is organized into eighty-five village tracts and 184 villages. The General Administrative Department manages all matters within the township up to the village tract / village level.

Historical Background of Chin Ethnic Migrants

Chin people are one of the Tibet-Myanmar groups that migrated along the river Ayeyarwaddy. The history of Chin people was documented in the middle of the eighth century in Chindwin valley, Sagaing region in Myanmar. Mostly, the Chin people lived in the mountains and Chindwin river basin. "A theory says some groups of proto-Chin assumed migration out of Tibet and occupied along the Chindwin river, in the basin between the Chindwin and Irrawaddy river, while another group settled around the Popa and Bagan during the first millennium C.E. Another theory argues that the progenitors of Chin people today originally migrated out of southwestern China and initially settled down in central Myanmar in the same region mentioned above. Anyway, the point is that the ancestors of Chin people today in Chin State were not aborigines there at all but were also immigrants from somewhere else in last six to eight centuries ago" (Salai Vanni Bawi, 2015, p.4).

Migration of the Chins is over a long time and they were stuck in hardship wherever they inhabited. In the second millennium, the Chins started to distribute to the western mountain ranges. "The first settlers in the northern Chin moved from upper Myanmar and kept moving to reach the land called today Mizoram in India. The settlers in Mizoram at present are Mizo, Mar and Miram (Mara). When the first occupied land could not supply sufficient food to the growing population, they had to steadily extend their territories. Accordingly, the second dwellers in Northern Chin pushed the late comers southwards to reach the western part of southern Chin- today, and became Zotung, Zophei, Lautu and Matu. Yet some were pushed to reach southern Chin State, northern and western Rakhine State to be formed up of today-Khumi, Khami and Mro. An Alternative route was started from the Bagan and Popa area. Those groups initially displaced to the southern Chin area too. They are today-Muun, M'kaang, Dai and Uppu. From there, one group spread over into Rakhine State, Magwe and Bago Division. They were supposed to be the forefathers of today's Sho speaking minority, splitting into six

distinct groups: Asho, Kounsho, Chinpong (Uppu), Laitu (Doaitu), Lauktu (Ekkai) and Sumtu (Sunghtu)” (Kyin Lam Maung, 2015, p.4).

Socio-economic Factors of Falam Town

At present, migration is one of the challenging issues in Myanmar for political changes and socioeconomic development. Sustainable development is largely based on human resources. If a place has no human resources, it is difficult to develop. Chin State is sparsely populated and remains one of the least developed areas of the country. Poverty is also a significant issue in Chin State. Of all the states in Myanmar, the Chin Hills are characterized as having "the highest poverty gap ratio, highest occurrence of food deficits, poor road connectivity, low population density but lowest percent availability of cultivable lands and high percentage of waste and scrub lands" as well as a higher rate of people migrating out of the area (Reeves, p.7). The total population of Falam town was 12,212 in 2019 (Field Survey, 2020).

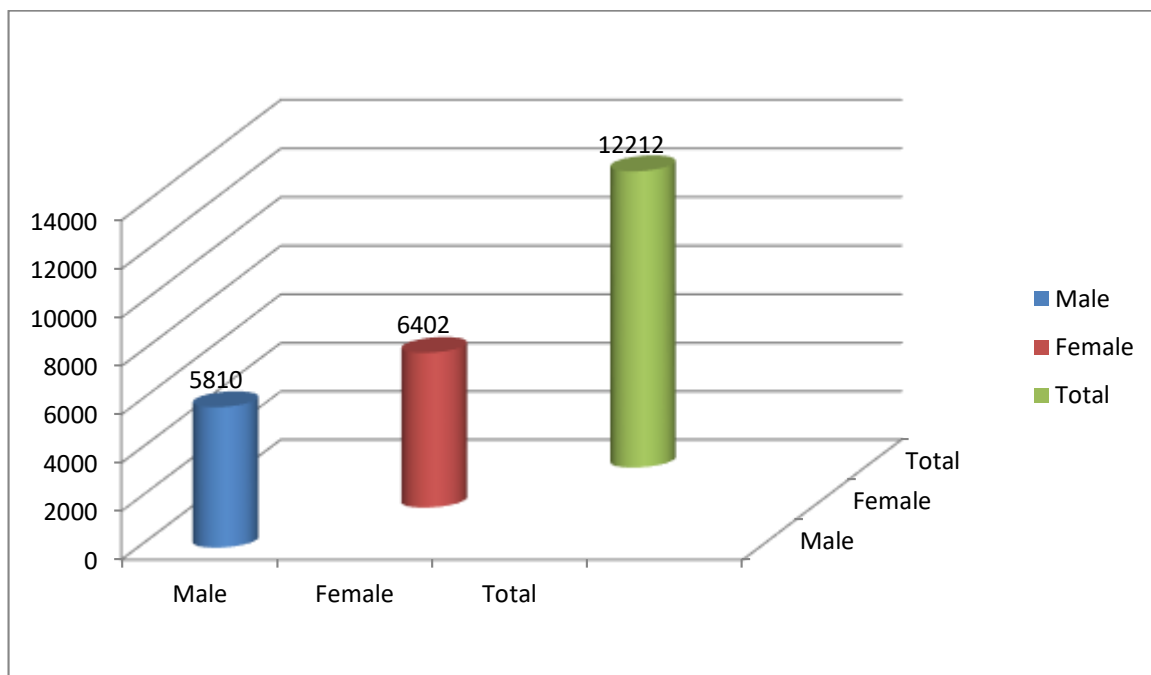


Figure 3: The Total Population of Falam Town in 2019, Field Survey (2020)

Most Falam make their living by subsistence farming. Many people farm using no external equipment or resources, and rely solely on natural resources and labor. In Falam Township, agriculture provides a livelihood for most of the population and 17,761 acres of land are utilized for farming. A land management committee is present in the township and is led by the General Administrative Department (GAD). However, there is only a small number of land plots agricultural and household officially registered in Chin state due to the limited presence of government staff (Reeves, 2015, p.5).

Customary upland plots for shifting cultivation or taung-yar are communally managed. There are some unresolved problematic land issues in Falam, particularly where the state government has transferred land ownership without consultation with the local communities. Falam has eight quarters; (Field Survey (2020) as seen in table). Seventy percent of civil servants were working at the administration sectors.

Table 1: Population and Quarters of Falam Town in 2019

| Ward | Male | Female | Total |
|-----------|------|--------|--------|
| Cimmual | 1518 | 1677 | 3195 |
| Balai | 1030 | 1154 | 2184 |
| Far Thawk | 858 | 987 | 1845 |
| Tlang lo | 1366 | 1479 | 2845 |
| Lai Zo | 127 | 158 | 285 |
| Lai Lun | 83 | 71 | 154 |
| Lung Pi | 476 | 496 | 972 |
| Za Lai | 352 | 380 | 732 |
| Total | 5810 | 6402 | 12,212 |

Note: Population and quarters of Falam Town in 2019, Survey Field

The table points out that Cimmual, Balai, and Far Thawk account for a quarter of Falam town. Cimmual ward has taken in more households after 2015 due to the environmental disaster (landslide) according to interview survey. Other quarters are included in the appendix of villages. Among the quarters, many Chin are pushed to leave their villages, because of difficulty in finding Jobs, poor skills and uneducated, poor knowledge for farming and agriculture in Tlang lo, Lai zo, Lai lun, Lung Pi, Za Lai wards. Most people in this area make their living from agriculture, which includes locally grown rice, maize, corn, millet, ben, vegetables; and apples, oranges, damsons and grapes are cultivated in the region and sent to other regions. "The town earns most of its income from the agricultural products. (Khin Saw New, 2015, p.7) Aid has been given to gardening, cultivation, mobile farms and permanent farms. Cotton weaving, weaving thatch for roofing, making traditional handicrafts of bamboo and rattan can be seen in Chin Hills".

Economic activities are mostly agriculture (vegetable and fruit production), livestock, weaving, small trade and seasonal labor work in Northern Chin State, and more than eighty percent of the households rely on agriculture- crops and livestock. Maize is an important food crop in the state. Most villagers in Falam town do not produce enough of their own maize to provide staple food. Villagers compensate for the lack of staple food by buying maize from adjacent lowlands from the sale of forest products, livestock, and cash crops such as fresh vegetables, Elephant Foot Yam, fruits, tuber crops, etc., and through wage labor. Villagers can't cope by consuming home-grown maize due to the frequent landslides in this area. Maize is also widely used for livestock feeding, especially for pigs for which

there is a good market. Hence maize is the second most important grain crop grown in the Falam. Furthermore, maize is also for daily consumption.

Traditional livelihoods are rooted in agriculture; usually corn, rice, upland shifting cultivation, or mobile farming with raising fowls and livestock. Deforestation and changes in rainfall and climate pose threats to productivity. Migration affects all the socioeconomic development of this area, it can be said that this situation creates increasing labor shortage problems. Moreover, migration of young people leads to labor shortage problems in various economic activities; for example, in agriculture because only the older people and women are left behind at home. In this case, they cannot provide the whole work of this area. In addition, it is difficult to hire laborers because young people have migrated. That impacts again to agriculture. This kind of situation sometime may also affect the socioeconomic development of this area.

Regarding food security, the Northern Chin State is representative of upland agriculture systems and the farming systems are based on rotational fallow method to allow time for the regeneration of soil fertility. Over the last twenty years, most of the villages have faced a marked reduction of the fallow period (from 15 years to 6-9 years) in their shifting cultivation systems, due to the increased pressure on agricultural lands. Consequently both natural resource management and agricultural production have been significantly affected. Most trading is with Kalay, Hakah, and transportation is moderately good but the Kalay- Falam road needs upgrading. According to the results from field survey, it can be found that people have been migrating because of the difficulties of agriculture which was sometimes due to climate instability, landslides and difficulties of land reclamation that made it not profitable.

Types of Migration

Migration can be permanent, temporary, voluntary or forced. It can be international or internal. Permanent migration is when someone moves from one place to another and has no plans to return to their original home. Temporary migration is limited by time. This could be for seasonal employment. Forced migration involves the migrant having no choice but to move. Voluntary migration is the opposite of this. International migration is when a person moves from one country to another country. Internal migration is when people migrate within the same country or region. According to the results from field survey, migrants have been migrating; mostly as voluntary migration because of the difficulties of agriculture which was sometimes due to climate instability. And then, there are often landslides leaving Chin people in a Food security situation. They found it difficult to meet their household needs. Thus, they migrated to India to look for work. Occasionally, some migrants from Cimmual, Far Thawk, Balai migrated for education and to use transit to other places/countries, for example, Malaysia, the United States.

The migrants find a social network through information from first migrants to their friends, relatives and neighbors. In this way, the new migrants follow the earlier migrants and link by social network. If a family member goes to a new destination, there is a connection to the area and a greater potential of numbers of migrants that will follow. This situation was attractive to other kin or friends leading to chain migration. In this area, he or she migrated to cross border where there are job opportunities and income for support to their families. They can send remittance to their family back home. This type of migration is labor migration. In conclusion, types of migration like labor migration, chain migration and temporary migration can all be found in this area.

“The International Labor Organization estimates that migrant workers accounted for 150 million or sixty-five percent of the world’s 232 million international migrants in 2013. Labor migration is generally defined as a cross-border movement for purposes of employment in a foreign country. Today, large numbers of Myanmar workers continue to be intra-regional, irregular, and low-skilled” (Griffith & Ito, 2016, p.14). From 1945 to 2000, of migrants have left the study area, 40% moved to India. According to interviews, most of the migrants are in working group ages between 18 and 45. They are labor migrants, mostly uneducated and coming from the suburbs. Migrant workers leave without travel documents and most travel illegally to the Indian state of Mizoram. (Maureen, 2013, p.6) stated that “migration is defined broadly to encompass the movement of human beings from their place of origin in order to reside in a new location, either temporarily or permanently”. Young men migrants go to India (Mizoram state) for economic reasons and return to their suburb in old age. India where more job opportunity can be expected than in their home land. This type of migration can be said to be temporary. Interviews with migrants pointed out that about eighty percent of young people migrated abroad to India.

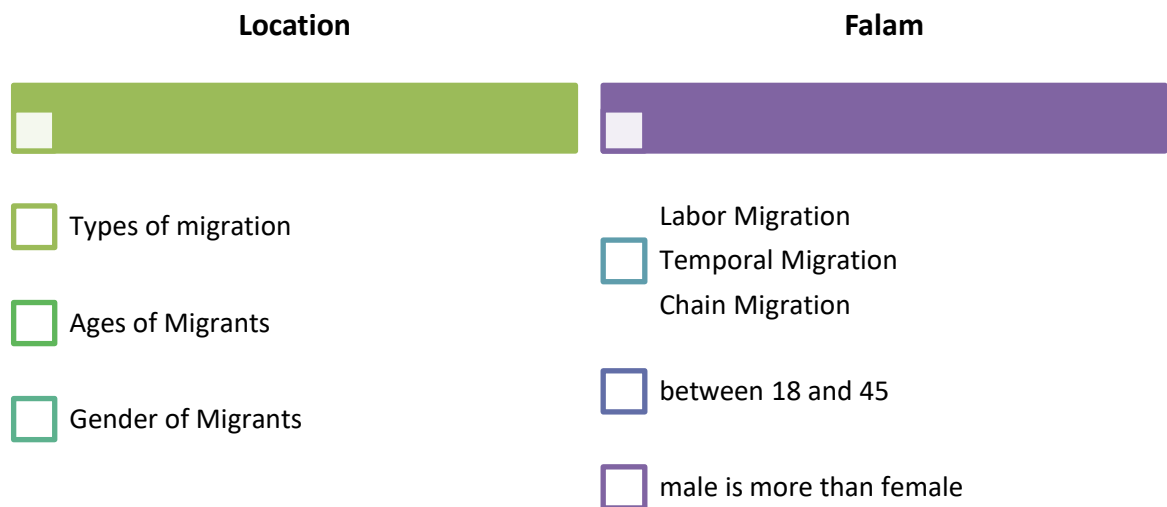


Figure 4: Causes of Migration: Push and Pull Factors of Migration

Migration is the movement of people from one place to live in another. Migration impacts on both the place left behind, and on the place where migrants settle. People have many reasons why they might want to move from one place to another. These reasons may be economic, social, political or environmental. For migration to take place there are usually push factors and pull factors at work. Push factors are the reasons that make someone decide to move. This is their own experience of life in one place which gives them good reasons to leave it. Often push factors are negative things such as unemployment, crop failure, droughts, flooding, war, poor education opportunities or poor services and lack of basic needs. On the other hand, pull factors are the expectations which attract people to the new place. They are usually positive things such as job opportunities, easy to get more money than native land, better education, environmental attraction and better living condition (Migration: Types and Reasons, n.d., para.1).

In this study, there are many kinds of push and pull factors. One of the push factors of migration of this area is unsatisfied basic needs, low wages and lack of job opportunities. In this area, income or salary is very low and it is impossible to support the family. Often, it is difficult to get a job and there is no alternative job as well. For example, there is often a landslide in this area. In this time, villagers do not cultivate the crops. They have no alternative jobs because they depend on the cultivation. In this situation, they start to migrate to other places to search for job opportunities. Thus, migration process can be found that migrant is related with the agriculture in this area. Mostly, Chin migrants in

India take up jobs in construction and service (domestic services, and trading). There are some push and pull factor can be shown in the following chart.

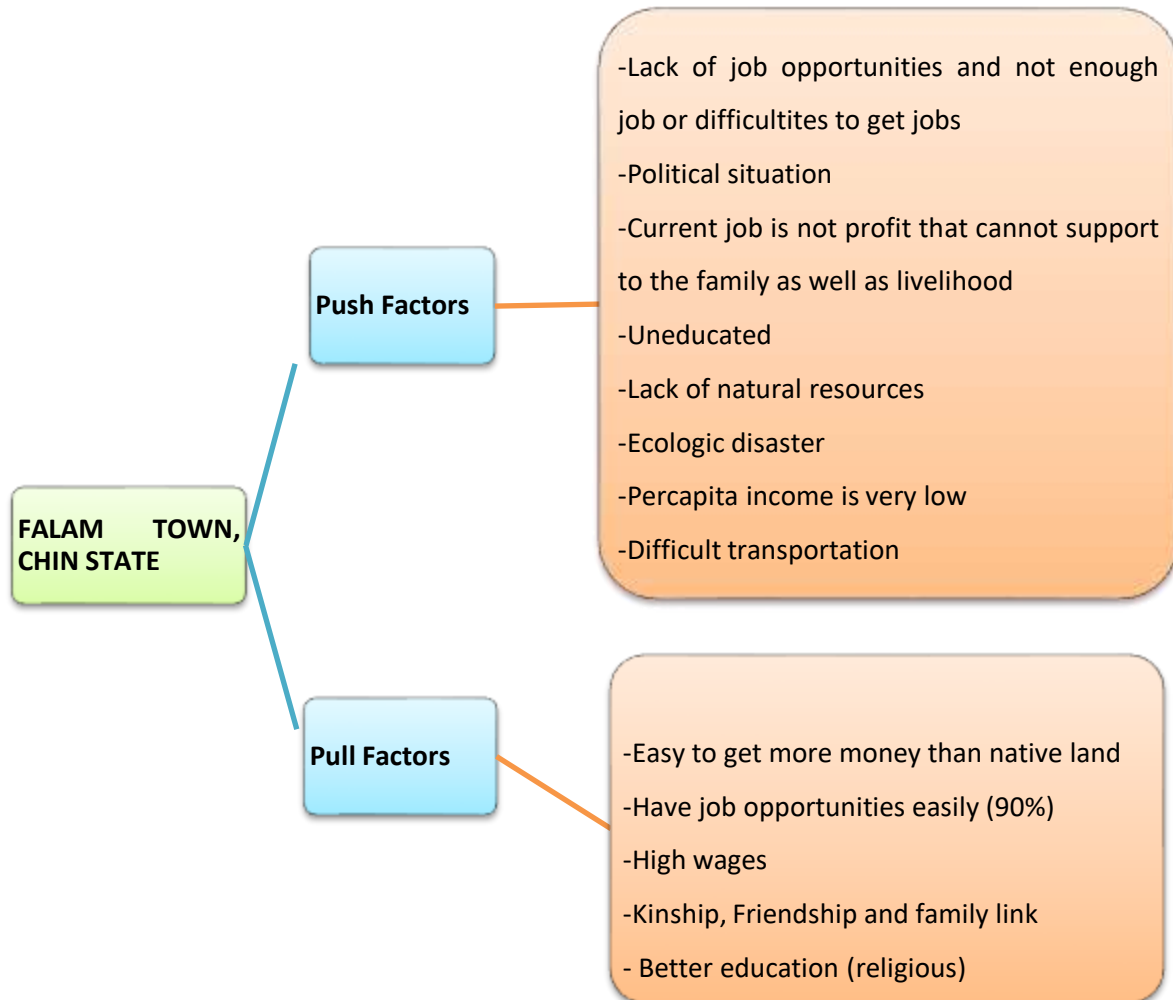


Figure 5: Push and pull factors

Cross-border migration of people from Myanmar to India has a long history spanning many decades. Economically, India has a pull factor being a destination where the border trade market needs unskilled workers in many sectors, including manufacturing and some service work, especially domestic and construction work. On the Myanmar (Chin State) side, slow economic growth, not enough food, uneducated, unemployment, poverty and environmental disaster such as landslides. Moreover, Myanmar was ruled by two military regimes between 1962 and 2010. According to Kyin Lam Maung (2015), many people migrated out of the native land. Some young men moved to Mizoram State, in India, where they could do wage-labor jobs for Mizo or Mara people throughout the periods.

Another push factor is the political situation. During the 1988 uprising, there were protests in many towns in Chin state. After the military regime took over, some Chin activists went to India. They formed a new insurgent force, the Chin National Front (CNF), to fight the Tatmadaw (Myanmar military). The Chin People of Burma: Unsafe in Burma, Unprotected in India, (2009) argued that “Chin community leaders and longtime residents in Mizoram estimate that 75,000 to 100,000 Chin from Myanmar live in Mizoram” (p.16). “The CNF charged taxes on each household, 5,000 kyats per year: for example, one village tract had to pay 250,000 kyats to 300,000 kyats. At the same time, Tatmadaw soldiers demanded the same amount that the villagers gave to the CNF. After 1988, if villagers could not afford to pay because of a poor harvest, they could postpone payment to CNF but not to the Tatmadaw soldiers. Economic and political hardship forced many Chins to flee to India” (Kyin Lam Maung, 2015, p.10). In fact; both the CNF and the Tatmadaw put pressure on the villagers.

After 2010, the Myanmar government reformed the country’s political and economic systems. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) marked Myanmar as one of the fastest-growing economies. “The current government of the National League for Democracy (NLD) has also committed to building Myanmar’s manufacturing and service sectors. To increase domestic employment opportunities and skills training programmes to equip the working population for the new jobs” (International Labor Organization, 2017, p.6). So, migration is decreasing year by year in Falam area.

Myanmar-India Borderland

Myanmar-India borderland consists of Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram in India and Chin, Sagaing Region and Kachin state in Myanmar. Indo- Myanmar has 1643 km of political boundary line situated in the conjunction of China, India and Myanmar. The borderland cultural, economic relations with contiguous Sagaing Region, Kachin and Chin state of Myanmar with Manipur, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh are likely to flourish in the 21st century. In addition, “the porous nature of the India-Myanmar border to helping insurgency and informal trade, also allows for the flow of illegal weapons and narcotics and of political and economic refugees from Myanmar into India” (Jacob, 2010, p.21). Due to the porous border and closeness of the Chin community living in Mizoram, it is impossible to accurately determine the number of Chin currently living in Mizoram. “Chin community leaders and long-time residents in Mizoram estimate that 75,000 to 100,000 Chin from Burma live in Mizoram” (The Chin People of Burma: Unsafe in Burma, Unprotected in India, 2009, p.17). The border marking Mizoram and Chin State is of relatively recent origin-it is a creation of British rule-and significant migration between Mizoram and Chin State continues. Sharing a common history, ethnic ancestry, and cultural practices, Chin State and Mizoram have had a long history of cordial border

relations. "Mizoram (India) is also a Christian State, On March 1998; there are 60,000 to 80,000 Chins from Chin State of Myanmar in Mizoram" (Songate, 2005, p. 122).

Thuzar Myint (2012) said that cross border migration in India was a complex issue and its dimensions were not only economic, political and social but also administrative and cartographic. At the Indo-Myanmar border, most of the illegal migrants were Chin and some Myanmar from Mandalay and a little from Dry Zone of Myanmar. Economic motivations underpinned the great majority of Chin and Myanmar migratory movements into India. The major causes for Chin illegal migrants into India were not because of poverty, but to get better job and to use India as a transit point to migrate into America. Among them, some of them migrated into India due to an occasional environmental disaster but all of them migrated into Mizoram because Mizoram was the one and only peaceful state among the seven states of Northeast India and the Mizo are of the same tribes as Chin (p.81).

Unlike other borders, this fifty km stretch of the Indo-Myanmar border is not only porous; it is open, albeit controlled. The Indo-Myanmar "Friendship Bridge" spans the Tiau River between the Mizoram village of Zokhawthar and Rih Lake in Chin State of Myanmar. A bridge spanning the Chin Hills of Myanmar to the Northeast Indian State of Mizoram is employed for the moving of goods and products from one nation-state to the other. The border town on the India side, Champhai, enjoys a thriving economy in legal trade. Chin traders sell their wares in Mizoram's markets including in its capital of Aizawl. According to Julien Levesque & Miza Zulfiqur Rahman (2019) ninety percent of Chin people control the border trade. The Mizo of India rely on these goods, some being brought all the way from China via Mandalay and Kalay. Goods from India are brought across the border into Myanmar as well. Like the Mizo, the Chin, as well as the Myanmar, rely on products from across the border. Chin people went to India (Mizo state) and worked as porters and hew planking workers, and one trip could earn them Rs. 50 or kyats 1000. Indeed, the Mizoram (India)-Chin State (Myanmar) border is in the form of barter trade (p.12).

Effect of Migrations

Since 2011, Myanmar has undertaken political, economic and social reform processes and has cooperated more actively and widely with regional and international organizations in relation to migration. Due to the reforms introduced by the Myanmar government, and the opening of the country, many irregular migrant workers want to return home to Myanmar, and this has become an option for many (Win Moh Moh Htay, 2016, p.16). According to interview, migrants were fewer due to political reform of Myanmar and they are working at the civil service of seventy percent, after 2010. In Falam area, migrants' remittances can be reinvested for economic activities. 70% of migrants can send remittances for constructing a new house for their family in Falam. For some migrants from Tlang

lo, Lai zo, Lai lun, Lung Pi, Za Lai wards who were formerly farmers, when they come back home they reinvest in commerce. They can reinvest in many kinds of economic activity from their remittances such as, services, agriculture (Source: Structured Interview Survey, 2020). Moreover, it can enhance the development of these wards if the migrants have new skills or education (knowledge) when they come back home. Some educated migrants went to India to be pastor.

The general election held on 8 November 2015, dramatically changed the political landscape of Myanmar. During the election campaign, the National League for Democracy (NLD) issued a document titled “Economic Strategy and Priorities: Stabilization, Liberalization, Institutionalization”, and released its five-prong strategy focused on (1) fiscal prudence, (2) reform of government, (3) revitalizing agriculture, (4) establishing monetary and financial stability, and (5) building critical infrastructure” (Beyond Economic Liberalization: New Policy Challenges For Myanmar, 2017, p.49).

Discussion

This area of migration patterns result from a complex interplay of economic and political factors. Chin ethnic normally work in Mizoram at any job as laborers, weavers, domestic workers, and tenant farmers. Some also work as subcontractors, arranging for Chin laborers to fulfill government contracts held by Mizos. The government of Mizoram hired some to do public projects, such as road construction. Among all States and Regions, Chin State is characterized by the highest poverty gap ratio, highest occurrence of food deficits, poor road connectivity, low population density but lowest percent availability of cultivable lands and high percentage of waste and scrub lands, adherence to the shifting cultivation system, lack of rural based industries, and higher rate of out migration. In order to pull the local people out of these traps, fundamental problems have to be addressed. Public goods such as infrastructure and electricity should receive priority for development. Without this development framework, attempts to address the issues of community development, food security, natural resources management and community empowerment will have no significant impact on the local communities. Until now there is a lack of agricultural techniques and knowledge, capital and a functioning marketing system to encourage permanent crops at Falam. In addition, market information is also lacking in the town.

Maize based farming system should be examined in terms of profitability, economic viability and resource management. At Falam, the Agricultural Technical School had been established and operated at Lon Pil ward. The school graduates have well served the needs of the agriculture sector of Chin Hills as well as other parts of the country. In addition, there should be upgrade and coordinated activities of the INGOs and local NGOs for integrated development programme. Accordingly, there should be a

strengthened and reorganized agricultural school focusing on the sloping land agriculture technology and natural resources management. Good agricultural practices should be offered to successful growers in attempt to enhance the competitiveness of the quality foods production. It should be aimed in advance for future export markets. Chin hills is ideally suited to organic food production. One of the influencing factors is often the landslides - daily occurrences in Chin State. Due to climate change, there is more heavy rain in Falam Town. The state should seek a way to reduce damage and to accommodate along with landslide. So, this area needs more cooperation and coordination between Geoscientists from local field and those from international network. The local community should try to consider what the potential for the economic development of this region is and how to promote it; and what the strengths and opportunities of this area are, etc. Furthermore, the government and local state authorities should collaborate for trying to promote and to upgrade living standards, which will also promote the socioeconomic development of this region.

Conclusion

Migration is movement involving a change of permanent or temporary residence. Most people move voluntarily for economic reasons. They may relocate for better-paying jobs or in search for opportunities in new areas or to escape from poverty or a low living standard. From 1962 to 1988, the main motivation for voluntary migration is political system and lack of job opportunities in this area, about ninety percent of migrants moved to India for economic purposes. After 2010, two percent of migrants moved to family to get permanent residence. Following the general election held in 2015 there have been economic and political changes which have brought an increase in foreign investment. So, less migrants because of good job opportunities in this area: increased government sectors, local private company, NGO and so on. Actually, Falam becomes as Development Township in Myanmar part of the changing of political system. Bordering with India, Falam can transport its products to the mainland. To some extent the native's socioeconomic is a developing town.

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