

CHAPTER V

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is solely based on the primary data collected from the field. The chapter starts with a descriptive statistic of different variables associated with the Bihari migrant labourers and also discusses their basic socio-economic profile. Further, the chapter tries to fulfil the first objective of the study, which is to understand the reason behind the migration of Bihari labourers to Assam and Sikkim. Of course, using secondary data, we have tried to address the objective briefly in the previous chapter as well. In this section, using primary data, a modest attempt is made to address the issue precisely.

Table 5.1 depicts that expenditure of a few migrants is reported to be zero. It is because the expenses of the few workers, especially the maid servants, are entirely borne by the employers that include the basic necessities of life like food, lodging, clothing, etc. In this chapter, socio-economic information of the migrant's family (household) including the family members left behind in Bihar (at the origin) is also stated. It may be possible that migrant himself/herself alone is working in the family and migrated for employment. Therefore, in some cases, number of working member(s) in the family of the migrant may be zero, if he/she is the sole bread earner in the family and migrated in NER. At the same time, household incomes of the migrants mentioned in this chapter do not include income of the migrant himself/herself. It is the income of the family member(s), other than the migrant himself/herself. If the migrant is the sole bread earner, his/her household income may be reported as zero. The same is also depicted in Table 5.1 as descriptive statistics of the variables. It has been drawn from the primary survey, collected from 350 sample

labourers migrated from Bihar to the two states of the NER (Assam with 200 sample and Sikkim with 150 samples).

5.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE SAMPLE MIGRANTS

Table 5.1: Descriptive statistics of the Bihari migrant labourers

Assam					
Variables	Obs.	Mean	Min	Max	Std. dev.
Age	200	32	12.00	72	10
No. of hours of work/day	200	10	3.00	14	2
Years of migration	200	8	0.08	25	6
Average monthly expenditure	200	6942	0.00*	24400	3568
Average Monthly savings	200	5240	0.00	20000	2687
Average Monthly income	200	12182	2100.00	29500	4733
Average percentage of savings to income	200	43.60	0	100	16.67
No. of working member in family	200	1	0.00**	3	1
No. of Dependent in family	200	6	2.00	11	2
Number of children	200	3	0.00	8	2
School/college goers in family	200	2	0.00	6	1
Household income	200	2854	0.00***	30800	4910
Sikkim					
Variables	Obs.	Mean	Min	Max	Std. dev.
Age	150	29	10.00	60	11
No. of hours of work/day	150	11	6.00	14	2
Years of migration	150	8	0.08	25	7
Average monthly expenditure	150	8188	0.00*	27600	6478
Average monthly savings	150	7421	0.00	25000	3574
Average monthly income	150	15609	2000.00	48500	7638
Average percentage of savings to income	150	38.60	0	100	24.18
No. of working member in family	150	1	0.00**	4	1
No. of Dependent in family	150	6	2.00	12	2
Number of children	150	3	0.00	6	1
School/college goers in family	150	2	1.00	5	1
Household income	150	2487	0.00***	20000	3896

Source: Field Survey

*Total expenditure may be '0' when expenditure of the migrant/respondent (mostly domestic servant) is entirely borne by the employer.

**No. of working members in the family implies the member(s) working other than the migrant/respondent himself/herself in the family.

***Household income does not include income of the migrant/respondent.

The mean age of migrants in Assam is 32 years, whereas it is lower in Sikkim, measured as 29 years. Bihari migrants in Sikkim normally work for longer hours in a day vis-à-vis in Assam (9 hours a day in Assam and 10 hours in a day in Sikkim). Noticeably, on an average, the time of migration in both the states is 8 years. As of the daily/monthly expenditure, it can be seen that on an average, a Bihari migrant in Sikkim spends more than their counterpart in Assam, estimated at monthly expenditure of Rs 6942 in Assam and Rs 8188 in Sikkim. Likewise, the savings and income differ in the same manner in these states. But Bihari migrants in Assam save around 43.60 percent of the total income which is only 38.60 percent for the Bihari migrants in Sikkim. Most of the migrants' accompanying family members at the destination stay at home, and on an average, one member of the family at the destination, other than the migrant himself is found to be working. The average number of dependent family members for the migrants in both the states is 6 and average number of children is 3. As discussed above, about the household income, the migrants in Sikkim have lower monthly income vis-à-vis their counterpart in Assam.

5.3 AGE DISTRIBUTION

Figure 5.1: Age-group distribution of the migrants (in %)

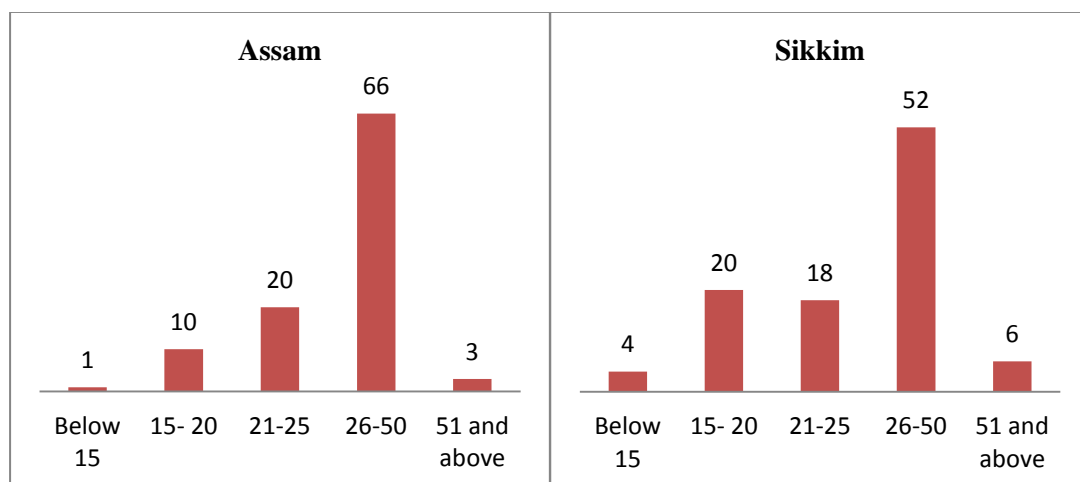


Figure 5.1 shows the age distribution of the migrants in Assam and Sikkim. It is evident that majority of the migrants in both the states fall in the age category of 26-50 years. Also, on an average, majority of migrants are found to have belonged to the 15 to 50 years age group. In Sikkim, it is observed that 24 percent of migrants are less than 20 years of age. Of the total, 4 percent of the respondents are below 15 years who belong to the category of child labours according to the Indian labour law.

5.4 MARITAL STATUS

Table 5.2: Marital status of the migrants

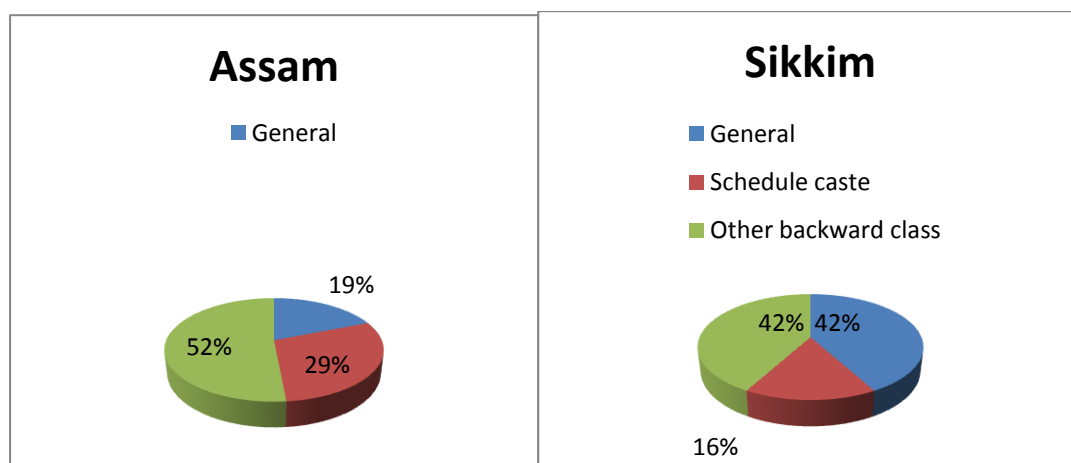
Marital status	Assam	Sikkim
Unmarried	26 (13)	57 (38)
Married	174 (87)	93 (62)
Total	200 (100)	150 (100)

Source: Primary survey

Note: Figures in parentheses are the percentages of the total.

5.5 SOCIAL CATEGORY

Figure 5.2: Social category of the migrants (in %)



In Table 5.2, it is found that most of the Bihari migrants in both the states are married. Of the total, 87 per cent and 62 per cent of the respondent in Assam and

Sikkim respectively are married. As of the caste category of the respondents, Figure 5.2 grouped the migrants into different castes as— general, schedule caste and backward castes (no scheduled tribe respondent was found in the primary survey). In Assam, majority of the Bihar migrant labourers are belonged to Other Backward Classes (OBC), estimated at 52 percent, followed by 29 percent of scheduled caste (SC). In the third category, 19 percent of migrant labourers are belonged to general castes. In the case of Sikkim, the scenario is slightly different. Only 19 per cent of the respondents are belonged to SC category. While majority of the respondents are from the general and OBC categories, estimated at 42 per cent each of the total respondent.

5.6 RELIGIOUS STRUCTURE

Figure 5.3: Religious structure of the migrants (in %)

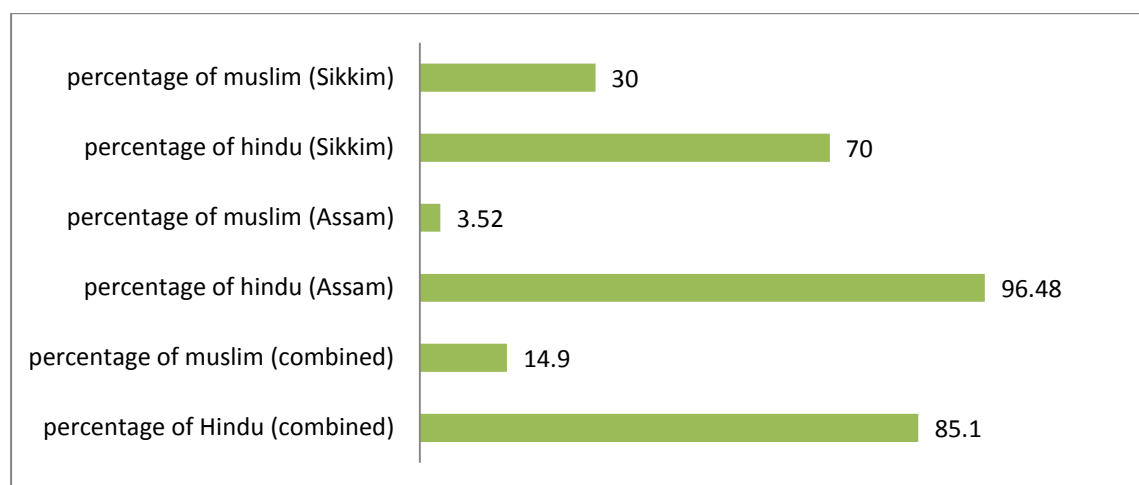
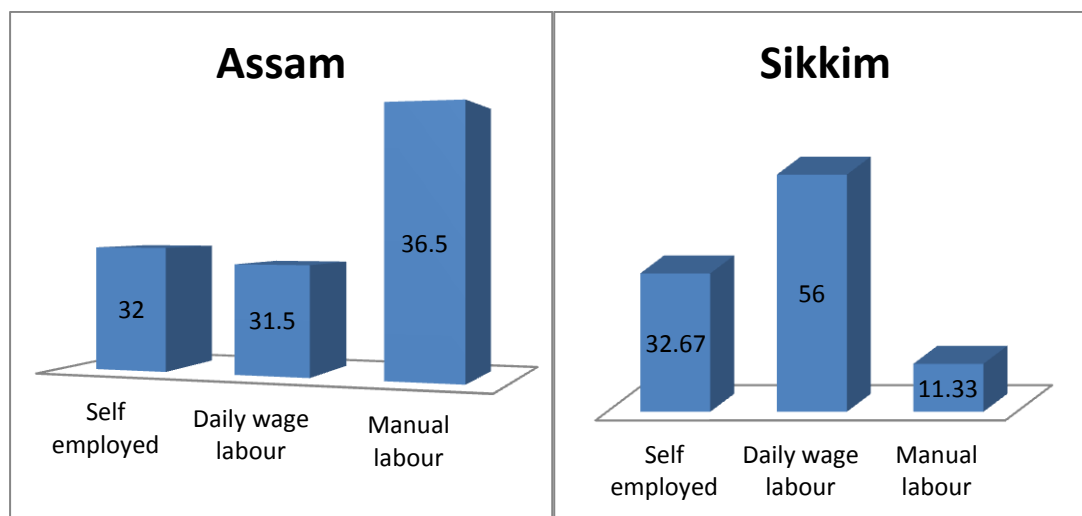


Figure 5.3 reveals that only one religious group, the Hindu, dominates the Bihari labourer migrants in these two states. In Assam, around 97 percent of the respondents are Hindu and around 4 percent are Muslims. While in Sikkim, 30 per cent and 70 per cent of the Bihari immigrants are found to be Muslim and Hindu respectively. When we combine the two states together, 15 per cent and 85 per cent of the respondents are turned out to be Muslim and Hindu respectively.

5.7 OCCUPATIONAL STRUCTURE

Figure 5.4: Occupational structure of the migrants



As of the occupational structure of the Bihari migrants, most of them are involved in the blue collared jobs. Most of the migrants are found to be worked as rickshaw pullers, cart pullers, vegetable/fruit sellers/hawkers, electricians, plumbers, washer man, construction workers, helpers in shop, etc. As it is depicted in Figure 5.4 and the categories classified in the methodology section, the migrants are mainly categorised in three categories as— self-employed, daily/monthly wage labour and manual labour. In Assam, around 37 percent of them are found to be manual labours, followed by self-employed and daily wage labourers consist of 32 per cent of the total Bihari labourer migrants. In Sikkim, the situation is quite different. Around 11 per cent of the respondents are found to be manual labourers and 56 percent of them are turned out to be daily wage labourers. In term of self-employed category, it consists of 33 per cent in Sikkim vis-a-vis 32 per cent in Assam.

Table 5.3: Occupational structure across different age groups

Age group	Assam			Sikkim		
	Self employed	Daily wage labour	Manual labour	Self employed	Daily wage labour	Manual labour
<15	1 (1.56)	1 (1.58)	0 (0)	0 (0)	5 (5.95)	1 (5.88)
15-20	2 (3.12)	13 (20.63)	5 (6.84)	5 (10.20)	25 (29.76)	0 (0)
21-25	8 (12.5)	18 (28.57)	14 (19.17)	10 (20.40)	16 (19.04)	1 (5.88)
26-50	51 (79.68)	28 (44.44)	53 (72.60)	31 (63.26)	33 (39.28)	15 (88.23)
51 <	2 (3.125)	3 (4.76)	1 (1.36)	3 (6.12)	5 (5.95)	0 (0)
Total	64 (100)	63 (100)	73 (100)	49 (100)	84 (100)	17 (100)

Source: Primary Field Survey.

Note: Figures in parentheses are the percentages of the total.

As of the occupational structure across different age groups, Table 5.3 shows that the migrants less than 15 years are either daily wage labourer or manual labourers both in Sikkim and Assam. The picture is more or less same in Assam, in the case of the age group between 15-20 years. While in Sikkim, around 10 percent of the migrants are found to be self-employed and 30 per cent of the sample is found to be daily wage labourers under the 15-20 years of age group. In Assam, 28.57 percent of the migrants in Assam in 21-25 years age group are found to be daily wage labourer, whereas 20.40 percent migrants in the same age group are turned out to be self-employed. Majority of migrants in both states belonged to 26-50 years age group and are found to be self-employed. It is also corroborated from the data that the senior and the migrants stayed relatively longer periods in the destination are found to be self-employed. There are very less number of migrants belonged to the age category of 51 years and above, and 4.76 percent and 5.95 percent of the total migrants are daily wage labourers in Assam and Sikkim respectively.

5.8 PREVIOUS OCCUPATION

Figure 5.5: Previous occupation of the migrants

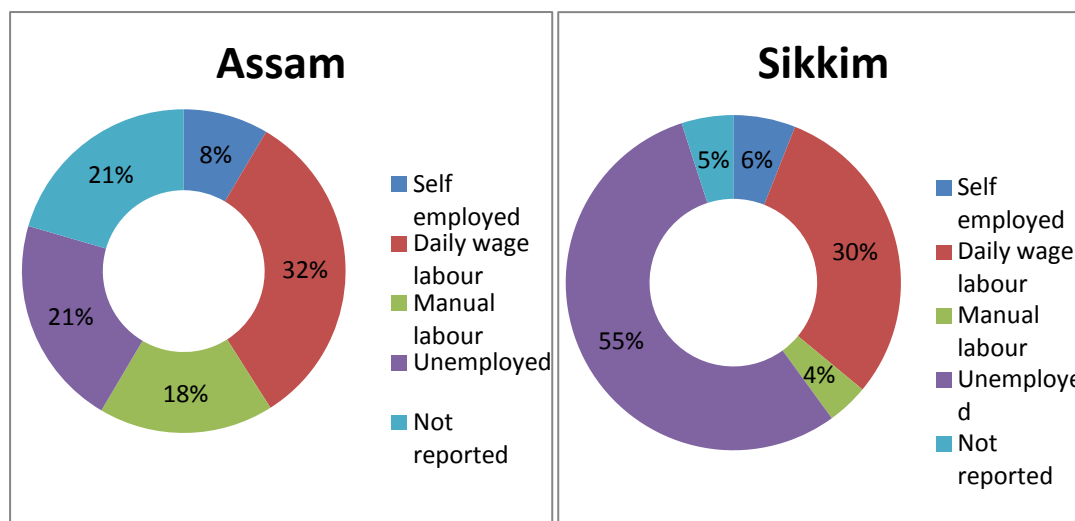
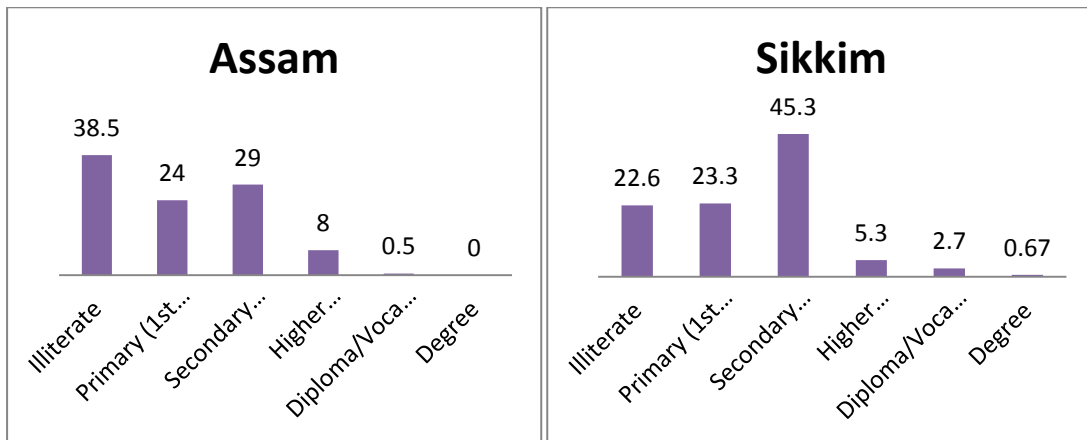


Figure 5.5 reports occupational structure of the migrants at the origin before migrating to Sikkim and Assam. Majority of the respondent/migrants coming to Sikkim, estimated at 55 per cent had been unemployed at the origin, in Bihar, before migrating to Sikkim. Around 30 per cent of them were daily wage earners before coming to Sikkim, while around 6 per cent and 4 per cent were found to be self-employed and manual labourers respectively. In Assam, 32 percent of the migrants are reported to be daily wage labourers at the origin, 21 percent reported to be unemployed and 21 percent also reported to be self-employed before coming to Assam. 18 percent worked as manual labourers.

5.9 EDUCATIONAL STATUS

Figure 5.6: Educational status of the migrants

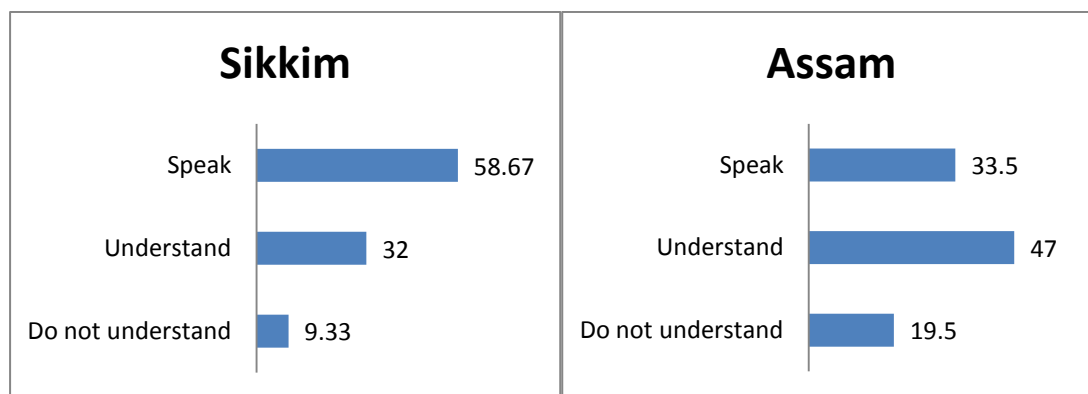


In terms of educational attainment of the migrant labourers, as expected, the overall educational attainment of the migrant labourers was found to be very low. As given in the Figure 4.6, around two-fifth of the Bihari migrants in Assam, estimated at 39 percent is found to be illiterate. While in Sikkim, only one-fifth of the migrants are turned out to be illiterate, estimated at 23 per cent of the total. Of course, higher educated migrants are not expected in the informal sector, and understandably, a very few migrants are found to be attained higher education in this study as well. In Assam, of the total migrants 24 per cent and 29 per cent of them are found to be attained primary and secondary education respectively. Hardly, 8 per cent of the migrants are found to have attained higher secondary education (up to 12th standard) level and negligible or no higher educated Bihari migrant is found in informal sector. In Sikkim, around 45 percent of the Bihari migrants were found to have attained secondary education, 23.3 percent are found to have attended schooling up to class 5th standard. We understand that the migrants in Sikkim are somewhat better in terms of literacy, but the number of Bihari migrant attained education beyond class 12th

standard has been very limited. Therefore, they end up working in the informal sector with negligible/zero scope of shifting in the formal sector.

5.10 KNOWLEDGE OF LOCAL LANGUAGE

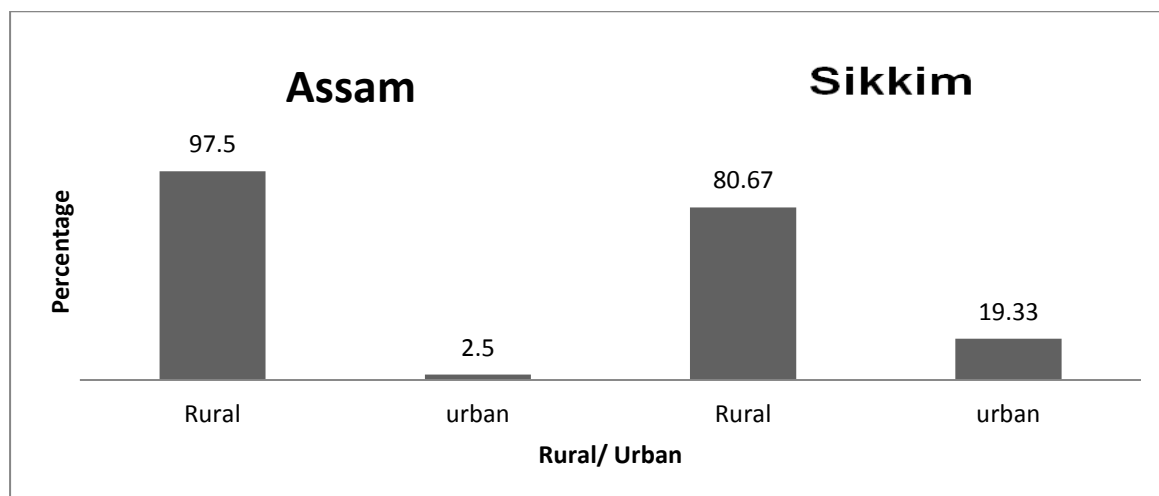
Figure 5.7: Knowledge of local language in Assam and Sikkim



Knowing local language is one of important factors for availing benefits of the provided by the state and local administration. Well versed with local language help them to adjust and cope with the adversities at the destination. Knowing local language is also an indicator of the migrant’s stay for a longer period in that area. As given in the Figure 5.7, in Sikkim, around 59 percent of the migrants reported to be able to speak local language (Nepali), where as in Assam, hardly 34 percent of the migrants can speak local language. Many migrants cannot speak local language but can understand, 32 percent and 47 percent of the Bihari migrants can understand the local language in Sikkim and Assam respectively. In Assam, 19.5 percent of the migrants (sample respondent) do not understand the local language. Comparing to Sikkim, it is quite a higher number where 9.33 percent of the Bihari migrant (sample respondent) do not understand the local language.

5.11 ORIGIN OF MIGRANTS

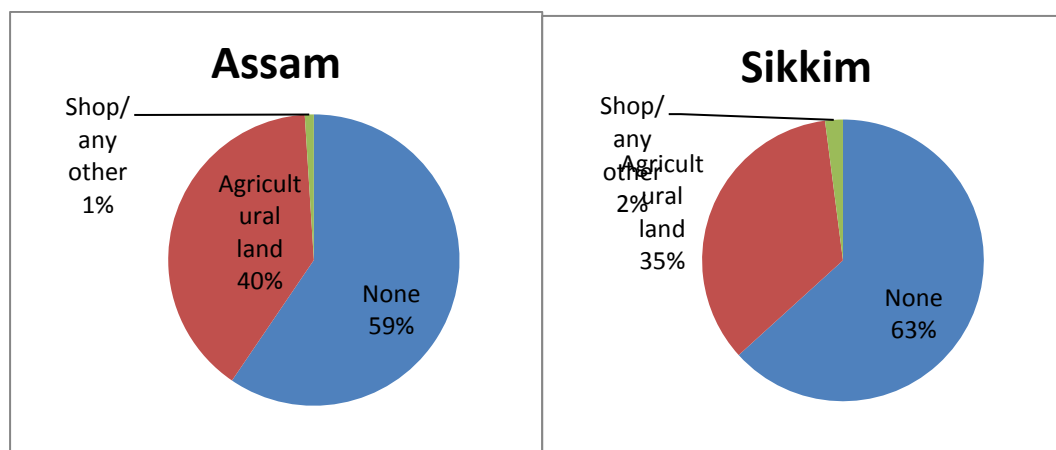
Figure 5.8: Rural-urban origin of the migrants



It is clearly specified in Figure 5.8 that most the migrants coming from Bihar to Sikkim and Assam are found to be rural origin. To be very accurate, 98 per cent and 81 per cent of the migrants in Assam and Sikkim respectively were turned out to be rural origin. While, 3 per cent and 19 percent of the migrants in Assam and Sikkim respectively are found to be urban origin.

5.12 LAND/BUILDING OWNERSHIP

Figure 5.9: Land/Building ownership of the migrants



As we can see from Figure 5.9, around 59 per cent and 63 per cent of the migrants in Assam and Sikkim respectively are landless at the origin in Bihar. In other words, no income generating property like shop, building, industry, etc. was found to have owned by the majority of the migrants. However, around 40 per cent and 35 per cent of the migrants in Assam and Sikkim respectively reported to have owned agricultural land at home, in Bihar. Of course, most of the migrants who owned agricultural land at the origin were happened to be marginal and small farmers.

5.13 YEARS OF MIGRATION

Table 5.4: Years of migration

Period of migration	Assam	Sikkim	Combined
Less than one year	32 (16.00)	30 (20.00)	62 (17.71)
1.1- 3 years	34 (17.00)	20 (13.33)	54 (15.43)
3.1- 6 years	34 (17.00)	29 (19.33)	63 (18)
6.1- 10 years	46 (23.00)	21 (14.00)	67 (19.14)
10 years and above	54 (27.00)	50 (33.33)	104 (29.71)
Total	200 (100)	150 (100)	350 (100)

Source: Primary Field Survey

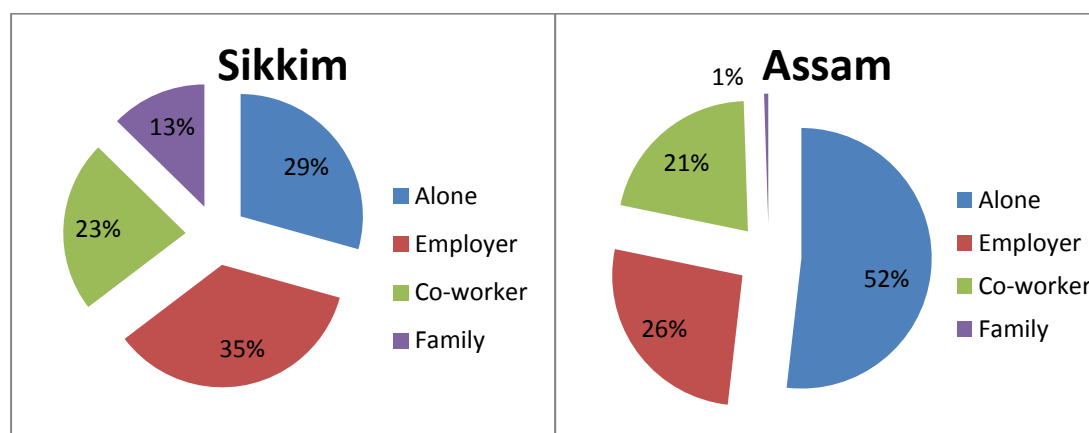
Note: figures in parenthesis are percentage to absolute numbers

As far as duration of years of migration of the labourers is concerned, Table 5.4 shows that 30 per cent of the migrants from Bihar have been staying in NER for more than 10 years. In the case of individual states, 27 per cent and 33 per cent of the Bihari migrants are staying in Assam and Sikkim respectively for more than 10 years. Around 23 per cent and 14 per cent of the migrants in Assam and Sikkim respectively are found to be staying between 6 to 10 years. 17 percent of the migrants have stayed

in Assam for more than 3 years but less than 6 years, and in the same category, 19.33 percent of them were found in Sikkim. For the duration of stayed at destination for more than 1 year to 3 years, 17 percent and 13.33 percent of them were found in Assam and Sikkim respectively. In the previous chapter, we found from the secondary data that the number of short-term migrants was found to be more in Assam vis-à-vis in Sikkim. A similar kind of response has also been observed by the primary data. However, 16 per cent and 20 per cent of them were found to be staying less than 1 year in Assam and Sikkim respectively.

5.14 TYPE OF STAY

Figure 5.10: Type of stay at present



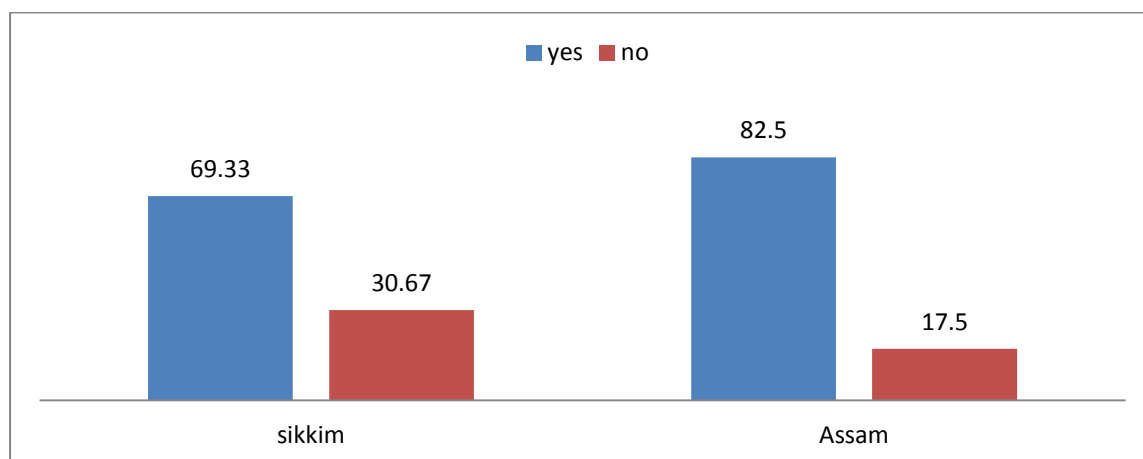
When the labourers migrate to a new place/destination they face number of problems that include environment, social and economic hardship. Hence, it is observed that most of the migrants do not bring their family with them in the initial stage. After understanding and settling at the destination, they tend to bring their family members that include spouse, parents and children. However, it is slightly difficult for the short term migrants and casual workers whose earning is very meagre.

Therefore, the types of migrants included in this study do leave their family and parents at their native place.

From the Figure 5.10 we can see that only 1 percent of the Bihari migrant in Assam do bring their family with them. However, 13 percent of them stay with family in Sikkim. This indicates that most of the migrants stay alone at the destination. When we see state-wise, 29 percent and 52 percent of the migrants in Sikkim and Assam stay alone. Around 35 per cent and 26 per cent of the migrants in Sikkim and Assam respectively are provided accommodation by the employers. It also indicates that these types of migrant are casual labourers and belonged to very low income group. Many migrants stay with their friends, relatives or co-workers in order to reduce the expenditure at destination. 23 percent and 21 percent of the Bihari migrants stay with their co-workers in Sikkim and Assam respectively.

5.15 MAIN BREAD EARNER OF THE FAMILY

Figure 5.11: Main bread earner of the family



When we ask whether the migrants are the main bread earner or not, most of them are found to be the main earning member in the family. To estimate accurately,

around 69 per cent and 83 percent of the immigrants in Sikkim and Assam respectively are found to be the head of the family and main bread earner.

5.16 REASONS/ FACTORS FOR MIGRATION

Several factors are responsible for a person to migrate to new places. To identify whether the migrants are driven by the pull-push factor or network factor, a thorough investigation is needed. As discussed in the methodology section, a weighted score (index) has been used to understand the major factor(s) responsible for migration. In order to calculate the weighted score for every individual, out of the alternative reasons given, the first, second and third are assigned score as three, two and one respectively (method for assigning weight is given in the methodology section). Finally, for each reason, the total weighed score was calculated and ranked them orderly. Also, in order to understand the factors influencing the Bihari migrant labourers to choose Assam or Sikkim as their destination, all the factors have been divided in to 3 main categories— the push factor, the pull factor and the social network. The three categories have been extensively discussed in various past literatures.

Table 5.5: Reasons for migration

Reason for migration to Assam										
Main factors	Specific Reasons/ Factors	1st priority	weightage	2nd priority	weightage	3rd priority	weightage	weightage	Rank	Overall Rank
Push	Landlessness at home	24	72	9	18	4	4	94	V	I
	Jobless/ Unemployment	85	255	24	48	1	1	304	I	
	Financial crisis at home	32	96	84	168	35	35	299	II	
	Inadequate income	30	90	26	52	5	5	147	IV	
	Others 2 (Push factors)	4	12	1	2	7	7	14	VII	
Pull	For higher social status	3	9	10	20	12	12	41	VI	III
	Impressed by city life	4	12	10	20	9	9	41	VI	
	Others 1 (Pull factors)	0	0	0	0	2	2	4	VIII	
Social Network	Friends/ Relatives/ acquaintances	18	54	36	72	55	55	181	III	II
Reasons for migration to Sikkim										
Main Factors	Specific Reasons/ Factors	1st priority	weightage	2nd priority	weightage	3rd priority	weightage	Weightage	Rank	Overall Rank
Push	Landlessness at home	12	36	8	16	1	1	53	V	I
	Jobless/Unemployment	46	138	15	30	1	1	169	II	
	Financial crisis at home	36	108	38	76	15	15	199	I	
	Inadequate income	20	60	16	32	7	7	99	IV	
	Others 2 (Push factors)^	6	18	7	14	4	4	21	VII	
Pull	Higher social status	3	9	12	24	17	17	50	VI	III
	Impressed by city life	2	6	16	32	15	15	53	V	
	Others 1 (Pull factors)#	5	15	2	4	2	2	21	VII	
Social Network	Friends/ Relatives/ acquaintances	20	60	31	62	26	26	148	III	II

Source: Primary field survey

#includes factors like natural calamities (flood, draught), Family conflicts, conflicts with people in neighbourhood, village

^ includes factors like good weather, nearby home

From Table 5.5, we first see the specific factors and understand the important factors that influenced Bihari labourers to migrate to Assam. It has been seen that the ‘unemployment/joblessness’ at home/origin, followed by the ‘financial crisis at home’ are the major factors that influenced to migrate the most. On the contrary, in Sikkim, the ‘financial crisis at home’ is the most influencing factor vis-a-vis others to migrate from Bihar, followed by ‘unemployment/joblessness’. As given in the conceptual framework, the factors relating to unemployment and financial crisis at home belong to ‘push factor’. The third most important specific reason, as per rank-wise, is ‘friends and relatives/social network’ at the destination. The friends, relatives and acquaintances at destination facilitate the new migrants in many ways, for instance, providing information, help in settling initially at the new place, finding a job and many others. Once an aspirant migrant gets confidence of assured help at the destination, he chooses the place fearlessly. For choosing the two NER states, same kind of mechanism works for many respondents. In the fourth position, in Assam and Sikkim, ‘inadequate income in the previous occupation’ is placed in order of priority. ‘Landlessness at home’ also seems to be other significant reason in order of priority. We understand that specific reasons like to attain higher status and impressed by the city life have very little significance in influencing Biharis to migrate. There are many other specific factors that include the factors like natural calamities (flood, draught), family conflicts, conflicts with the neighbours/village or society is clubbed under the push factors. In the past many decades, several areas of Bihar had faced massive floods and deadly draughts, which badly affected the livelihood of the poor peasants and driven people to leave their native places. Many of the migrants reported that the natural calamities, which caused loss of lives and incapability of the government to provide them with the required help. This, in turn, made poor Biharis

to migrate. Apart from this, migrants reported about the conflicts and differences with relatives, friends, neighbours and lack of employers, which forced them to migrate. There are also a few pull factors like good weather, economic opportunity at destination which has attracted the labourers of Bihar to choose the two states. Sikkim is known for good weather because to its topographical condition and location. Likewise Assam does not have extreme weather condition like Bihar. From the Table 5.5 we understand that the push factor dominates over the pull factor. Social network is the second most influencing factor for the Bihari migrants coming to Assam and Sikkim.

Furthermore, the responses of the Bihari migrants in Assam and Sikkim were recorded as multiple entries for reason of migration and have been calculated in percentage form. This was done to see to how frequently is the stated reasons for migration are marked by the labourers. This is done for overall migrants in both the states Assam and Sikkim.

Table 5.6: Frequency of Factors for Migration

Reasons for migration	Count	Percent (in %)	Cases (in %)
Financial crisis at home	236	67.4	26.2
Friends and social network	187	53.4	20.8
Joblessness or Unemployment	168	48.0	18.6
Inadequate income in the previous occupation	101	28.9	11.2
Landlessness	59	16.9	6.5
To attain higher social status	57	16.3	6.3
Impressed by the city life	57	16.3	6.3
Others [#]	36	10.3	4.0
Total	350	--	100

Source: Field Survey

includes factors like natural calamities (flood, draught), Family conflicts & conflicts with people in neighbourhood, village, good weather, nearby home.

In Table 5.6, out of 350 respondents 236(67.4 percent) of them reported to have financial crisis at home and that was one of major reasons to migrate. Of the total reasons identified, financial crisis got share of 26.20. Social network is reported by almost 53.40 per cent migrants as one of the reason of migration and found as second prominent factor with 20.8 per cent proportional share among the 8 reasons of migration .48 percent of the people reported unemployment in the native or village for migration, which gets 18.6 percent proportional share. In a similar manner all other factors are explained. Pull factors like attaining higher social status and impressed with city life was reported by 16.3 percent of the total cases and sustained 6.3 percent proportion out all reasons respectively.

Hence, it can be concluded that the major reasons that influence migration from Bihar to the two north-eastern states: Sikkim and Assam, are the push factors. The adverse conditions at the native place were extensively discussed in the previous section of the thesis, supported by previous literature and it was found to be most influencing factor for migration from Bihar. Apart from this, the Bihari migrants, especially the recently migrated or casual labourers, are attracted to these two states because of the social network they had from the previously settled Bihari migrants. They act as agents and support system for the new migrants.

5.17 PREVIOUS MIGRATION EXPERIENCE

The study has also tried to find out that whether the migrants came directly to the NER (Assam or Sikkim) or migrated to other places as well before coming to the present destination. Generalizing the situation, it is observed that people tend to migrate to various places when they already got some contacts, i.e., when they have relatives or friends whom they know well and who could help them in finding a job, a

place to stay and so on, at least, in the initial days of migration. Most of the Bihari migrants included in this study, had migrated to other places before they came to the present destination— Assam and Sikkim. Many of the rural origin migrants reported that they first had stayed at a place near to their village and then chose to travel to urban area. Conway (1980) termed this kind of migration as step-wise migration. Around 45 percent of the respondents were found to have been this kind (see Table 5.7).

5.18 PRIOR MIGRATION EXPERIENCE

Table 5.7: Prior Migration Experience

Response	Count
Yes	157 (44.85)
No	193 (55.14)

Source: Primary Field survey

Note: Figures in parenthesis are percentage to absolute numbers

The present study indicates that the majority of migrants had an aspiration to go to metropolitan cities before coming to these two states (Assam and Sikkim). The places like, Delhi, Mumbai, Ahmadabad, Bangalore are major cities that the migrants aspired to go. Preferentially, in the second option, the migrants were longing for the metropolitan centres like Chandigarh, Kanpur, Lucknow, etc. Many of the migrants also revealed that they had worked in the bigger cities of the country before coming to NER, but they could not achieve the goals or survive in the previous destination, and that compelled them to go back to their native villages. We can conclude that factors that govern migration is very complex in nature and are beyond control of the migrant himself.

The migrants reported several reasons for leaving their previous destination before coming to NER. This might be indirectly related to the choice of current place of migration (Sikkim and Assam). Therefore, the reported reasons are discussed below in Table 5.8.

Table 5.8: Reasons for Leaving Previous Destination before coming to NER

Reasons	Assam					Sikkim				
	1st reason	weightage	2nd reason if any	weightage	Total	1st reason	weightage	2nd reason if any	weightage	Total
Medical/health problems	11	22	--	0	22	5	10	--	0	10
Expensive place	3	6	--	0	6	6	12	2	2	14
Lower wage/income	27	54	8	8	62	15	30	--	0	30
The city/place was not good	24	48	2	2	50	13	26	3	3	29
Work load more term got over	9	18	--	0	18	3	6	6	6	12
Far distant from native	6	12	1	1	13	6	12	--	0	12
Fight with employer/colleagues	3	6	2	2	8	10	20	--	0	20
Couldn't get a job there	4	8	--	0	8	0	0	--	0	0
Others*	4	8	--	0	8	0	0	--	0	0
Others*	8	16	--	0	16	0	0	--	0	0
Total	99	198	13	13	211	58	116	--	0	116

Source: Primary survey data

*Others include bad weather, very young that time, unsafe work environment, relatives called him back.

Several factors are responsible for leaving the previous place for the migrants. Table 5.8 clarified that the migrants could not find suitable jobs in the previous destination. Most of them were paid low wages or received low income (if self-employed). They felt disadvantaged as the payment/wages did not match with their work. Due to the lower wages/income, they did not like the city/place. The third reason according to rank-wise is, 'the adverse health condition' at the previous destination. Distance also plays a major role in deciding the place of destination. Since these migrants are the main bread earners in the family and major decision maker at home, paying visit to home is an important responsibility of the migrant labourers. Likewise, few other reasons stated by the migrants like the destination place was expensive, fight or conflict with the previous employer, could not get a job are also reported. These reasons might have played a major role in deciding the present place of destination (Sikkim and Assam) positively. It can be therefore concluded that quest for better jobs has been the main reason why the respondents left the previous place of migration.

5.19 MIGRANTS' IMAGES OF ASSAM/SIKKIM BEFORE THEIR COMING

Images/knowledge of the place where they intend to migrate play a crucial role in motivating the people to migrate to those places. But is also evident that few migrants may not have any prior knowledge about the place they have chosen for migration. The same procedure which was followed to understand the reasons of migration according to rank previously is applied here (method discussed for reasons of migration in methodology section, p. 31). During the survey, out of 200 respondents in Assam and 150 respondents in Sikkim, 4 and 9 migrants respectively stated that had no thoughts about the place. In the survey, five images were reported by the

migrants of what they thought of destination before coming here. From Table 5.9 Majority of Bihari migrants in Assam believed that they would receive support and assistance from the friends and relatives whereas in Sikkim majority of migrants expected that getting a job would be easier here. The third most rated image according to the ranking is that, they thought will get better options of employment at Assam and Sikkim. It indicates that many migrants have had the experience of low paying jobs or jobs which they were unwilling to do so they came with the expectation to find better jobs. Many migrants also had an image that the destination is a good city to stay before arriving here.

Table 5.9: Images of the present destination before arriving

Images	Assam							Sikkim						
	1 st	Weightage	2nd	Weightage	3rd	Weightage	Total	1st	Weightage	2nd	Weightage	3rd	Weightage	Total
Getting a job would be easy here.	74	222	40	80	6	6	308	58	174	6	12	1	1	187
Getting a better job than the previous destination	30	90	45	90	3	3	183	21	63	24	48	1	1	112
Expecting support from friends and relatives.	73	219	60	120	16	16	355	40	120	27	54	7	7	181
Good city to stay	16	48	26	52	25	25	125	19	57	45	90	17	17	164
Others*	3	9	2	4	1	1	14	3	9	3	6	0	0	15

Source: Primary field survey

*Others include (Fearful/ afraid of the destination; the weather conditions are good, so they will have pleasant; they will pleased to stay here)

5.20 MODE OF REACHING TO DESTINATION

Figure 5.12: Mode of reaching to destination (Assam and Sikkim)

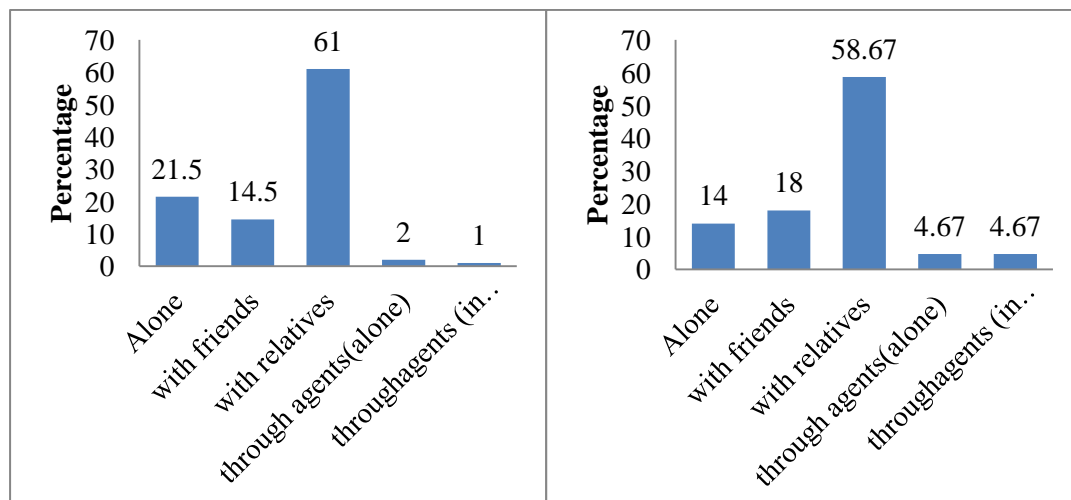


Figure 5.12 (left/first one is Assam and right/2nd one is Sikkim) shows how migrants reached at the destination. It can be seen from the Figure 5.12 that most of the migrants were accompanied with their relative or known family members when they first migrated to NER. To be very precise, 61 percent and 58.67 percent in Assam and Sikkim respectively migrated with their relatives when they first come. While, 21.5 percent Bihari migrants in Assam were found to have migrated alone to the destination and only 14 percent came alone in Sikkim. Sometimes, agents who work as link between origin and destination operate to bring the migrants to NER. These agents sometimes travel with the new migrants to the destination, around 10 percent in Sikkim and 3 percent migrants in Assam travel with these agents for the 1st time (alone or in groups).

5.21 REMITTANCES

Table 5.10: Frequency and Mode of sending remittance

Frequency	Assam	Sikkim
Monthly	128 (64.00)	91 (60.67)
Once in two months	30 (15.00)	13 (8.67)
More than once a year	8 (4.00)	3 (2.00)
Whenever demanded	34 (17.00)	43 (28.67)
Total	200 (100)	150 (100)
Mode	Assam	Sikkim
Money order	18 (9.00)	1 (0.67)
Banking transfer	137 (68.50)	84 (56.00)
E-banking	1 (0.50)	2 (1.33)
Personally	4 (2.00)	12 (8.00)
Through friends and relatives	36 (18.00)	47 (31.33)
Others (courier, post office, employer sends on one's behalf)	4 (2.00)	4 (2.67)
Total	200 (100)	150 (100)

Source: Primary Field survey

Note: figures in parenthesis are percentage to absolute numbers

Table 5.10 reports the frequency of sending remittance and mode of sending remittance. Sending remittances to the family back at home is an integral part of migrant's earnings. Migrants, given in the case studies (in Chapter VII), report about the importance of remittances and the role to make them continue their stay and sustain their livelihood. As also given in this section, most of the respondents are the sole bread earner, working member of the family and decision maker of the family. Family members who stay back at home solely depend upon the remittances. More than 60 percent of the migrants in both the states send money every month. 17 percent

and 28.67 percent migrants in Assam and Sikkim respectively send money whenever demanded depending upon the need and requirement in the family at Bihar. To be accurate, 15 percent of Bihari migrants in Assam were found to have sent money once in two months and 8.67 percent in Sikkim. The migrants whose family members are involved in some other occupation like agriculture or others normally do not demand remittance monthly, have lower frequency in sending money at home.

Nearly 68.7 percent and 58 percent of migrant in Assam and Sikkim respectively send money through banking. Many migrants reported that they do not have any bank accounts. They send money through the friends and relative at destination, and this category consists of 18 percent in Assam, while it was around 31 percent in Sikkim. As expected and being illiterate, a very few migrants use other modes like e-banking. Interestingly, the modes of courier and post office transfers in both the states have also been very negligible.

5.22 FREQUENCY OF VISIT TO HOME

Table 5.11: Frequency of visit to home

Frequency	Assam	Sikkim
Every month	6 (3)	7 (4.67)
Once in a three months	76 (38)	53 (35.33)
Once in 6 months	68 (34)	34 (22.67)
Once in a year	28 (14)	30 (20)
Occasionally	22 (11)	26 (17.33)
Total	200 (100)	150 (100)

Source: Primary Field survey

Note: Figures in parenthesis are percentage to absolute numbers

Most of the migrants stay alone or without family members as discussed in the previous section of this chapter. Visiting native place is an important part in the life of migrant labourers. Since they stay at destination for earning money so that they can support the family, they cannot travel frequently to their respective homes at the cost of hard earnings. In Table 5.11, a total of 38 percent and 35.33 percent of migrants in Assam and Sikkim respectively visit home (Bihar) once in three months. Around 34 percent migrants in Assam are able to visit home once in 6 months, while it is for 22.67 percent in Sikkim. There are 14 and 20 percent migrants in Assam and Sikkim respectively visits home only once a year. Few migrants visit home only at the time of need or on an important occasion.