

Synopsis of the thesis on

Economic Growth and Employment Linkages in North east India: A Case Study of Manipur

by

RABICHANDRA SINGH ELANGBAM

Under the guidance of

Prof. A.S.Rao



Department of Economics

FACULTY OF ARTS

The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda,

Vadodara

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1. Introduction

Economic reforms in India are said to have been initiated in a systemic manner since 1991. Though India has recently emerged as one of the fastest growing countries in the world, poverty level has not declined much. Employment is considered an important channel through which economic growth impacts poverty. Thus the dynamics of employment is important in understanding issues of inclusion in the process of development. The unemployment rate in India has flip-flopped since the post reform i.e. early 1990s. The unemployment rate by current daily status has increased from 6.1% in 1993-4 to 7.3% in 1999-2000 and further to 8.2% in 2004-5. However it came down to 5.6% in 2011-12. Though the demand for labour increased after the economic reforms the increase was not shared evenly in rural and urban India between men and women and regular and casual workers. The nature of unemployment in India is also changing. Today, unemployment rates are much higher among educated individuals. Within this category, the largest chunk comes from urban India.

Unemployment of its growing manpower has also been one of the challenges faced by India. The demographic dividend magnified the challenge.

The diverse penalties of unemployment are

- Loss of current output
- Social exclusion and loss of freedom
- Skill loss and long run damages
- Psychological harm
- Ill health and mortality
- Motivational loss of future workforce
- Loss of human relations and family life
- Racial and gender inequality
- Loss of social values and responsibility
- Organizational inflexibility and technical conservatism

The social costs of these penalties are heavy. The media and globalisation have led to ever rising expectations. The occupational distribution of the work force too has seen some changes.

Hence the natural question arises as to what extent economic reforms can be said to have led to this emerging characterisation of the employed and the unemployed such as erratic behaviour of rate of unemployment, higher proportion of self employed and higher proportion of marginal workers.

2. Motivation

India's North Eastern Region (NER) comprises of eight states namely Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura and is linked with the mainland through the 27km wide Siliguri corridor in the northern part of West Bengal. It is an economically poor resource rich region. Almost 4500 kms or 98 per cent of the boundary of the northeast constitutes international borders with China and Bhutan in the north, Myanmar in the east and Bangladesh in the south and west. These states cover an area of 2,62,189 sq. km. constituting 7.98 percent of the country's total geographical area and account for only around 3.77 percent of the total population and 3.87 percent of country's GDP. The region has remained one of the most backward regions of the country¹. Mainstreaming this region in national development is a challenge. It lags behind the rest of the country in several social, economic and infrastructure indicators. The region is yet to regain its vibrancy at the time of India's independence². NER Vision 2020 shows that assuming that India's gross domestic product will grow 9% per annum, in order to catch up with the income level in the rest of the country by 2020, GDP in the region will have to accelerate from the current 5.3% to 12.9% per annum. The document also dwells at length on the roadmap for achieving those targets that would make development meaningful for the people. Haphazard, jobless and exclusive growth are to be avoided. How serious we are in pursuing this objective depends on our ability to understand the drivers of growth in the region and their linkages with employment generation.

¹ GOI(1997) Transforming The Northeast Tackling Backlogs in Basic Minimum Services and Infrastructural Needs ,Planning Commission,New delhi

² Singh,E.B.K. (2009) "Understanding Economic growth in the North Eastern region of India "Dialogue , vol.10 no.3 Jan.- March Astha Bharati

Despite huge investments over time, north eastern region of India has lagged behind the mainland states in many ways. In the last 60 odd years four new states viz Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh emerged out of Assam and the demand for even more balkanisation still persists. These states have registered reasonable growth rates. However there seems to be a missing link between economic growth and employment generation. There is a widespread notion that unemployment has been a significant driver behind the decades of unrest that has come to characterise this region. There are two issues: first growth has been jobless growth and secondly whatever jobs that have been generated have been not only inadequate but highly inappropriate for the labour force as is evident from the influx of migrant workers from outside the region. The issue of generation of adequate job opportunities for the growing labour force is as important as the issue of minimising the mismatch between job opportunities and labour supply. The mismatch is as important as unemployment.

India's 'look east policy' formulated in 1991 on the heels of India's economic liberalization, was a foreign policy initiative towards South East Asia. Now it has been upgraded to Act East policy. The strategic location of Northeast between mainland India and Southeast Asia is expected to generate immense developmental benefits as a result of this initiative and hence, has synergy effects on reducing poverty in the region; as well as on insurgency and armed conflict. The region's diverse natural resources, rich bio-diversity and enormous hydro-electricity potential, among others, should be effectively managed to overcome the widespread feeling of backwardness among the inhabitants of the Northeast. But there is also a poser that the impact of increased introduction of market imperatives in the traditional society of the region would have irreversible impact on the people's culture and life and it would also lead to increased settlement of migrants both legal and illegal in the northeast affecting the existing demographic composition.

It is in this backdrop with a sense of urgency that the proposed study seeks to understand the quality of the region's negotiation with economic reforms particularly the impact of economic reforms on the employment and unemployment situation in the region. Employment is the link between economic growth and inclusive economic development. The future of economic reforms in India in general and in the North East in particular crucially

depends on their impact on employment and unemployment as economic growth with low paid jobs or less job opportunities implies exclusive growth. The sustainability of such type of growth is being questioned today. The issue of more and more inclusive growth is being proposed to the people.

Why Manipur ?

Manipur has been chosen out of the eight states for the following reasons: widespread social unrest, high rate of growth, nature of labour market and India's gateway to South east Asia via Myanmar. The Xth Five plan document listed Manipur as the state with highest growth rate. Yet Manipur has a high poverty ratio and the highest number of insurgent groups in the region which indicates People's negative perception of growth. During the last few decades Manipur has developed into a highly dependent state making scholars wonder as to how a kingdom which used to play a significant role in southeast Asian politics went on a downslide. From 1891 to 1947 Manipur was a native kingdom which was a British protectorate. Manipur became a part of India in 1949 and in 1950 all erstwhile regulations controlling the entry of 'foreigners' into Manipur were withdrawn. Since then migrant workers from Assam, UP, Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal have cornered a large portion of the labour market. In addition people from neighbouring countries such as Bangladesh, Myanmar and Nepal managed to enter the state. The growing number and apparent prosperity of these migrants have led to continual outbursts against 'outsiders' or 'nonindigenous' people in general. Today the civil society organisations and student bodies are demanding reintroduction of the inner line permit system. The resurgence of anti outsiders movement in the last few years has been very intense in Manipur. Though Indo Myanmar border trade is supposed to be conducted through four land custom stations viz Moreh in Manipur, Zokhawthar in Mizoram, Avakhung in Nagaland and Nampong in Arunachal Pradesh, 99% of the border trade occurs along the Moreh (Manipur, India)-Tamu (Sagaing division, Myanmar) sector. It is through Asian Highway-1 passing through Moreh that India will be connected by road, with Hanoi city in Vietnam. Moreh, a small town at Tengnoupal district is fast coming up as the Gateway to SouthEast Asia. This interface with rapidly growing south East Asian countries will impact on the socio-economic conditions of the region in general and Manipur in particular. Border Trade has been recently upgraded to normal trade. These are the factors that had prompted the choice of the state for more indepth study.

Survey of literature :

Though several studies have examined the process and determinants of growth across the Indian states, except for Assam, the remaining seven states of the region have never been examined rigorously due to their insignificant size and population. Most of the pre reform and post reform state level studies are centred around 14 major states. Researchers have ignored this region due to the poor and questionable data base and its insignificant share in national income and population. The states in the region are not homogenous entities and the quality of enabling environments differ widely. Issues whether these states should be treated as homogenous or heterogeneous have remained hypothetical. Yet Assam used to represent the north east in academic dialogue. Most of the states in the region are small states and they face unique challenges in raising their growth potential. Small population, geographical isolation and low population density, poor connectivity, narrow production base, heavy reliance on central funds have made them different. The available studies (Das, Dubey& Pala 2007,Singh 2007,Sahu 2012) are descriptive and have not used rigorous analytical tools to investigate the linkage between development and employment generation. Sahu (2012) used unit record data of NSS for 1993-4,1999-00 and 2004-5. The entire exercise of elasticity estimation was based on estimates of growth rates. Tripathi (2016) used multinomial logit model using unit level NSS data from the 68th round. The issues that need further probing are nature and quality of employment available, duration of unemployment, level of productivity of these jobs and prospect of their sustainability and linkage between economic growth and generation of gainful employment. The issue of appropriateness of the categories used for employment and unemployment also needs probing.

A significant increase in employment elasticity should match with increase in productivity. But the overall improvement in employment elasticity in agriculture is to be seen in the context of level of per worker productivity. Because productivity in this sector is relatively low with considerable under-employment. The elasticity of employment in manufacturing, too, witnessed an increase in the post-2000 period, in north-eastern states. In Assam, it declined during the same period. But in construction, trade and transport storage-communications, the levels of employment elasticities declined during 2000/2005 as compared to previous period, i.e. 1994/2000. Similarly two important components of tertiary sector, i.e. finance-insurance-real estate and community-social-personal services have

witnessed negative employment elasticities in 2000/2005. Thus in some of the sectors that witnessed a varying degree of increase in employment growth rate during the post-2000 years, the magnitude of employment elasticity too witnessed a varying degree of increase. In other words, the rising or declining labour content of growth has indeed been a strong driving factor behind accelerating or decelerating pace of employment expansion in individual sectors.

Whether improved growth rates of GDP has led to any significant changes in the level and growth of worker productivity is an important issue that needs crucial examination. The overall labour productivity indicates an increasing trend. The level of overall labour productivity in NER has increased from Rs 19223 in 1993–94 to Rs. 21126 in 1999–00 and to Rs. 23154 in 2004–05 at 2004-05 prices . At sectoral level also per worker productivity has witnessed varying degree of improvement. In agriculture, the level of productivity is not only abysmally low, but also declined during post 2000 period. In the NER as a whole, per worker earning differential between agriculture and other sectors are very high. For example, in 2004–05 the per worker productivity in agriculture is 26, 19, 33, 21 and 29 times lower than that of manufacturing, construction, trade, transport-storage-communication and community-social and personal services respectively. The very low level of per worker productivity compared with some of the other sectors indicates higher magnitude of underemployment. It is, therefore proves that growth of state domestic product in this sector should not be expected to generate a big increase in total employment; instead, it would rather go to reduce the degree of under-employment with an increase both in wage rates for agricultural workers and earnings of cultivators.

3. Objective of the study

- i. Examining the pattern of economic growth of the states in the north eastern region of India
- ii. Examining the pattern of growth of employment at sectoral and aggregate level and unemployment
- iii. Examining the association between growth and employment in the Northeastern region at state level
- iv. Examining the nature and quality of employment and unemployment in the context of Manipur using primary data .

4. Data and Methodology

Both secondary and primary data have been used for the study. The secondary data consists of NSS data on employment and unemployment collected quinquennially since 1993-4. The data relate to 50th round (1993-4), 55th round (1999-2000), 61st round (2004-5) and 68th round (2011-12). Decadal Census data also have been used for population intrapolation. Net state domestic product data provided by Central Statistical Organisation have been used for studying the pattern of growth.

In addition to the secondary data available, primary data relating to these issues have been collected. A random sample of 300 respondents was taken from the frame provided by Employment Exchanges of Imphal West, Imphal East, Bishnupur and Thoubal in July 2014 with the purpose of analysing the trends on the basis of the sample. In the final analysis due to non response only 271 respondents were shortlisted.

Further research with primary data will provide a broader view of the issues. There are two questionnaires –one for the unemployed and the other for employed. The questionnaires have thrown light on individual characteristics determining the probability of getting employed, duration of unemployment, effectiveness of job search strategy etc. The list of persons registered in employment exchanges have been used as the frame.

Shapely decomposition technique has been used to decompose growth in per capita NSDP at 2004-5 prices of each of the eight states in NER into growth associated with changes in output per worker, growth associated with changes in employment rates and growth associated with changes in the size of the working age population. The software for decomposition ‘Job Generation and Growth Decomposition tool’ is available with Poverty Reduction Group, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management (PREM), World Bank.

Besides studying structural changes in the state economies Bai & Perron (1998) test was used to identify multiple break points in the time series of real NSDP, real income originating in agriculture, industry and services for eight states based on the specification

$$\log(Y) = a + bt + \text{dummy}$$

Primary data collected from the 271 respondents are examined using logit models. The issues investigated are identification of characteristics affecting of probability of being employed, duration of unemployment, effectiveness of job search strategies etc.

5 : Findings and Conclusions

NER is services driven economy having 55.9 percent of annual income coming from services sector. However, agriculture is the mainstay of the economies of the NER as it accounts to 21.83 percent (2013-14), and is a major source of employment and livelihood for around 80 percent of the population. The region is found to be heterogeneous. Industry in Sikkim contributed 60% of real NSDP. Services contributed 67 % of Mizoram's real NSDP. Agriculture & allied sector continues to contribute around 33% of NSDP in Arunachal Pradesh. The service sector has become the dominating sector except for Sikkim. Though Sikkim is the smallest and least populated state in NER, its manufacturing contributed 34% of its NSDP, the highest in the region. It also has the highest per capita income in the region. Agricultural growth has been uneven across regions and crops. NER continues to be a net importer of foodgrains. Service sector dominated the economies in Tripura, Sikkim, Nagaland, Mizoram and Meghalaya . In Arunachal Pradesh it was agriculture. In Manipur and Assam it was industry. By 2013-14 services became the dominant sector in all states except Sikkim where industry contributed 60% of real NSDP.

Bai & Perron (1998) test for structural change can identify multiple break points in a time series. The application of the test vindicates the stand that there need not be a single growth regime for the entire period. There were data without any break and there were data with multiple structural breaks for which a single growth regime is not appropriate.

Shapely decomposition shows that during 1994-2012 output per worker is the main factor behind growth of per capita NSDP in all NER states . In Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura increase in participation in labour force played an important role. Growth linked to employment rate played an important role in Arunachal Pradesh only. However sub period analysis at sub national level presented a diverse picture. During 1994 to 2000 only in Arunachal Pradesh growth linked to share of working population was the dominant factor behind growth in per capita income. This was the strongest factor in Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland during 2000-2005. In Nagaland the growth in per capita NSDP during this period came almost entirely from more people joining the labour force and the contribution of output per worker was negligible. In Sikkim the contribution of this component hovered around 80% and despite some flip-flops it was never negative in any state in any sub period except during 1994-2000 in Arunachal Pradesh. The swings were widest in Nagaland. The contribution of the other two factors flip-flopped between positive

and negative values. Sikkim and Tripura are the only states in NER where higher participation in labour force consistently contributed to growth in per capita NSDP. Negative contribution implies withdrawal from the labour force, a phenomenon which needs to be looked into. It has implications for inclusivity of growth. From this perspective the quality of growth in Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya and Mizoram may be relatively less inclusive than that in Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. Except for Arunachal Pradesh all the NER states have positive contribution of output per worker, which means the productivity of the worker increased during the post reform period. For example if we look at Assam during 1994 -2000 the contribution of output per worker and employment rate to the growth is positive. Similarly if we look at the cases of Nagaland and Tripura the share of working population declined,. In case of Manipur, Meghalaya and Sikkim not only there is a decline of share of working population but there is also fall in employment rate as it is shown in the table that the contribution of employment rate is negative. This can imply that as employment rate is falling many people have been discouraged and left the labour force during that period. The data shows classification of the states with similar patterns. For example Manipur, Meghalaya and Sikkim have similar pattern whereas Assam, Nagaland and Tripura have similar patterns too in different ways. However the magnitude is very much different from one state to another. Even the share of working population increased positively in all the states which implies that people became more optimistic of getting a job. It can be because of new openings of opportunity after the reforms of 1990s being implemented. However the employment rate is not all positive as states like Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Tripura had negative contribution to the growth, especially Tripura has a very high magnitude of (-)51.04%.

Using the Shapley approach, changes in aggregate output per worker can be decomposed into changes in output per worker within sectors and, movements of labour between sectors. Increases in output per worker within a sector will increase average output per worker. Relocation of workers across sectors of different productivity levels can increase average output per worker if the final relocation results into a larger share of workers employed in higher productivity sectors. we can calculate the amount of growth in *total output per capita* that can be linked to changes in output per worker in sector *i*, and to intersectoral relocation of labour by combining the contribution of each of these components to changes in output per worker, with the contribution of changes in output per worker to total per capita growth. The contribution of changes in output per worker within a sector can

be interpreted as the total per capita growth consistent with a counterfactual scenario, in which all else (employment rate, demographics, and output per worker in the remaining sectors) had all remained unchanged, and the only change had been the observed change in output per worker in sector *i*. The contribution of the intersectoral shift component can be interpreted as a counterfactual scenario in which the employment rate, the demographic structure of the population and output per worker in each sector had remained unchanged, and labour had reallocated across sectors as observed.

6. **Chapters of the Thesis:**

The chapter scheme followed in the thesis will have as follows (modifications of chapters can occur in the final thesis)

Chapter 1 :Inclusive development and employment- An Introduction

- 1.1 Inclusive development
- 1.2 Role of employment in inclusive development
- 1.3 Can Indian development experience be termed inclusive ?
- 1.4 Objectives of the study
- 1.5 Data base and methodology

Chapter 2:Job content of post reform economic growth in India

- 2.1 Post reforms pattern of economic growth in India
- 2.2 Drivers of growth in post reforms India
- 2.3 Emerging employment & unemployment scenario

Chapter 3:Post reforms growth & structural change in north eastern region of India

- 3.1 A brief introduction to NER of India
- 3.2 Developmental challenges of the region
- 3.3 Economic growth & structural change in NER
- 3.4 Employment & unemployment scenario of the region

Chapter 4 Shapely decomposition of growth of output in NER

- 4.1 Methodology
- 4.2 Data base
- 4.3 Analysis

Chapter 5 Socio economic profile of Manipur

- 5.1 Geography & History
- 5.2 Basic Facts & Structural change
- 5.3 Developmental challenges

Chapter 6 Correlates of unemployment in Manipur

- 6.1 Methodology
- 6.2 Data base
- 6.3 Analysis

Chapter 7 Summary & Conclusion

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Aspects of unemployment and employment in Manipur:
QUESTIONNAIRE

UNEMPLOYED

1. Name of the respondent
 a. Sex b. Agec. Qualification.....

2. Current address:

3. Place of birth:

4. Educational history

s.no.	Name of school/college	Board/university	Medium of instruction	Main subject	Percentage secured

5. Father's name

a. Age b. Qualification c. Occupation

6. Type of family

a. Joint b. Nuclear c. Female headed

7. Religion.....

8. Total monthly expenditure of the family

.....

9. Total cultivable area owned in acres

10. Total area cultivated

a. Area leased in

b. Area leased out

11. Household profile

Sl.no.	Sex	Age	Relation to respondent	Education level	Employed/unemployed	Occupation	
						Main	Subsidiary

12. How long have you been unemployed?

13. What was your qualification when you entered the labour force ?

14. What do you do when you are unemployed?

- a. Actively search for job
- b. Get further training
- c. Keep waiting

15. Have you tried to improve your chance of employment through additional training/higher education ?

16. If you have been looking for a job, has your job expectation remained the same ?

17. What is your search strategy?

- a. read employment news
- b. read newspaper and advertisement
- c. prepare for competitive examination
- d. through family network
- e. Engaged in further study

18. Have you ever been employed ?

- a. yes
- b. no

19. If yes, give details of last employment

- a. Duration
- b. Status/rank
- c. Government/private,/cooperative society/NGO/others

20. Reasons for quitting the last job

- a. work not remunerative enough
- b. unpleasant environment
- c. harsh employer
- d. health hazard
- e. non availability of employment benefits
- f. others

21. State the source of livelihood :

22. Have you ever migrated in search of job ?

23. If you are offered a suitable job, would you accept it ?

- a. Outside your district yes/No
- b. Outside your state yes/No

EMPLOYED

1. Name of the respondent.....
2. Were you born where you are currently staying ?
 - a. Sex
 - b. Age
 - c. Qualification.....

Educational history

s.no.	Name of school/college	Board/university	Medium of instruction	Main subject	Percentage secured

3. Father's name
 - a. Age
 - b. Qualification
 - c. Occupation
4. Type of family
 - a. Joint
 - b. Nuclear
 - c. Female headed
5. Religion.....
6. Total monthly expenditure of the family.....
7. Total cultivable area owned in acres
8. Total area cultivated
 - a. Area leased in
 - b. Area leased out
9. Household profile

Sl.no.	Sex	Age	Relation to respondent	Education level	Registration in employment exchange	Occupation	
						Main	Subsidiary

10. Year of joining the present job
11. Status/rank at the time of joining

12. Nature of employment

- a. Government
- b. private
- c. Cooperative society
- d. self employment

13. If you are self employed, specify

- a. Type of work
- b. Income per day/week/month

14. present status/rank

15. Nature of employment

- a. permanent
- b. Contract
- c. daily wage
- d. others

16. Particulars of present employment

- a. wage rate per day/week/month
- b. Duration of working hours per day
- c. Distance of workplace from residence
- d. No. of days worked in a week
- e. Facilities provided by the employer (tick)
 - i. provident fund facilities
 - ii. medical treatment expenses
 - iii. any other (Plz specify)

17. Is this your first employment ?

18. If no ,how many times have you switched jobs ?

19. Details of last employment in the case of job switch

Employer	Wage rate	Type of work	Duration of employment	Workng hours per day	Reasons for quitting the job

20. How did you get the current job ?

- a. Open competition
- b. personal contact
- c. Die-in –harness
- d. Through employment exchange
- e. regularization through contract

21. Job search strategy

- a. Through news paper
- b. Personal contact
- c. Through electronic media

22. Are you satisfied with the current employment ?

- a. yes
- b. No

23. If no, which is a dominant reason

- a. Poor working condition
- b. low salary
- c. No prospect for promotion
- d. others

24. Are you looking for an alternative job ?

25. Are you working on any subsidiary job ? If yes, give details

26. Time use pattern in a day

Sl.no	Name of activities	Hours engaged	Paid/unpaid