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Educational Migration and Livelihood: A Case Study of Paying Guest Keeping Households in Kalimpong Town, West Bengal

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Abstract

This paper highlights the importance of educational migration in Kalimpong town and the local urban system created to sustain migration in a small town of Kalimpong in Darjeeling district of West Bengal. To accommodate the migrant students the households in the towns have opened a system of keeping students as paying guests. The main aim of the study is to know the economic and social linkages of the migrants with the households and its members. The result of the study have shown that the rents paid by the students have helped the households to great extent in creating some additional income in the family and some social links like keeping them busy, curbing loneliness etc. has also been found. This study has helped to understand the character of a small place like Darjeeling which was once the summer capital of the Britishers.

Keywords: Economic, Education, Household, Migration, Social.

I. Introduction: Kalimpong, a small town nested in the Darjeeling hills of West Bengal has a rich history from colonialism, trade, migration to education. Darjeeling hills was once entirely under forest until the East India Company first acquired it in 1835. This region not only attracted the officials of East India Company, for its cool climate but also encouraged pionaries in education to open up educational institutions (Lama, 2009). Darjeeling hills once only a 'sanatorium' and a 'summer capital' for the British people has now become an educational hub. Presently, it is very renowned for its educational institutions and attracts students from all over India and South Asia. This honour goes to the Christian Missionaries who were pioneers in it. About 150 years ago, the hill people were in a state of deep slumber where formal education was unknown. The native people were still in the primitive state and to some extent non-formal education in a rudimentary form existed. Tracing the education of the native settlers, the system of education was simple and practical. Slowly the Scottish and Irish Missionaries developed schools for the local people and encouraged education.

The educational development in Darjeeling district in the recent time is a rewarding outcome of the developments in the past. The good educational development in the region

predominantly in schooling may be the reason for in-migration of students from far flung area, outside the state as well as from neighboring countries. Large scale in-migration in the town for educational purpose has led to increase in population of migrant students. The hill area of the district differs from the plains in physical features as well as culture. The schools in the Kalimpong, are generally boarding schools which besides imparting education to the locals also attract large number of students from outside the region. So the increasing in-migration of students has led to the shortage of accommodation facilities in these boarding schools. Migration of students also takes place for attending local colleges which mostly takes place from the rural areas. Boarding facility is generally not available in the colleges. Therefore a system of keeping students as paying guests exists in the households of the town area in this region (Malley, 2001).

II. Education and Migration: “Although the truism holds that economic forces often play an important role as one of the root causes of migration, and people tend to move to places where the standards of living are better, this alone cannot explain the actual shape of migration patterns” (Haas, 2008: 19). The standard academic literature on migration pays virtually little attention to students as migrants. If we look closely, students are highly mobile section of the population. Yet geographers and others interested in population mobility have been remarkably slow to study the migration behaviour of this section of population (Gelices, 2003). Though there are few literatures taking education and migration as a variable of their study, researcher hardly dwells into the intricacies of educational migration, though, it is an important element in understanding migration holistically. This study exactly looks to fill this research gap.

Education is also an important reason for migration in youths. Moving for acquiring education is a human capital investment which might be motivated by the quality of education in the destination, but the benefits of it can be enjoyed in both the origin and in the destination (Dustmann, 2009).

Moving from one place to another for acquiring education may be the sole reason for migration but there are different determinants for the migration of students for acquiring education. It might be due to differences in the educational facility provided by a state or a country or sometimes it might be because of the personal choice of the students. Quite interestingly the student migration policies also play an important role in the migration of the students across countries. With the students migrating to different places they carry along with them the opportunities as well as vulnerabilities. With students migrating to different regions, they carry with them a set of opportunities and vulnerabilities.

Rajan & Wadhawan (2013) in their joint paper has discussed about the migrating patterns of Indian students to U.K. The research unit on International Migration too has conducted a vast study to understand the costs and the choices affecting international student migration. The author on the other hand gives three main reasons for international migration of Indian students. Firstly, the lack of domestic facilities in the country of origin. Secondly, the commercial value of foreign degree and lastly, the exchange of knowledge

and culture to another country. This study reveals that in a majority of cases, student migration is often the gateway for permanent stay in the host country. This is made easier by policies in of many destination countries that allow students to convert their student status into a residence permit if they find a job within a certain time frame after graduation. An important motivation for attracting foreign students is also because they raise the performance standards of these universities. Secondly, most of the European countries are encouraging migration due to the declining trend of their respective demography of their country. These countries experience an ageing workforce along with very low fertility rates which is a liability and not an asset. Therefore these countries have a serious need to attract migrants who will form a vital component of their labour force in the years to come. International migration from India makes the sole theme in the two papers presented in the preceding paragraphs.

No doubt, India too is emerging as a popular destination country. This fact is revealed in the paper by (Khadria, 2014). They are of the view that a number of individuals from African countries and neighbouring countries like Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal are coming flocking to India for education and seeking employment. The reason they give for this was due to the high rates of growth in India and insulation from the economic crisis as compared to other countries of the world. But, despite having witnessed migratory flows, India's involvement in international migration lacks a well-structured policy framework.

The migration of students not only takes place between countries but within countries too. The migration for higher education within the country takes place generally towards metropolitan states. This may be due to unavailability of higher studies in the rural region work on Indian migration hint at the same conclusion (Ramesh, 2012). The author depicts the interlink ages between migration and education in the North-eastern states. He does this with the help of Census data by using simple percentage and frequency distribution shows the trends and pattern of migration and education from this region. In the paper he concludes, the most preferred destinations for acquiring higher education for students of Northeast were Delhi, Karnataka and Maharashtra.

Brezis and Soueri (2011) have tried to identify some other reason why students emigrate and elucidate the pattern of flow between countries. They have tried to study whether quality of education or wage levels determines the flow of the student. The author through his models and empirical evidence has concluded that the quality of education determines most of the student migration rather than the wages. On the other hand a negative relation was seen while analysing wage differences on migration of students. Thus from the article, it is understood that students migrate to the regions which promises quality education and not high wage opportunities.

Apart from quality of education there may be few other additional social factors that would determine the flow of students to particular area or countries. This has been depicted by the same author mentioned in the preceding paragraph. These factors may be language, culture, etc. From their study they testified that similar language and culture in a place of

origin and destination encourages educational migration to a place rather than discourages migration. Wider cultural gaps lead to higher psychological costs which reduce migration.

In case of India, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Rajasthan are the main source states of educational migrants. The wide differences in educational migration amongst states in India are due to the different levels of development in each state. They suggested that India needs to address the issue for the provision of higher education. They pointed out that the issue of internal in-migration for education in the states in India has not received adequate attention.

III. Objective: This study aims to know the relation between educational in-migration and local urban system created to sustain the migration focusing on economic and social aspects at household level in Kalimpong town of Darjeeling district, West Bengal.

IV. Study Area: The study area taken is Kalimpong town (municipal area), in Darjeeling district in the state of West Bengal. The district can be divided into two, the hill and the plain region. Kalimpong is one of the largest in area amongst the three sub-divisions in the district. The average elevation of Kalimpong is 4100 sq ft above sea-level. There are five seasons are spring, autumn, winter and monsoon. The temperature in summer reaches a maximum of 30⁰ c and in winter it is about 15⁰ c (Malley,2011).The total population of the municipal area is 42998 according to census 2001.The percentage literate is 79% to the total population.



Fig 1. Map showing Darjeeling District

V. Data and Methodology: This study is primarily based on field data. Purposive sampling technique was used for the survey using mixed (closed and open) questionnaire. In the absence of any comprehensive data regarding the educational in-migrants and the number of households availing the paying guests in the study area, a purposive sample survey was conducted. As the renowned institutions are located in the town itself, it was chosen as the study area for the survey. The sample size of 200 households which keeps students as paying guests and 200 students staying as paying guests in the households were taken as a sample for this study. As the study is regarding the role of the migrant students in the

households keeping paying guests, the survey did not cover the households which did not keep the paying guest.

VI. Education in Kalimpong/Darjeeling: Darjeeling district is very much renowned for education mainly for schooling. The historical facts reveal that the missionaries were the first to establish schools in the hill region way back in 1841. There has been a considerable improvement in the quality of education ever since the era of independence (Dewan, 1999). According to the Census of 1901, people of whatever age who could read and write were regarded as literate and who could not as illiterate. When in whole of Bengal only 1 male in 10 and 1 female in 200 was able to read and write, in Darjeeling it was found that no less than 12 percent of the males or approximately 1 in 8 were literate while the proportion of literate females rose from 5 to 14 per 1000 in 1901. The advancement of education among the females was very much in satisfaction (Banerjee, 1980).

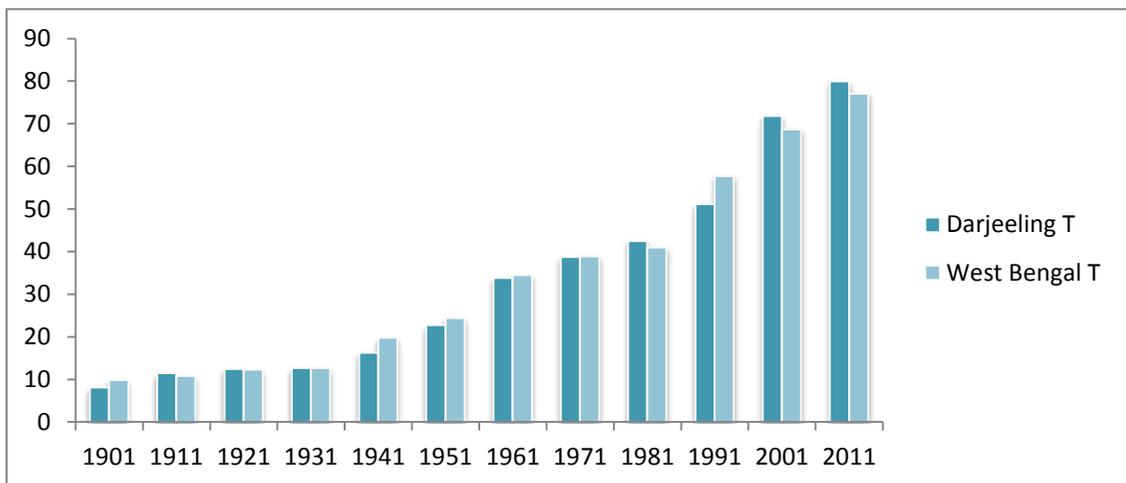


Fig 2: Literacy rate of Darjeeling district compared to the state average

The present education index figured out from the State Development Report in 2010, shows that Darjeeling district ranks sixth compared to other districts of the state and ranks first among the districts of North Bengal. The literacy rate of the district (79.92) is also higher from the state average of (77.08). So by studying the educational development in the Darjeeling district the relation with migration can be understood.

Table 1: District Wise-Education Index In West Bengal

District	Education index	Rank
1.Kolkata	1	1
2.North-24 Parganas	0.824	2
3.Howrah	0.814	3
4.Medinipur	0.797	4
5.Hoogly	0.786	5
6.Darjeeling	0.696	6

7.Bardhaman	0.665	7
8.South-24 Parganas	0.561	8
9.Nadia	0.507	9
10.Bankura	0.472	10
11.Jalpaiguri	0.461	11
12.Cooch Behar	0.452	12
13.Birbhum	0.361	13
14.Dakshin Dinajpur	0.338	14
15.Purulia	0.247	15
16.Murshidabad	0.148	16
17.Malda	0.042	17
18.Uttar Dinajpur	0.015	18

Source: State Development Report

VII. Educational Migration in Kalimpong: The state of West Bengal has been divided by the NSSO into five regions as: *Region 1(Himalayan)*-Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, Koochbehar; *Region 2(Eastern Plains)*-Uttar Dinajpur, Murshidabad, Dakshin Dinajpur, Birbhum, Maldah, Nadia; *Region 3(Southern Plains)*-N.24Parganas, S.24.Parganas, Kolkata, *Region 4(Central Plains)*- Bardhaman, Hugli, Howrah; *Region 5(Western Plains)*-Bankura, Purulia and Medinipur. Amongst the five (region 1: NSSO (National Sample Survey Organisation)¹ regions of West Bengal, the region 1 which comprises the hill region of the state has the highest number of educational migrants in the age-group of 6-17, that is the school going age.

Table II: The share of educational migrants in different NSS regions in the state

NSS Regions	Number of educational migrants	Share of educational migrants to the total educational migrants	6-17(school going age) (in%)	Above17(for higher studies) (in%)
Region 1	6,831	2.43	97.9	2.1
Region2	73,496	26.15	62.6	37.4
Region3	83,150	29.59	23.9	76.1
Region4	41,288	14.69	36.5	63.5
Region5	76,248	27.13	47.5	52.5
Total	2,81,012	4.2	44.1	55.9

Source: Computed from NSSO 64th Round

So, Kalimpong which lies in Darjeeling district also shows more migration for attaining schooling rather than college education. From the results of the field, the following figure will give the clear picture about the pattern of educational migration in Kalimpong.

¹ It is an organisation under the Ministry of Statistics of the Government of India. It is the largest organisation in India conducting socio-economic surveys.

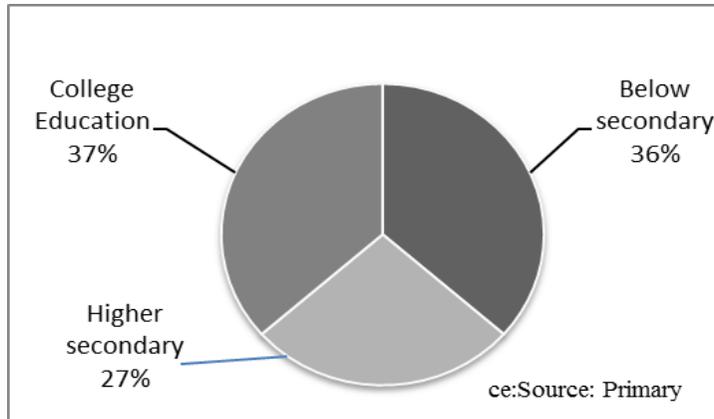


Fig 3. In-migration of students for education in Kalimpong 2013

Fig 3, shows that for school education 63 per cent migration of students takes place in comparison of 37 per cent migration for college education. However migration for attending college is also not meagre. Migration to these colleges takes place from the nearby areas. Therefore educational migration takes place into the region from both within the district, from outside the district, within the country and from neighboring countries of Bhutan, Nepal and Bangladesh.

IX. Paying Keeping Households in Kalimpong: The paying guests keeping households usually are located near the schools from which the students can easily commute. In this system of keeping students as paying guests, the households avail certain number of rooms to the paying guests. The number of persons in one room depends upon the size of the room and the demand of the students. Certain amount has to be paid monthly or in other manner by the students staying as paying guest for fooding and accommodation facilities. Other facilities like water, furniture and electricity is provided by the household and is included in the amount taken from the students as fee.

During the interview it was known from the local people that the system of keeping students had been started some 15-20 years back. Earlier only few households were involved in his system but at present almost all the households were involved in this system. Due to lack of data records there is no estimate on the number of houses keeping paying guests. One of the interviewee an 80 year old writer, a male said:

“Earlier the students from nearby villages would come to Kalimpong for education in government schools, mainly the students who had relatives in the town area. But instead of paying cash to the household, in which they stay, they would pay in kind like vegetables and grains or whatever was produced in their village. Slowly as the educational institutions started becoming famous, in-migration started taking place not only from within the country but as well as from the neighbouring countries of Nepal and Bhutan and this system of paying guests started expanding.”

Number of private boarding hostels apart from school boarding was opened up which also accommodated large number of students but the number of students accommodated was less compared to that of school boarding. Slowly the households near the school areas also started keeping students as paying guests. As compared to the private boarding these households accommodated lesser number of students as paying guests.

The school boarding mostly prefers international students and students from far off places, within the country, and fee is also high in the school boarding. Therefore only some family, who can afford, keep their children in school boarding. The fees in the private boarding or big private hostels are also high, but lesser than the school boarding. As compared to both of these, the paying guests opened up in the households are much cheaper and the number of students kept is also less. Therefore staying as paying guest in the household is mostly preferred by students who cannot afford to stay in costly boarding and private hostels.

This system of hostels and paying guests were initially started by the school teachers but now it has expanded so much that people from any occupation preferred to keep students as paying guests. It is now preferred mostly by housewives as this system brings in some additional source of income for the family. Some people who were now unemployed, were involved in this job as the main source of living.

Though it brings some additional income, this task of keeping paying guest is challenging because there are lot of households in the locality doing the similar task. This brings a lot of competition amongst these households in catering to the needs of the students. Some students have their own liking and preferences according to which they continue to stay in the household they had chosen to stay, when they first came to this place as migrant. The type of food provided and provision of accommodation determines a lot in the decision to stay further in the same household. Other factors include good environment and distance from the educational institutes. In case, the students are dissatisfied with the present household in which they stay, they may move on after they find another better household to stay in. So these factors determine the number of students in the households. There is no certainty about the number of students in the household as the number may increase or decrease, it all depends upon the choice of the students and the quality of accommodation facility provided by the household to the students. In some cases emotional attachment may prevent the students from moving on from one household to another even in case of dissatisfaction.

X. Socio-Economic Influence of the Migrant Students on the Household: Migration has an effect on the place of destination as well as the place of origin. In this study, the place of destination which is the study area is of concern. The migrant students staying as paying guest in particular households in Kalimpong have some influence or effect on the household in which they stay. Moreover the effect is not only limited to the household but also the society as a whole. There is social as well as economic influence/effect by the migrant students.

It has been observed that the inflow of students as paying guest has created an additional source of income in the family and it has also created employment for those who were unemployed.

i) Economic Linkages: *The amount paid by the migrant students acted as an additional source of income for some household and for some the income from the paying guest acted as the main source of income.*

a) Per Capita Income of the household excluding the income from the paying guests

The members of the households keeping paying guest are involved in other jobs apart from keeping the paying guests. The income from this job also contributes to the income of the family. So to understand the distribution of this income per capita income excluding the income from the paying guests is calculated.

Table III: Per capita monthly income of the household excluding the income from the paying guest

Per Capita Income	Number and percentage of households	
	Frequency	Frequency
Less than 5000	87	43.5
5000-10000	65	32.5
10000-15000	35	17.5
More than 15000	13	6.5
Total	200	200

Source: Field survey 2013

Table III shows that 43.5 per cent of households has a per capita income of less than 5000 when the paying guest income is not included whereas the lowest 6.5 percent of the households has a per capita income of more than 15000 when paying guest income is not included. This denotes that the per capita income distribution of households availing paying guest is skewed towards lower income.

b) Per capita income of the households from the paying guests: Some of the household's main source of living in Kalimpong is through the income from the students. So to see the distribution of this income the per capita income of the same households taking only the monthly income from only paying guest is calculated below.

Table IV: Per capita income of the household from the paying guest

Per capita income	Frequency	Percent
less than 5000	127	63.5
5000-10000	44	22
10000-15000	12	6
more than 15000	17	8.5
Total	200	100

Source: field survey, 2013

The Table IV, show that the highest percentage of households having a per capita income of less than 5000 when only the paying guest income is taken and the percentage of households having a per capita income more than 15000 from the paying is less that is 8.5 per cent. The per capita income of the household taking both the income from the paying guest and the income excluding the paying guest is given below.

c) Total Per capita Income from the households including both the income from the paying guests and other sources: The total per capita income will give an idea about the economic status of the people keeping the paying guests. The table below gives a clear picture. The Table V, shows that the per capita income of the households including both the income from the paying guests and income excluding the paying guest income is less in 43.5 per cent households whereas it is the highest in 8 per cent of households. It can be depicted from the table that the most of the households availing the paying guest belong to middle income families.

Table V: Total Per capita Household Income

Per capita Income	Number and Percentage of households	
	Frequency	Percent
less than 10000	87	43.5
10000-20000	74	37
20000-30000	23	11.5
more than 30000	16	8
Total	200	100

Source: field survey, 2013

d) Share of income from the paying guest in the total income of the households availing the paying guests: The share of income from the paying guests to the total household income gives a clear picture of the contribution the income from the students is making to the households in Kalimpong.

Table VI: Percentage share of rental income from the paying guest in total monthly household income

Percentage share of income from the paying guest	Number	Percent households
< 20 per cent	32	16.0
20-40 per cent	73	36.5
40 -60 per cent	55	27.5
60 -80 per cent	24	12.0
> 80 per cent	16	8.0
Total	200	100

Source: field survey 2013

The above table 6, indicates the share of income from the paying guest in total household income. 37per cent of the households has a share of 20-40per cent in the total household income, whereas 28per cent of the households has a share of 40-60per cent share, 16per cent of the households has a share of less than 20per cent in the household income, 12per cent households has a share within 60-80per cent and the last 8 per cent of the household has a share of more than 80per cent in their total household income.

e) Use of income from the paying guest: The income from the paying guest is used in various ways by the households. As there were multiple responses from the people so the most significant use could not be derived.

Table VII: Use of income generated from the paying guest

Categories	Yes	No
In children's education	34	66
On health	15.5	84.5
In fooding	42	58
In savings	33.5	66.5
Miscelleneous	77.5	22.5

Source: field survey (Note: the above figures denote multiple responses, rows add to 100, columns do not add upto 100; Miscelleneous includes day to day spending in household chores)

II. Social Linkages: The effect of migrant students on the households is not only economic but also social. The following analysis is based on the responses of households to questions directed in order to know the social effect of keeping paying guests on the persons actively engaged in managing the paying guests and the household as a whole. It also seeks to know whether it had any influence in building perceptions among households, whether positive or negative towards migrant students.

The first table records the different perceptions reported by respondents which they consider to be the effect of keeping paying guests at home. It was in response to the question asked about how they felt or what changes they experienced in themselves as a consequence of keeping paying guests.

a) Perception of change within the person managing the paying guest: The different category of changes are first, this work keeps them busy, second they get to learn new things from the students, third it helps them curb loneliness, fifth it makes them economically strong and last, irritation in behaviour after starting this business.

Table VIII: Perceptions of persons managing paying guests

1.Types of changes	Yes	No
2.Keeps me busy	78.5	21.5
3.Get to learn new things from the students	20.5	79.5

4.Helps curb loneliness	41	59
5.Economically strong	3	97
6.Hypertension/gets irritated very fast	3.5	96.5

Source: field survey, 2013

From the Table viii, it can be observed that a very high percentage of respondents (78.5per cent) found themselves to have become very busy, which could be because it added to greater work responsibilities. However, much contrary to the findings of an earlier analysis (Table V), where it was found that income earned by keeping paying guests was found to add significantly to total household income; only 3per cent of the members reported that it made them feel economically strong. This aspect of the perception held by the managers of paying guests was unexpected.

To elaborate the reasons why the members considered themselves to be busy, an open ended discussion on the matter was conducted by the researcher. It was reported that keeping paying guests kept them busy because it involved duties such as cooking and serving food, supervising their studies and behaviour and even other responsibilities such as monitoring them during their visits to the market. This simply makes the person managing the paying guest busy as they have to schedule their time according to the students.

Moreover, such duties were time bounded and had to be adjusted according to the specific requirements of the students. Those actively involved in such work, mainly women also adjusted their time of waking up in the morning and retiring to bed at night according to the needs of the students. The duties thus tended to become very routine and mechanical, involving considerable stress. Meals had to be cooked and served to students according to their timing of leaving for and returning from schools/colleges as well as self - study or tutorials. Despite the work schedule being hectic and involving considerable effort, the respondents said that they felt bored when students go back home in the vacations. The overall feeling of respondents towards such work was good as it kept them busy.

Interestingly, it was also reported that 20.5 per cent of the respondents felt that keeping paying guests and interacting with them helped them learn new things. It gave them a scope of learning about the likes and dislikes of the younger generations, the future prospects of study and information about the place, people and culture from where the students have come. Inter-generational knowledge and cultural exchange allowed the local people to be more open towards new culture and ways of life brought by the students.

In the next category which says helps curb loneliness, 41per cent of the people responded positive. This positive response during the field interview was given only by the elderly in age and/or couples whose children have migrated out from the household for the purpose of education or job and are left alone at home.

Much related to the very busy work schedule involved in catering to the needs of students, a small percentage of respondents also found themselves to get irritated very fast. This was mainly due to the hectic and routine nature of work as well as patience required in

dealing with and adjusting to the behaviour and habits of different students. However, the majority (96.5 per cent) reported to be happy with their work.

IX. Conclusion: From this study it can be concluded that migrant students had a substantial influence on both the economic and social life of the residents. There existed a significant relationship between the number of paying guest and the per capita income of the household meaning if the number of paying guest increases the per capita income also increases. The income received by the households, monthly or in any other way was used in various ways. It was observed that the people from diverse occupational category and age-groups were involved in this task which gave the local people some additional income. It was hinted from the responses that this job not only helped them economically but also helped them emotionally as well as mentally. This task made the people managing the paying guest feel busy and engaged which in turn helped them curb their loneliness.

From the review of literatures it is understood that most of the works on educational migration has been done on flow of students from one country to another. There is lack of research regarding educational migration within the country or a state. The literatures on educational migration are limited to only the volume and determinants of migration whereas their condition and place of living and their influence upon the place of destination requires more attention. So this study has presented educational migration from a new perspective.

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