

# **ADJUSTMENT PROCESS OF IMMIGRANTS IN THE MIDST OF ETHNIC CONFLICT: A CASE OF BANGLADESHI IMMIGRANTS IN INDIA**

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The adjustment process of immigrants in the midst of ethnic conflict is not a simple phenomenon. It can be highly associated with political factors or due to rising issues of ethnic sentiments or it can be primarily economical. The issue in this study covered is a multidimensional, i.e. economic, political ethnic. From the historic point of view it has been realised that primarily these Bangladeshi immigrants were brought to Eastern India for the fulfillment of economic needs, later on politicians utilised these immigrants as their supporting elements and further later it was made an issue of ethnic and religious sentiments. But the political importance is still predominant for the continuous flow of immigrants in Assam and West Bengal State of India. Being rising an ethnic issue the immigrants' adjustment in the host society becoming difficult. Not only illegal immigrants are facing difficulty to adjust but also legal immigrants are facing problems in adjustment. The feeling of being a foreigner and the feeling of fear of communal riots and ethnic conflict is high among illegal immigrants. Also interaction at community and societal level and friendship patterns with local people is also weak among illegal immigrants. Most of the illegal immigrants are weakly adjusted or not adjusted at individual (psychological), communal and societal level. Most of the immigrant's adjustment process is in transition type and it is close to non-adjusted type. Experience of ethnic conflict, local language skill, status (legal/illegal) and educational level are the major determinants of the immigrant's adjustment process.

## **Background:**

The most disturbing development of Assam in the twentieth century is population explosion due to tremendous migration. The process of migration into Assam was started with the migration of plantation labour to meet the growing demand of the European tea-planters. The problem became all the more acute during the boom in tea market in 1860s when every planter, big and small, entered into blind competition to push on his cultivation. The planters were advised by the local authorities to procure labour from areas of surplus population (Barpujari, 1998). The time-expired labourers, however, found it convenient to settle near the gardens and supplemented their income by working in times when need for labour was insufficient especially for plucking and hawking. In 1891 the total number of these migrants was estimated at 4,23,199, which went up to 6,54,000 in 1901. On expansion of tea gardens after two decades, a million and half or 30 percent of the total population of Assam was migrants. After 1931 importation of labour slowed down and it was totally stopped by 1941.<sup>1</sup>

Some of the other factors frequently highlighted for incessant flow of immigrants from Bangladesh to Assam are the acute economic crises in East Bengal and warm

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<sup>1</sup>Census 1951 (Assam) xii, Part -A, 73.

welcome accorded to them by their co-religious groups in the neighbouring districts of Goalpara, Kamrup, Darrang, Cachar, and Nagaon of that time (Goswami, 1984).

Looking back at the history of Assam during the last 166 years (since 1826), four different migration flows, totally unconnected with each other have arrived in Assam. First, the arrival of British, second, arrival of tea garden labourers, third is the arrival of Marwaries from the state of Rajasthan and fourth, which is the most important i.e. the massive flow of Bangladeshi Muslims. The later trend is still continuing unabated, resulting in a demographic disaster for Assam and tremendous occupation of wastelands. In case of later one, it is important to note that they never came to Assam on their own. In fact, they were offered incentives and imported into Assam by the contractors. This was in sharp contrast to the bulldozing landless Muslim peasants who not only migrated into Assam from neighbouring Bangladesh (then East Bengal) on their own but were also most actively encouraged by the British and the Muslim leaders in Assam and Bengal (Rai, 1993).

The virgin and fertile land of Assam attracted the Muslim agriculturist population from the adjoining provinces of Bangladesh from the very beginning of this century. Assam, being one of the few places with rich unexplored fertile lands in the sub-continent of India, became the destination of large army of immigrant farmers seeking new land to cultivate.

The British developed the tea industry in Assam. They imported labour from Bihar and other provinces to work in the tea gardens. The Assamese people living mostly in Upper Assam and cultivating one crop per year, were not interested working as labour in the tea gardens, nor in increasing or expanding land cultivation to meet additional requirement of food for the large labour population employed in the tea gardens. Therefore, the British encouraged Bengali Muslim peasants from the present Bangladesh to move in to the lower Assam for putting virgin land under cultivation. This set in motion a movement pattern, which, despite changed conditions, has been continuing till now. The Bengali Muslims were hard working peasants who occupied vacant land and put virgin land under cultivation. They made a significant contribution to the agricultural economy of Assam.

The problems of Assam truly began with the arrival of these Mymensinghia from the demographically saturated districts of Bangladesh and also the irrational attachment of Sylhet and Cachar districts with Assam. With the inclusion of Sylhet district, Assam was demographically and politically balanced precariously between Assamese Hindu

and the Bengali Muslims. The 1937 election produced the Minority League Government. The government aroused fear among Assamese that the entire province might be incorporated in to the Muslim State of Pakistan, a fear made more credible by the increasing influx of Bengali Muslim migrants in the state.

With Constitutional Reforms, the country started advancing towards democracy, which is a game of numbers. The Muslim League now came up with its demand for partition, on the basis of religion. This added a new twist to this population movement. During the Muslim League Ministry, a concerted effort was made to encourage the migration of Bengali Muslims in to Assam for political reasons. The Viceroy, Lord Wavell wrote in the Viceroy's Journal, "The chief political problem is the desire of the Muslim Minister to increase this immigration into the uncultivated Government lands under the slogan of Grow More Food but what they are really after, is Grow More Muslims".

Since attaining Independence in 1947 India has received voluminous stream of political refugees totalling about 2.5 million from East Pakistan (present Bangladesh) (Mukerji, 1985). Partition brought about a sea change in the situation. An international border now separated Assam and East Pakistan. Population movement from East Pakistan continued but it was initially mostly of Hindu refugees, fleeing from religious persecution. Unlike the West, where refugee movement lasted for a few months only, in the case of East, this spread over several years and is still continuing. Hindu population in East Pakistan started declining steeply. In 1947 it was 27 percent, by 1971 it had reduced to 14 percent and by 1991 it was down to 10 percent. Along with the Hindu refugees, Muslim infiltrators continued migrating into Assam for economic reasons.

Before partition of the country there used to be free movement of people between East Bengal and India without any document. On 14 August 1947 Pakistan was separated from India and became an independent nation. Pakistan was composed of two distinct geographical units, the East wing (present Bangladesh) and West wing. These two wings are distinctly differed in language, culture, tradition and habit. Bengali was the mother tongue of the people of East wing, but for West wing Urdu was mother tongue. The setting up of the Dominion of India and Pakistan did not prove deterrent to the exodus of the Bengali Muslims in to Assam. In spite of Pakistani Passport System, Pakistan (Control) Act, and Migration Act, 1950, the inflow of migrants remained unabated. As most of the earlier migrants settled down in districts of Assam adjoining to Bangladesh, the new comers found no difficulty in crossing the porous border and settled

down through among their relatives unchecked and undetected. During 1951-61 the rate of increase of Muslims in Assam has been estimated at 27.5 percent as against the natural increase of 22.4 percent. Muslims who came from Bangladesh and settled in Assam stood 220,691 in 1961. According to an estimate out of these immigrants 6952 were passport holders and rest 213,739 were illegal immigrants.<sup>2</sup>

The question of Bengali Muslims who were in Assam prior to the emergence of Pakistan in 1947 became so entangled and so politicised that it had to be dealt with specifically under the Inter-Dominion Agreement, 1948 (Mujahid, 1970) and the Liaquat-Nehru Agreement, 1950 (Mujahid, 1970). The later agreement ensured greater security for Muslim settlers, and soon after the agreement many of those who had been turned previously into refugees, started going back their homes. But since the returnees were left out of the 1950 Indian Census, they are recognised persistently by the Assamese as Bengali infiltrators. The problem still remains a matter of great controversy both inside and outside Assam.

The creation of Bangladesh in 1971 indeed further boosted the process of migration because there were no changes in the social interaction, linguistic affinity and economic compulsions. According to census authorities, the numbers of people who migrated illegally from Bangladesh to India totalled over 1.7 million during 1961-71, and over half a million during 1971-81. These figures did not include the estimated 0.6 million who entered Assam during 1971-81.<sup>3</sup> Though Bangladesh Government has steadfastly denied that its citizens cross over to India, but the evidence from Bangladesh Census figures shows that, millions of people disappeared from Bangladesh. As quoted in the *India Today*, 10 August 1998, S Sharif Begum, a demographer at the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies in Dhaka, calculated that nearly 3.5 million people 'disappeared' from East Pakistan during 1951 to 1961, probably as a result of partition. Also indicated another 1.5 million people may have entered India during 1961 to 1974. Also there are evidences of documented immigrants from Bangladesh, who visit India with perfectly valid visa and passport and then simply disappear. In 1991, 13,424 people from Bangladesh visited India with valid documents but in the records of returning there were only 9,645 numbers: in 1992, only 12,160 out of 21,574 went back: and in 1994, only 21,436 of the 29,757 visitors left India. A large numbers disappeared only to re-emerge with new identities. Many visitors used fake passports. In 1996, Regional

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<sup>2</sup>*The Statesman*, 12 March, 1970.

<sup>3</sup>*The Assam Tribune*, 29 August 1998, Guwahati.

Passport Officer personally supervised the screening of 16,000 ‘suspicious’ passport applications and sent out letters to the permanent addresses given by the applicants and received almost all of them back with the “address not found” stamp.<sup>4</sup>

According to Bezbarua,<sup>5</sup> (editor, *The Sentinel*,) there are two most important reasons, which make possible the flow of immigration to Assam from Bangladesh still in the same pre-partition rate. First reason is that local contractors and other employers in Assam and other North Eastern States of India manage to exploit this kind of Bangladeshi immigrant labour, where they can be engaged at much lower wages, because there is no alternate in their own country. Since these labourers are hard working as well as skilled, so, in most of the construction sights of building and bridges of urban areas such labourers are engaged in mass. There are also large concentration of illegal Bangladeshi Muslim migrants in cities and other urban centres, who are mainly engaged themselves as rickshaw-puller. The second reason, which is probably the most important reason, politicians have encouraged migration from 1961 onwards. Because by clandestinely getting the names in the voter list, they created an illegal vote bank, on the basis of which it is very easy to win election. This process has continued regardless of which party is in power. Now there is a clear indication that every political party in Assam that has come to power has used that illegal vote bank.

Of late environmental degradation has also become an important reason for large-scale out migration from Bangladesh to India. Most of the recent immigrants from Bangladesh are due to the environmental degradation in south-east Bangladesh. Many of the recent Bangladeshi immigrants are originally from the south western part of Bangladesh and very often they are forced to leave their homeland for environmental reasons. Many left due to loss of agricultural land in home land: some left due to reduced fish catch in home land: also some left because of river bank erosion and due to flood. Most of migrants left their home land due to above causes were originally from the Kushtia, Mehepur and Chuadanga districts of Bangladesh and these districts were the first to be affected by Farakka water diversion as they are situated in the immediate down stream of the barrage. There was a sudden increase of illegal immigrants from Bangladesh in the later half of the seventies due to environmentally displaced Bangladeshis from the Farakka-affected region” and has created native-migrant conflicts in Assam in 1979 (Swain, 1996; Saikia, 2001).

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<sup>4</sup>The *India Today*, 10 August 1998.

<sup>5</sup>During an interview with the author he was highlighted these points.

Leading intellectuals in Bangladesh have been making out a case for “Lebensraum” (living place) for their country. Mr. Sadeq Khan, a former diplomat wrote in *Holiday* on October 18 1991, “All projections however, clearly indicate that by the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century Bangladesh will face a serious crisis of Lebensraum.... if consumer benefit is considered to be better served by broad competitive trade of labour, there is no reason why regional and international co-operation could not be worked out to plan and execute population movement and settlement to avoid critical demographic pressure in pockets of high concentration. A natural overflow of population is very much on the cards and will not be able to restrain by barbed wire or border patrol measures. The natural trend of population over-flow from Bangladesh is towards the sparsely populated lands in the Southeast in the Arakan side of the Northeast in the Seven States side of the Indian sub-continent”. Mr Abdul Momin, former Foreign Secretary and Bangladesh’s first Ambassador to China writing in the same magazine stated, “ The runaway population growth in Bangladesh resulting in suffocating density of population in a territorially small country, presents a nightmarish picture”.<sup>6</sup> Arguing that along with border-less circulation of goods and commodities there should be border-less competitive trade of labour. The views of Jinnah,, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Sadeq Khan and Abdul Momin have a common thread running through that there should be out-migration from Bangladesh to adjoining areas in India. However, no matter how friendly is India’s relation with Bangladesh, India can ill afford to ignore the dangers inherent in demographic invasion from that of Bangladesh.<sup>7</sup>

Besides, the above mentioned flow of immigrants from Bangladesh to Assam, the Bangladesh War of Independence in 1971 also resulted into heavy influx of both Hindu and Muslim refugees in India, particularly in Assam and West Bengal. On average, 36,000 were estimated to cross the India border every day, with the maximum rate of daily migration exceeding 100,000 persons. They were sheltered in over 500 camps hurriedly organised and operated along the 1,350-mile long common border. By August 1971, the number of Bangladesh refugees in India was recorded 7.55 million of whom 6.97 million were Hindus, 0.54 million Muslims and 0.04 million others (Ayooob and Subrahmanyam, 1972). This number later increased to nearly 10million (Greenough and Cash, 1973).

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<sup>6</sup>*Holiday*, 20 November 1991.

<sup>7</sup>*The Sentinel*, 18 and 19 December 1998.

**Introduction:**

The process of acculturation and social integration of immigrants is as complex as the societies involved in the international movement of people. Such migration including the free movement of labour within the developed region and developing region and between developed and developing regions as well as flight of refugee and expellees from countries subject to civil warfare and political upheaval. Furthermore, the process of socio-cultural adoption and immigrant's adjustment process may occur without undue conflict when receiving society is experiencing economic growth and relative affluence; but immigration give rise to problems when unemployment is high or if there is competition for other scare resources, such as agricultural land, affordable housing, access to high education or welfare benefit in the receiving society.

Earlier sociological studies of the assimilation of immigrants were often based upon on oversimplified misrepresentation of the characteristics of immigrants and the conditions in sending and receiving societies. The problems of socio-cultural adoption experienced by those immigrants were quite different from those whose international movements have taken place in the age of jet aircraft, radio, television and computers (Anthony, 1988). But in the modern period also some international movements consist the same features as earlier movement. These are mainly seen in case of cross border migration without document (illegal migration) and refugee movement, which are usually experienced in poorer areas.

Today more than ever it is important to recognize the poly-ethnic and culturally diversified character of both sending and receiving countries. There may not be one single way of life in a society into which immigrants arriving must eventually be assimilated. In a society, which is ethnically stratified and culturally pluralistic there exhibits a diversity of life-styles.<sup>8</sup> Almost all the countries have indigenous racial and ethnic minorities who have retained distinctive languages, religions and subcultures for several generations. To these already heterogeneous populations have been added more recent immigrants and their children, who have increased still further the ethnic diversity of the countries concerned.

According to Gordon (1964) culture and behavioural assimilation is the first step in the process of assimilation; the final step of social-structural assimilation is the

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<sup>8</sup>Immigration and ethnic origin are not only sources of cultural variation in modern societies, where, diversity freedom of choice and tolerance of alternate life-style have been institutionalized. Other sources of such sub-cultural variations include age, gender, sexual orientation, education, occupation,

large-scale entrance into cliques, clubs, institutions and organisations of the host society on the primary group level. This would mean that socio-economic factors might have little or no direct effect upon the degree of social assimilation, although they may be significantly related to cultural assimilation. But, many studies on Israeli immigrants in the United States show that socio-economic variables have much more effect on social assimilation (Elizur, 1978; Freedman and Korazim, 1983).

### **Interaction with the Community:**

Research on both the theory of socio-cultural adoption and conflict, and on the processes experienced by migrant groups in specific countries, has been surprisingly frugal in view of its complexity and importance (Reginald, 1988). Due to rapid movement of people, whether it may be permanent or temporary in large or small scale, ethnic, societal, religious and linguistic diversities become important issues focused by social scientists. To become a member of a diverse society, region or a nation, which is a new world for a person who moves there, has become a complex issue for immigrants. The combinations of illegal status, linguistic, religious and socio-cultural differences encourage the immigrant community to live in isolation. New comers live mainly within the confines of their workplace and residence and only gradually interact with the next-door neighbours, landlords and shopkeepers.

To adjust with a new society initially the structure of friendship pattern and opportunity to make friendship is the most important factor for immigrants. A study (Mohamood, 1994) of adoption of Bangladeshi immigrants in Japan shows that their first friends are generally fellow workers with whom they eat and talk during breaks. In due course, local colleagues get to know and appreciate foreign cultures and values. Living together in the same factory building, using the same factory kitchen and sharing the same lobby watching television, provide further opportunity for interaction with local people. Similarity of age and being separated from their families can further bond relationship.

Beyond work place, immigrants meet people from the neighbourhood walking to and from work, at local bars and restaurants, or through other friends, making friends becomes progressively easier. But, this study concluded, that Bangladeshis in Japan go through the painful and gradual process of adjusting to a new world. Language barriers,

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rural/urban location, religion. These all have contributed to the multiple choice available.

health and medi-care, lack of interaction with the community and society, inadequate housing and, most important, living in constant fear of the law, are among the most serious problems.

However, it is very difficult to substantiate many of the findings due to lack of material on such type of study. Living with an illegal status is by far the most difficult problem immigrants are facing. They are haunted constantly by the fear of being apprehended by the law. Every time they see a policeman in the street they fear arrest. Fear of apprehension is most acute during first few years. Gradually, they become used to the situation, and start communicating with local people of the same community and later out side their community. Such type of relationship mainly starts due to employment purpose. Interactions take place at the place of work, market centre or shopping centre, working together at the place of cultivation. These are the major source of interaction with the local people.

#### **Data and Methods:**

To study the adjustment process of immigrants primary data were collected by the author. On the basis of the knowledge of the local people about respondents four hundred immigrants were selected randomly from the India Bangladesh border area of the Assam state in India and capital city of Guwahati of Assam (200 respondents for each area). By the structured schedules head of the household was interviewed. After the formal interview there was a casual conversation with each respondent to assess his experience of ethnic conflicts and religious violence.

The Multidimensional Model of International Migrants Adjustment [in the Appendix] is used to examine the qualitative and quantitative measures of adjustment of immigrants. Adjustment processes are studied at three levels (individual, communal and societal levels). Individual level adjustment is measured in terms of psychological feeling of immigrants about their status i.e. frequency of feeling of being foreigner, frequency of feeling of fear and tension about communal riots, religious violence etc. Community level adjustment is measured in terms of mutual visits and friendship relationship with local Muslim people, getting invitation from local Muslim people and participation in non-religious functions. At societal level adjustment is measured in terms of mutual visits and friendship relationship with local non-Muslim people, as well as participation in local festivals etc. Logistic Regression analysis technique is used to examine the determination of adjustment process.

### **Adjustment Process in the Midst of Ethnic Fear:**

The first priority of immigrants (where immigration flow is mainly due to poverty in the place of origin) in the new land is to find out an area, which can give them better way of living, in terms of earning, food supply and housing. The second criterion for such immigrants is to look for their social and occupational security. To fulfil the first one, they move to places, where fertile land for cultivation is available and demand of labour is high. In case of second one, they prefer to settle in areas, where already fellow immigrants are settled. But, when the government's immigration laws and citizenship act are very liberal, or local people do not raise any objection against the immigration, immigrants may not follow the second criteria for selecting areas for their settlement. In such circumstances the state (place of destination) experiences large-scale immigration flow. If the process continues for long time, it can lead to different problems and indigenous people start realizing the negative consequences of immigration flow. This may which may result into conflicts between local people and immigrants. In case of Assam, there exists a threat perception against Bangladeshi immigrants among local people and high potentiality of conflicts and violence (Saikia, 1999). This coupled with illegal status of many immigrants; they always maintain a gap in terms of personal interaction between themselves and local non-Muslim people. Also because of tension and fear of being apprehended to law due to their illegal status, they limit their interaction with local people.

After the movement against foreigners in Assam, the adjustment process of Muslim immigrants had changed into different directions. Interaction between local people and Muslim immigrants has become highly vulnerable towards the conflict. Due to the fear of such conflict interaction between immigrants (particularly Bangladeshi Muslim immigrants) and local people had reduced. The reduction of interaction with local people has been observed not only in case of illegal immigrants or recent immigrants but also with earlier Bangladesh origin settlers who are now citizens of India. This is because during the anti-foreigner's movement there were many conflicts between illegal immigrants and local people. In reality, it seemed that the conflicts were not only between illegal immigrants and local people, but the conflicts was between two groups of people on one side the whole Bangladesh origin people and on other side the local people of the state. Due to such experiences, not only the illegal immigrants

psychologically find difficult to adjust but also earlier settlers from Bangladesh are facing the same because of tension and fear of potential conflict.<sup>9</sup>

Several questions were asked to study the adjustment of Bangladeshi immigrants in Assam and find out whether there are differences between illegal and legal immigrants in different aspects of adjustment process.

### **Immigrants' Feelings:**

For the study of adjustment process of immigrants it is important to know their feelings about themselves and feeling about communal and ethnic fear. Table 1A and 7.01B show the feeling of being foreigner. To understand their feeling, questions were asked regarding: frequency of his feeling as a foreigner and frequency of feeling about communal riots and ethnic conflicts.

Table 1A gives the distribution of legal and illegal immigrants by frequency of feeling being foreigner. It is seen that 41 percent of immigrants feel being foreigner either frequently (18 percent) or occasionally (23 percent). More than one-third of immigrants (40 percent) never have feeling of being foreigner. There is significant difference between legal and illegal immigrants in this respect. Nearly one-third illegal immigrants (31 percent) compared to only 5 percent legal immigrants have frequently feeling being foreigner. In contrast, majority of legal immigrants (66 percent) never had a feeling of being foreigner. This percentage is only 14 percent among illegal immigrants. The situation is almost similar in rural and urban areas. However, a higher proportion of both legal and illegal immigrants in rural areas than in urban areas never get the feeling being foreigner.

**Table 1A: Percent of immigrants by frequency of feeling being foreigner by illegal and legal status, according to residence**

Frequency of feeling	Rural		Urban		Total		Total
	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	
Frequently	7.0	25.0	3.0	37.0	5.0	31.0	18.0
Occasionally	11.0	41.0	5.0	33.0	8.0	37.0	22.5
Rarely	12.0	16.0	30.0	20.0	21.0	18.0	19.5
Never	70.0	18.0	62.0	10.0	66.0	14.0	40.0
Total percentage	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

<sup>9</sup> Such feelings of Bangladeshi origin people (both illegal and legal immigrants) was understood by the author through casual conversations with immigrant respondents during his field visit.

**No. of immigrants      100      100                      100                      200                      200                      400**

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Table 1B also confirms that among the immigrants who frequently feel of being foreigner, a large majority in both rural (78 percent) and urban (93 percent) areas are illegal immigrants and those who never had that feeling, a vast majority are legal immigrants (80percent and 86 percent in rural and urban areas respectively).

**Table 1B: Percentage share of legal and illegal immigrants by feeling of being foreigner, according to residence**

Feeling about foreigner	Rural		Urban		Total	
	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal
Frequently	21.9	78.1	7.5	92.5	13.9	86.1
Occasionally	21.2	78.8	13.2	86.8	17.8	82.2
Rarely	42.9	57.1	60.0	40.0	53.8	46.2
Never	79.5	20.5	86.1	23.9	82.5	17.5

Table 2A shows the proportion of legal, illegal and total immigrants by frequency of feeling of communal riot according to residence. More than half (55 percent) of immigrants, have frequent feeling (33 percent) and occasional feeling (23 percent) of communal riots and violence. There is a significant difference in this respect between legal and illegal immigrants. More than three-fourth (78 percent) of illegal immigrants frequently or occasionally fear about communal riots compared to one-third (33 percent) legal immigrants. Similarly there is significant difference between rural and urban immigrants regarding feeling of fear about communal riots. A larger proportion of both legal and illegal immigrants in rural areas than in urban area have such feeling of fear about communal riots either frequently or occasionally. This may be because of better law and order situation in urban than in rural areas. However, both in rural and urban areas a high proportion of illegal than legal immigrants fear about communal riots. The difference is particularly significant in urban areas as 69 percent of illegal immigrants but only 13 percent of legal immigrants fear about communal riots. More than 40 percent of legal immigrants (44 percent) never have fear of communal riots compared to only 9 percent of illegal immigrants. This can be further seen from Table 2B, which shows the percentage share of legal and illegal immigrants by frequency of fear about communal riots in rural and urban areas. Among those who frequently feel fear about communal riots

about three-fourth immigrants are illegal and only one-fourth are legal immigrants whereas among those who never feel fear about communal riots an overwhelming majority (84 percent) are legal immigrants. In urban areas, among those who frequently feel fear about communal riots 96 percent are illegal immigrants. While conducting the field-work the author has a detailed casual conversation with most of these immigrants and author was told that a large number of illegal immigrants experienced communal violence against them during anti-foreigners movement in Assam thus making them more fearful about communal violence and riots.

**Table 2A: Percent of immigrants by frequency of feeling of fear about communal riots by legal and illegal status, according to residence**

Frequency of feeling	Rural		Urban		Total		Total
	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	
Frequently	30.0	56.0	2.0	42.0	16.0	49.0	32.5
Occasionally	23.0	30.0	11.0	27.0	17.0	28.5	22.8
Rarely	14.0	9.0	32.0	19.0	23.0	14.0	18.5
Never	33.0	5.0	55.0	12.0	44.0	8.5	26.2
Total percentage	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>No. of immigrants</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>400</b>

**Table 2B: Percentage share of legal and illegal immigrants by frequency of feeling of fear about communal riots, according to residence**

Feeling about riot	Rural		Urban		Total	
	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal
Frequently	34.9	65.1	4.5	95.5	24.6	75.4
Occasionally	43.4	56.6	28.9	71.1	37.4	62.6
Rarely	60.9	39.1	62.7	37.3	62.2	37.8
Never	86.8	13.2	82.1	17.9	83.8	16.2

### **Mutual Visits:**

To understand the adjustment process it is also important to know the interaction of the immigrants with the local people of their community as well as other local people. This has been studied by mutual visits of Bangladeshi immigrants to local Muslims and non-Muslim people.

Table 3A shows the pattern of mutual visits of Bangladeshi immigrants to local Muslim people. Around half of the immigrants (47 percent) visit local Muslims frequently. A high proportion of legal immigrants (56 percent) visit local Muslims compared to illegal immigrants (39 percent). Only a small proportion of illegal (15 percent) and legal immigrants (3 percent) never visit local Muslims. Among those who frequently visit local Muslims more than half (59 percent) of immigrants are legal immigrants (Table 3 B). But, among those who never visit, more than 80 percent are illegal immigrants. There is not much difference between rural and urban areas in this regard. In both rural and urban areas, among those who never visit local Muslims overwhelming majority is of illegal immigrants (80 percent or more).

**Table 3A: Percent of immigrants by frequency of mutual visits to local Muslim people by illegal and legal status, according to residence**

Frequency of visit	Rural		Urban		Total		Total
	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	
Frequently	80.0	41.0	31.0	37.0	55.5	39.0	47.2
Occasionally	17.0	45.0	35.0	6.0	26.0	25.5	25.8
Rarely	2.0	10.0	30.0	32.0	16.0	21.0	18.5
Never	1.0	4.0	4.0	25.0	2.5	14.5	9.5
Total percentage	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>No. of immigrants</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>400</b>

**Table 3B: Percentage share of legal and illegal immigrants by frequency of mutual visits with local Muslim people, according to residence**

Feeling of visit	Rural		Urban		Total	
	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal
Frequently	66.1	33.9	45.6	54.4	58.7	41.3
Occasionally	27.4	72.6	85.4	14.6	50.5	49.5
Rarely	16.7	83.3	48.4	51.6	43.2	56.8
Never	20.0	80.0	13.8	86.2	14.7	85.3

Table 4A shows the pattern of mutual visits of Bangladeshi immigrants to local non-Muslim people. The pattern of mutual visits of all immigrants is not much different from the earlier one. Only one-fifth (20 percent) immigrants frequently visit non-Muslim people. Here also a much higher proportion of legal immigrants (57 percent) compare to illegal immigrants (34 percent) visit local non-Muslims

frequently or occasionally. In contrast, the proportion of those who never visit local non-Muslim is higher for illegal immigrants than legal immigrants. This is true both in rural and urban areas. Among those immigrants who frequently visit local non-Muslims more than 70 percent are legal immigrants both in rural and urban areas but among those who never visit local non-Muslims, 70 percent are illegal immigrants (66 percent in rural areas and 81 percent in urban areas) (Table 4 B).

**Table 4A: Percent of immigrants by frequency of mutual visits with non-Muslim people by illegal, legal status, according to residence**

Frequency of visit	Rural		Urban		Total		
	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Total
Frequently	19.0	6.0	39.0	15.0	29.0	11.0	19.8
Occasionally	26.0	13.0	31.0	33.0	28.0	23.0	25.8
Rarely	33.0	38.0	26.0	35.0	30.0	36.0	33.0
Never	22.0	43.0	4.0	17.0	13.0	30.0	21.4
Total percentage	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>No. of immigrants</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>400</b>

**Table 4B: Percentage share of legal and illegal immigrants by frequency of mutual visits with local non-Muslim people, according to residence**

Frequency of visits	Rural		Urban		Total	
	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal
Frequently	76.0	24.0	72.2	27.8	73.4	26.6
Occasionally	66.7	33.3	48.4	51.6	55.3	44.7
Rarely	46.5	53.5	42.6	57.4	44.7	55.3
Never	33.8	66.2	19.0	81.0	30.2	69.8

So, it is clear that there are not many differences by religion of local people on mutual visits between immigrants and local people. Most of such visits start due to employment purpose and immigrants do not have hesitation to work with or work under different religion people or employer.

#### **Friendship Pattern:**

The importance of friendship pattern in the adjustment process in a new world has been already discussed earlier. The following findings show the strength of friendship

and impact of religion. Table 5 A shows the strength of friendship pattern with local Muslim people. Overall only 12 percent of immigrants have all close five friends from local Muslim community. Eighteen percent immigrants do not have any close friend from local Muslims. The largest proportion of both legal and illegal immigrants have only 1-2 close friends from local Muslim community. The friendship is more or less similar for rural and urban areas. However, both in rural and urban areas a much higher proportion of illegal immigrants than legal immigrants do not have any close friend from local Muslims.

Among those immigrants who have all five close friends from local Muslim community, more than half are legal immigrants (57 percent). Only close friends from local Muslim community, nearly two-third are illegal immigrants. But in urban areas it is just reverse (Table 5 B).

**Table 5A: Percent of immigrants by number of local Muslim friends among five close friends by legal and illegal status, according to residence**

Number of friends	Rural		Urban		Total		
	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Total
All friends	22.0	11.0	6.0	10.0	14.0	10.5	12.3
3-4 friends	30.0	21.0	21.0	11.0	25.5	16.0	20.7
1-2 friends	44.0	49.0	57.0	46.0	50.5	47.5	49.0
No friend	4.0	19.0	16.0	33.0	10.0	26.0	18.0
Total percentage	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>No. of immigrants</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>400</b>

**Table 5B: Percentage share of legal and illegal immigrants by number of local (non-immigrants Muslim) friends among five close friends, according to residence**

Number of friends	Rural		Urban		Total	
	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal
All friends	66.7	33.3	37.5	62.5	57.1	42.9
3-4 friends	58.8	41.2	65.6	34.4	61.4	38.6
1-2 friend	47.3	52.7	55.3	44.7	51.5	48.5
No friend	17.4	82.6	32.7	67.3	27.8	72.2

Table 6A shows the pattern of friendship of legal and illegal and total immigrants with local non-Muslim people according to residence. More than half (54 percent) of total immigrants do not have any close friend from local non-Muslim community. However, a much higher proportion of illegal immigrants (68 percent) than legal immigrants (39 percent) fall in this category. But compared to rural areas lower 68 percent legal and 90 percent illegal immigrants do not have any close friend from local non-Muslim community.

This is further confirmed from table 6B. There are only 7 legal immigrants who have their all five close friends from local non-Muslim community. Among those who do not have any local non-Muslim friend, majority (64 percent) are illegal immigrants. Among those immigrants who have one or two friends from local non-Muslim community, majority are legal immigrants (64 percent or more).

**Table 06A: Percent of immigrants by number of local non-Muslim friends among five close friends by legal and illegal status, according to residence**

Number of friends	Rural		Urban		Total		
	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Total
All friends	2.0	0.0	5.0	0.0	4.0	0.0	2.0
3-4 friends	8.0	3.0	34.0	19.0	21.0	11.0	16.0
1-2 friends	22.0	7.0	51.0	34.0	36.0	21.0	28.0
No friend	68.0	90.0	10.0	47.0	39.0	68.0	54.0
Total percentage	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>No. of immigrants</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>400</b>

**Table 6B: Percentage share of immigrants by number of local non-Muslim friends among five close friends, according to residence**

Number of friends	Rural		Urban		Total	
	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal
All friends	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
3-4 friends	72.7	27.3	64.2	35.8	65.6	34.4
1-2 friend	75.9	24.1	60.0	40.0	64.0	36.0
No friend	43.0	57.0	17.5	82.5	36.3	63.7

There is a clear indication that, immigrants do consider the religion in making close friendship. Even though most of the friendship occurs due to occupation/employment purpose, in case of all-friends and 3-4 friends' categories the percentage is always lower for immigrants having non-Muslim friends, it is happening regardless of illegal or legal immigrants and in rural or urban areas.

### **Community Participations:**

It has already been discussed in the beginning of this chapter, how community participation is important for understanding the adjustment process of immigrant. Tables 7 to 10 show participation of immigrants in community functions, such as getting invitation in different kind of non-religious ceremonies/functions, local Assamese festivals, local Muslim ceremonies and festivals and non-Muslim ceremonies/festivals. By understanding their frequency of participation and frequency of getting invitation one can make out the adjustment (accessibility/opportunity to participate and getting invitation) at community level.

Table 7A and 7B show the immigrants' participation in non-religious functions. The table presents the proportion of legal, illegal and total immigrants by frequency of participation share of legal and illegal immigrants in each category of frequency of participation respectively. Here non-religious functions include inauguration of school building, inauguration of hospital, *Bahagi Mela* (cultural function after *Bahag Bihu*) and other cultural programmes. Only 12 percent of immigrants are participating in such kind of functions frequently and 17 percent never participate in such functions. Majority of immigrants participate in such functions either rarely (38 percent) or occasionally (33 percent). A much higher proportion of illegal immigrants (25 percent) than legal immigrants (8 percent) never participate in non-religious ceremonies or functions. This pattern is similar in both rural and urban areas (Table 7 A).

**Table 7A: percent of immigrants by participation in non-religious ceremonies/functions by legal and illegal status, according to residence**

Frequency of participation	Rural		Urban		Total		
	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Total
Never	3.0	16.0	13.0	35.0	8.0	25.0	17.0
Rarely	13.0	43.0	57.0	39.0	35.0	41.0	38.0

Occasionally	54.0	29.0	25.0	24.0	39.0	27.0	33.0
Frequently	30.0	12.0	5.0	2.0	18.0	7.0	12.0
Total percentage	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>No. of immigrants</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>400</b>

**Table 7B: Percentage share of legal and illegal immigrants in participation in non-religious ceremonies/functions, according to residence**

Frequency of participation	Rural		Urban		Total	
	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal
Never	15.8	84.2	27.1	72.9	23.9	76.1
Rarely	23.2	76.8	59.4	40.6	46.1	53.9
Occasionally	65.1	34.9	51.0	49.0	59.8	40.2
Frequently	71.4	28.6	71.4	28.6	71.4	28.6

Table 8A and 8B show immigrants participation in local Assamese festivals. Here local Assamese festivals or occasions are *Bihu*, *Shankardev Tithi*, *Madhabdev Tithi*, *Silarairai Dibash* etc. Only one-fourth of immigrants participate in such kind of festivals frequently (Table 8A) and among them only one fifth have having illegal status (Table 8B). Slightly more than one out of ten immigrants never participate in such festivals, and among them more than 90 percent (Table 8B) are illegal immigrants. The proportion of those who never participate in local Assamese festivals is higher in urban areas than in rural areas, more particularly in case of illegal immigrants. A higher proportion of both legal (51 percent) and illegal (19 percent) immigrants participate in local Assamese festivals in rural areas than in urban areas (24 percent legal and only 1 percent illegal immigrants).

**Table 8A: Percent of immigrants by participation in local Assamese festivals by legal and illegal status, according to residence**

Frequency of participation	Rural		Urban		Total	
	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal
Never	1.0	14.0	2.0	37.0	2.0	25.0
Rarely	3.0	25.0	13.0	51.0	8.0	38.0
Occasionally	45.0	42.0	61.0	11.0	53.0	27.0
Frequently	51.0	19.0	24.0	1.0	37.0	10.0
Total percentage	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>No. of immigrants</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>

**Table 8B: Percentage share of illegal, legal immigrants by participation in local Assamese festivals, according to residence**

Frequency of participation	Rural		Urban		Total	
	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal
Never	6.7	93.3	5.1	94.9	5.6	94.4
Rarely	10.7	89.3	20.3	79.7	17.4	82.6
Occasionally	51.7	48.3	84.7	15.3	66.7	33.3
Frequently	72.9	27.1	96.0	4.0	78.9	21.1

Table 9A shows the proportions of legal, illegal and total immigrants by frequency of getting invitation by the immigrants from local Muslim people for different kind of festivals/ceremonies (*Eid, Maharam*, marriage and circumcision etc.). More than one-fourth of immigrants get invitation frequently and one-fifth never gets invitation for attending local Muslim ceremonies and festivals. Larger proportion of legal immigrants than illegal immigrants get invitation occasionally or frequently for attending such ceremonies and festivals both in rural and urban areas but differences are sharper in urban area than in rural areas.

**Table 9A: Percentage of immigrants by getting invitation for local Muslim ceremonies/festivals by legal and illegal status, according to residence**

Frequency of participation	Rural		Urban		Total		
	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Total
Never	14.0	18.0	16.0	30.0	15.0	24.0	20.0
Rarely	18.0	24.0	27.0	37.0	23.0	30.0	26.0
Occasionally	34.0	30.0	28.0	18.0	31.0	24.0	28.0
Frequently	34.0	28.0	29.0	15.0	31.0	22.0	26.0
Total percentage	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>No. of immigrants</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>400</b>

**Table 9B: Percentage share of legal and illegal immigrants by getting invitation for local Muslim ceremonies/festivals, according to residence**

Frequency of invitation	Rural		Urban		Total	
	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal
Never	43.8	56.3	34.8	65.2	38.5	61.5
Rarely	42.9	57.1	42.2	57.8	42.5	57.5
Occasionally	53.1	46.9	60.9	39.1	56.4	43.6

Frequently	54.8	45.2	65.9	34.1	59.4	40.6
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As far share of legal and illegal immigrants by frequency of invitations for such ceremonies and festivals, illegal immigrants predominate in ‘never’ and ‘rarely’ categories and legal immigrants predominate in ‘occasionally’ and ‘frequently’ categories. This pattern is similar in rural and urban areas.

Table 10A and 10B show the proportion and share of legal and illegal immigrants by frequency of getting invitation from non-Muslim people for different kinds of festivals and ceremonies (*Durga Puja, Shiv Ratri*, marriage and other ceremonies and festivals). Only 15 percent of immigrants get invitation frequently, and 18 percent never get invitation from non-Muslim communities for attending their ceremonies and festivals. However, the proportion of those who get these invitations either occasionally or frequently is much higher for legal immigrants than illegal immigrants in rural as well as in urban areas.

**Table 10A: Percent of immigrants by frequency of getting invitation for non-Muslim ceremonies/festivals by legal and illegal status, according to residence**

Frequency of participation	Rural		Urban		Total		Total
	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	
Never	9.0	39.0	9.0	17.0	9.0	28.0	18.0
Rarely	31.0	38.0	14.0	40.0	22.5	39.0	31.0
Occasionally	38.0	14.0	60.0	33.0	49.0	23.0	36.0
Frequently	22.0	9.0	17.0	10.0	19.5	10.0	15.0
Total percentage	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>No. of immigrants</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>400</b>

**Table 10B: Percentage share of legal and illegal immigrants by getting Invitation for non-Muslim ceremonies/festivals, according to residence**

Frequency of invitation	Rural		Urban		Total	
	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal
Never	18.8	81.3	34.6	65.4	24.3	75.7
Rarely	44.9	55.1	25.9	74.1	36.6	63.4
Occasionally	73.1	26.9	64.5	35.5	67.6	32.4
Frequently	71.0	29.0	63.0	37.0	67.2	32.8

In case of invitation for non-Muslim festivals also illegal immigrants dominate in ‘never’ and ‘rarely’ categories and legal immigrants predominate in ‘occasionally’ and ‘frequently’ categories both in rural and urban areas,

### **Levels and Degree of Adjustment:**

The levels of adjustment were calculated by using the Multidimensional Model of International Immigrants Adjustment. The immigrants adjustment has been determined at three levels: 1) at the individual level, 2) at the community level and 3) at the societal level. Individual level: which is measured in terms of psychological feeling of immigrants. Community level: which is measured in terms of mutual visits with local Muslim people i.e. frequency of getting invitation from them and participation in non-religious functions and friendship pattern with local Muslims. Societal level: which is measured in terms of mutual visits and friendship relationship with local non-Muslim people and participation in local festivals. The degree of adjustment is also determined at three levels i.e. no adjustment, weak adjustment and strong adjustment.

Table 11 A, B and C present the number and percentage distribution of total, illegal and legal immigrants by levels and degree of adjustment for all areas, rural areas and urban area.

It is seen that overall more than half of immigrants are not adjusted at individual level or psychologically. But a higher proportion of illegal immigrants (58 percent) than legal immigrants (44 percent) are not adjusted psychologically. Overall less than one-fifth of immigrants (18 percent) are strongly adjusted psychologically, and less than one-third of immigrants (31 percent) are psychologically weakly adjusted. At community level also less than one-fifth of immigrants are strongly adjusted. Among illegal immigrants 45 percent and among legal immigrants 30 percent are not adjusted at community level. At societal level little less than one-third of immigrants (32 percent) are strongly adjusted and more than one-third (38 percent) are not adjusted. Among illegal immigrants 25 percent and among legal immigrants 39 percent are strongly adjusted at societal level, and 47 percent illegal immigrants and 29 percent legal immigrants are not adjusted (Table 11 A).

**Table 11 A: Percent distribution of immigrants by level and degree of adjustments by legal and illegal status**

Levels and Degrees	I*	I**	I***	C*	C**	C***	S*	S**	S***	Number
Total	51.0 (203)	31.0 (124)	18.0 (73)	38.0 (150)	43.0 (173)	19.0 (77)	38.0 (150)	31.0 (123)	32.0 (127)	400
Illegal	58.0 (116)	31.0 (62)	11.0 (22)	45.0 (90)	42.0 (83)	14.0 (27)	47.0 (93)	29.0 (57)	25.0 (50)	200
Legal	44.0 (87)	31.0 (62)	26.0 (51)	30.0 (60)	45.0 (90)	25.0 (50)	29.0 (57)	33.0 (66)	39.0 (77)	200
I: Individual Level			C: Community Level			S: Societal Level				
*: Not adjusted			**: Weakly adjusted			***: Strongly adjusted				

**Note:** Figures in bracket relate to total number of immigrants.

In rural areas (Table 11 B) more than half of immigrants are (59 percent) psychologically not adjusted. Here also higher proportion of illegal immigrants (79 percent) than legal immigrants (39 percent) are not adjusted psychologically. Only about one-fifth of immigrants (11 percent) are strongly adjusted psychologically, and around one-third of immigrants (31 percent) are psychologically weakly adjusted. At community level also about one-fifth of immigrants (19 percent) are strongly adjusted. In rural areas at community level a much higher proportion of legal immigrants (31 percent) than illegal immigrants (7 percent) are strongly adjusted. At societal level 29 percent immigrants are strongly adjusted and more than one-third (39 percent) are not adjusted. Among illegal immigrants 16 percent and among legal immigrants 41 percent are strongly adjusted at societal level, and 51 percent and 27 percent are not adjusted respectively.

**Table 11 B: Percent distribution of rural immigrants by levels and degree of adjustments by legal and illegal status**

Levels and Degrees	I*	I**	I***	C*	C**	C***	S*	S**	S***	Number
Total	59.0 (118)	31.0 (61)	11.0 (21)	38.0 (75)	44.0 (87)	19.0 (38)	39.0 (78)	33.0 (65)	29.0 (57)	200
Illegal	79.0 (79)	16.0 (16)	5.0 (5)	49.0 (49)	44.0 (44)	7.0 (7)	51.0 (51)	33.0 (33)	16.0 (16)	100
Legal	39.0 (39)	45.0 (45)	16.0 (16)	26.0 (26)	43.0 (43)	31.0 (31)	27.0 (27)	32.0 (32)	41.0 (41)	100
I: Individual Level			C: Community Level			S: Societal Level				
*: Not adjusted			**: Weakly adjusted			***: Strongly adjusted				

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**Note:** Figures in bracket relate to total number of immigrants.

Forty-three percent of urban immigrants are psychologically not adjusted. Interestingly in urban areas a higher proportion of legal immigrants (48 percent) than illegal immigrants (37 percent) are not adjusted at individual level (Table 11C). Only little more than one-fourth of immigrants (26 percent) are strongly adjusted psychologically, and around one-third of immigrants (32 percent) are psychologically weakly adjusted. In urban areas the proportion of those who are strongly adjusted at individual level is more than double among legal immigrants (35 percent) than among illegal immigrants (17 percent). Thus we see that in urban areas the proportion of those who are not adjusted as well as those who are strongly adjusted is much higher among legal than illegal immigrants.

At community level one-fifth of immigrants are strongly adjusted and this proportion does not vary by legal and illegal states of immigrants. Though the proportion of those who are not adjusted at community level is higher for illegal immigrants than legal immigrants, but the difference is not very large. At societal level more than one-third of immigrants (35 percent) are strongly adjusted and little more than that are not adjusted (36 percent). Among illegal immigrants 34 percent and among legal immigrants 36 percent are strongly adjusted at societal level, and 42 percent and 30 percent are not adjusted respectively. So, in urban immigrants not much difference has been seen between illegal and legal immigrants at different levels and degrees of adjustment. It is interesting that, a higher proportion of urban illegal immigrants are strongly adjusted at community and societal level than rural illegal immigrants. This may be because in urban area a large number of immigrants (irrespective of their status) are in such situation where in they are compelled to adjust within their community as well with the local society for their occupational security and economic needs. Many of them work as casual labour, as construction worker for daily wage, as rickshaw puller, carry loads, sell vegetables etc. In such activities they have to establish a relationship with local Muslims (which refers to community level adjustment) as well as with other local people (social level adjustment).

**Table 11C: Percentage distribution of urban immigrants by level and degree of adjustments according to illegal and legal states**

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Levels and Degrees	I*	I**	I***	C*	C**	C***	S*	S**	S***	Number
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Total	43.0 (85)	32.0 (63)	26.0 (26)	38.0 (75)	43.0 (86)	20.0 (39)	36.0 (72)	29.0 (58)	35.0 (70)	200
Illegal	37.0 (37)	46.0 (46)	17.0 (17)	41.0 (41)	39.0 (39)	20.0 (20)	42.0 (42)	24.0 (24)	34.0 (34)	100
Legal	48.0 (48)	17.0 (17)	35.0 (35)	34.0 (34)	47.0 (47)	19.0 (19)	30.0 (30)	34.0 (34)	36.0 (36)	100

I: Individual Level  
\*: Not adjusted

C: Community Level  
\*\*: Weakly adjusted

S: Societal Level  
\*\*\*: Strongly adjusted

**Note:** Figures in bracket relate to total number of immigrants.

For understanding the overall adjustment process of legal and illegal immigrants it is necessary to study the different dimensions (i.e. individual, community and social) of adjustment process together. In Table 12 the legal and illegal immigrants are cross-classified by individual level and community level adjustment. It is interesting to see that one-fourth of legal immigrants, who are not adjusted at individual level, are strongly adjusted at community level. Similarly 17 percent of legal immigrants who are strongly adjusted at individual level are not strongly adjusted at community level. Majority of the legal immigrants who are weakly adjusted at individual level are strongly adjusted at community level (54 percent) and majority of legal immigrants who are strongly adjusted at individual level are weakly adjusted at community level (67 percent). But compared to legal immigrants, a much higher proportion of illegal immigrants who are not adjusted at individual level are not adjusted or weakly adjusted at community level (39 percent and 54 percent respectively) also. Similarly nearly half of the illegal immigrants with strong personal adjustment (50 percent) are not adjusted at community level and another 41 percent are weakly adjusted.

**Table 12: Percent distribution of legal and illegal immigrants by degree of Individual level adjustment cross-classified by degree of community level adjustment**

Levels and degree of adjustment	Legal immigrants					Illegal immigrants				
	C*	C**	C***	Total percent	█	C*	C**	C***	Total percent	█
I*	28.7	46.0	25.3	100.0	87	38.8	54.3	6.9	100.0	116
I**	32.2	25.2	53.6	100.0	62	64.5	19.4	16.1	100.0	62
I***	17.0	66.7	15.7	100.0	51	50.0	40.9	18.1	100.0	22
@	30.0	45.0	25.0	100.0		45.0	41.5	13.5	100.0	
█	<b>60</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>50</b>		<b>200</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>27</b>		<b>200</b>

I: Individual Level                      C: Community Level  
 \*: Not adjusted                      \*\*: Weakly adjusted                      \*\*\*: Strongly adjusted  
 @ Percent of Immigrants Legal/Illegal  
 ■ Number of immigrants

In Table 13 legal and illegal immigrants are cross-classified by community level and societal level adjustment. Among legal immigrants who are not adjusted at community level, 45 percent are strongly adjusted at societal level and 42 percent of legal immigrants who are strongly adjusted at community level are not adjusted at societal level. More than two-third (41 percent) legal immigrants, weakly adjusted at community level are also weakly adjusted at societal level. Interestingly, a much higher proportion of illegal immigrants than legal immigrants at every level of community adjustment (i.e. not adjusted, weakly adjusted and strongly adjusted) are not adjusted at societal level (Table 13). Nearly 60 percent of legal immigrants with weak or strong community level adjustment are socially not adjusted. In contrast almost one-third illegal immigrants with no community level adjustment are adjusted strongly at societal level.

**Table 13: Percent distribution of legal and illegal immigrants by degree of community level adjustment cross-classified by degree of societal level adjustment**

Levels and degree of adjustment	Legal immigrants					Illegal immigrants				
	S*	S**	S***	Total percent	■	S*	S**	S***	Total percent	■
C*	21.7	33.3	45.0	100.0	60	44.5	22.2	33.3	100.0	90
C**	25.6	41.1	33.3	100.0	90	60.3	36.1	3.6	100.0	83
C***	42.0	18.0	40.0	100.0	50	59.3	25.9	14.8	100.0	27
@	28.5	33.0	38.5	100.0		53.0	28.5	18.5	100.0	
■	<b>57</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>77</b>		<b>200</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>37</b>		<b>200</b>

C: Community Level                      S: Societal level  
 \*: Not adjusted                      \*\*: Weakly adjusted                      \*\*\*: Strongly adjusted  
 @ Percent of Immigrants Legal/Illegal  
 ■ Number of immigrants

Table 14 presents the cross-classification of legal and illegal immigrants by societal level adjustment and individual level adjustment. More than one-third of legal immigrants (37 percent) and 60 percent illegal immigrants who are not adjusted at

societal level are also not adjusted at individual level. Among legal and illegal immigrants who are socially strongly adjusted, the proportions of those who are adjusted strongly adjusted strongly at individual level also do not significantly (27 percent among legal immigrants and 24 percent among illegal immigrants).

**Table 14: Percent distribution of legal and illegal immigrants by degree of societal level adjustment cross-classified by degree of individual level adjustment**

Levels and degree of adjustment	Legal immigrants					Illegal immigrants				
	I*	I**	I***	Total percent	■	I*	I**	I***	Total percent	■
S*	36.8	50.9	12.3	100.0	57	60.2	36.6	3.2	100.0	106
S**	54.5	10.7	34.8	100.0	66	77.2	10.5	12.3	100.0	57
S***	40.2	32.5	27.3	100.0	77	32.0	44.0	24.0	100.0	37
@	44.0	30.5	25.5	100.0		58.0	31.0	11.0	100.0	
■	<b>87</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>51</b>		<b>200</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>22</b>		<b>200</b>

I: Individual Level

S: Societal level

\*: Not adjustment

\*\* : Weakly adjusted

\*\*\*: Strongly adjusted

@ Percent of Immigrants Legal/Illegal

■ **Number of immigrants**

### **Levels and Magnitude of Adjustment:**

Using the Multidimensional Model of International Immigrants Adjustment immigrants have been classified at different levels of adjustment. According to this model within each dimension of adjustment there is a range of adjustment- non-adjusted, partially adjusted (transition type) and fully-adjusted. Ranges of adjustment can give the idea of strength of adjustment, whether immigrants are fully-adjusted or in transition type of adjustment or non-adjusted. Again those who are in transition type, it can be further examined whether they are in early transition or in late transition or close to non-adjusted type or fully-adjusted type. Also their magnitude towards the closeness can be examined.

Table 15 A, B and C show the distribution of total, rural and urban immigrants (number and percentage) respectively according to levels of adjustment by their legal and illegal states. Table 15 A shows that among all immigrants, only 23 percent of immigrants are adjusted fully, where as more than 42 percent immigrants are in non-adjusted type and rest 35 percent (C= 14 percent + B=12 percent and +A =9 percent) are

in transition type. Compared to legal immigrants, illegal immigrants are less adjusted as among illegal immigrants only 16 percent are fully adjusted compared to 30 percent among legal immigrants. In contrast half of the illegal immigrants are not adjusted compared to 34 percent legal immigrants.

A comparison of rural and urban immigrants shows that urban immigrants are more fully-adjusted than rural immigrants (Table 15 B and C). For example in urban areas 27 percent immigrants are fully adjusted and 39 percent are not adjusted where as in rural areas 19 percent are adjusted and 45 percent are not adjusted. Similarly, the gap in the adjustment levels between legal and illegal immigrants is much wider in rural areas than in urban areas. In urban areas the gap between legal and illegal immigrants among those who are fully adjusted is of 8 percentage points whereas this gap is of 20 percentage points in rural areas. The proportion of those who are not adjusted is almost the same among illegal (40 percent) and legal immigrants (38 percent) in urban areas, but in rural areas the proportion of those who are not adjusted is twice as high among illegal immigrants (60 percent) as among legal immigrants (30 percent).

**Table 15 A: Percentage distribution of total, legal and illegal immigrants by different ranges of adjustment**

Immigrants	Percent of immigrants of immigrants at different ranges of adjustment						
	Non-adjusted	Transition(C)	Transition (B)	Transition (A)	Fully-adjusted	No. of imm.	Total %
Total	42.0	13.8	12.2	9.0	23.0	400	100.0
		39.3	35.0	26.7		140	100.0
Illegal	50.0	20.0	9.0	5.0	16.0	200	100.0
		57.4	26.5	16.1		68	100.0
Legal	34.0	8.0	15.5	12.5	30.0	200	100.0
		22.2	43.1	34.7		72	100.0

*Percentage distribution of transition type immigrants by types of transition (C+B+A)*

**Table 15 B: Percentage distribution of total legal and illegal immigrants by different ranges of adjustment in rural area**

Immigrants	Percent of immigrants of immigrants at different ranges of adjustment						
	Non-adjusted	Transition(C)	Transition (B)	Transition (A)	Fully-adjusted	No. of imm.	Total %
Total	45.0	47.5	10.5	8.0	19.0	200	100.0
		48.6	29.2	22.2		72	100.0
Illegal	60.0	21.0	6.0	4.0	9.0	100	100.0
		67.7	19.4	12.9		31	100.0
Legal	30.0	14.0	15.0	12.0	29.0	100	100.0
		34.1	36.6	29.3		41	100.0

*Percentage distribution of transition type immigrants by types of transition (C+B+A)*

**Table 15 C: Percentage distribution of total legal and illegal immigrants by different ranges of adjustment in urban area**

Immigrants	Percent of immigrants of immigrants at different ranges of adjustment						
	Non-adjusted	Transition(C)	Transition (B)	Transition (A)	Fully-adjusted	No. of imm.	Total %
Total	39.0	10.0	14.0	10.0	27.0	200	100.0
		29.4	41.2	29.4		68	100.0
Illegal	40.0	18.0	12.0	7.0	23.0	100	100.0
		48.6	32.5	18.9		37	100.0
Legal	38.0	2.0	16.0	13.0	31.0	100	100.0
		6.5	51.6	41.9		31	100.0

*Percentage distribution of transition type immigrants by types of transition (C+B+A)*

Table 16 which presents the percentage share of legal and illegal immigrants by degree of overall adjustment, makes it further clear that legal immigrants predominate among fully-adjusted and A and B transition type (close to fully adjusted), where as among transition type (close to non-adjusted type) and non-adjusted type illegal immigrants are in majority. Similar pattern is observed both in rural and urban areas. However, the dominance of legal immigrants among those who are fully adjusted or who are in transition type A and B is less significant in urban areas than in rural areas.

**Table 16: Percentage share of legal and illegal immigrants by level of adjustment according to residence**

Level of Adjustment	Rural		Urban		Total	
	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal	Legal	Illegal
Fully-adjusted	76.3	23.7	57.4	42.6	62.5	34.8
Transition (A)	75.0	25.0	65.0	35.0	69.6	30.4
Transition (B)	71.4	28.6	57.1	42.9	63.7	36.7
Transition (C)	40.0	60.0	10.0	90.0	29.1	70.9
Not-adjusted	33.3	67.7	48.7	51.3	40.5	59.5
<b>No. of immigrants</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>

It is also important to know about those immigrants whose adjustment is in transition, whether they are close to non-adjusted or fully-adjusted type. Following calculations are done to find out the number of immigrants, whose adjustment process is in transition, whether their adjustment is in early transition or late transition. The subscripts use in these calculations,  $t$ ,  $i$  and  $l$  represent total illegal and legal immigrants respectively and ‘C’, ‘B’ and ‘A’ represents the percentage of transition type of

immigrants to the total immigrants in transition. Difference of ‘D’ and ‘E’ (D-E) is ‘F’. The value of F will determine to show the magnitude of closeness, whether immigrants are close to the non-adjusted type or fully-adjusted type. This value ranges from 100 to -100. If this value is 100, then all the immigrants are close to non-adjusted type, if it is zero, then transition type is exactly in between non-adjusted type and fully-adjusted type and if the value is -100, all the immigrants are close to fully-adjusted type. For example F value for total immigrants is calculated as follows

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{(Total immigrants)} \\ C_t + B_t &= 39.3 + 35.0 = 74.3 = D_t \\ B_t + A_t &= 35.0 + 26.0 = 61.0 = E_t \\ D_t - E_t &= 13.3 = F_t \end{aligned}$$

In above calculation value of F is 13.3 which means overall most of the immigrants whose adjustment is in transition, most of the immigrants are closer to non-adjusted type but the magnitude towards non-adjustment is not so strong. Using the same procedure F values have been calculated for legal and illegal immigrants in rural and urban areas (Table: 17).

**Table 17: F values for total, rural and urban immigrants by legal and illegal status**

Immigrants	Total	Rural	Urban
Legal	-13.0	4.8	-35.4
Illegal	41.0	54.8	29.7

The F values for total legal and illegal immigrants are -13.0 and 41.0 respectively. This indicates that most of the legal immigrants in transition type close towards fully adjusted type but its magnitude is weak. In contrast, most of the illegal immigrants in transition are close to non-adjusted type but magnitude towards non-adjustment is moderately high.

In rural areas the F values for both legal and illegal immigrants are positive indicating that both legal and illegal immigrants are close to non-adjusted type. But, in case of legal immigrants the value is very close to ‘0’ which means they are in the middle of the transition and will be close to the fully adjusted type very soon. In case of fully illegal immigrants magnitude towards non-adjustment is much stronger.

In urban area the F value for legal immigrants is negative which indicates that legal immigrants in urban area are close to fully adjusted type. Since the F value is  $-35.4$  most of the immigrants are close to fully adjusted type. For illegal immigrants in urban area also F value is  $29.7$  which indicate that they are moderately closer to non-adjusted type.

Thus we see that, many Bangladeshi immigrants in Assam are still not adjusted and for a large number adjustment process is still in transition. Very few illegal immigrants could adjust fully with the local society and among the legal immigrants also a higher proportion is in non-adjusted type than in fully-adjusted type.

### **Determinants of Adjustment:**

To find out the determinants of adjustment process of immigrants some important background characteristics of immigrants are taken into consideration. These include: age, educational level, residence (rural/urban), status (legal/illegal), local language (Assamese) skill of respondent possessing of immovable documented property, experience of any ethnic conflict in Assam, registered as an electoral in any constituency in Assam and rest of India and membership to any political organisation/party. Logistic regression technique is used to examine the impact of these variables on adjustment process of immigrants at different levels (individual, community and societal) and their aggregate adjustment process (Table: 18).

Results of the analysis show that at individual level or psychological adjustment of immigrants his status (legal/illegal) and experience of ethnic conflict are the most important determining factors. Immigrants who have not experienced any ethnic conflict in Assam their adjustment at individual level is 21.5 times higher than immigrants who have experienced any ethnic conflict in Assam. Similarly, by status of immigrants, legal immigrants are 5.4 times more likely to adjust at this level. These two variables are highly significant ( $p < .001$ ) for determining immigrants adjustment at individual level. Also the residential status (rural/urban) has some impact on adjustment of immigrants. It shows that immigrants in rural areas are 1.8 times more likely to adjust than immigrants from urban areas.

At community level most important determining variable for adjustment is the local language skill. Also there are some impact of age and status on adjustment at this level. Immigrants who can speak Assamese they are 3.6 times more likely to adjust at community level that immigrants who cannot speak Assamese (significant

level:  $p < .001$ ). Similarly, immigrants of age group 31-50 are 1.9 times and legal immigrants are 1.7 times more likely to adjust at community level than immigrants of age group of less than 30 years and illegal immigrants respectively.

At societal level the adjustment process of immigrants is primarily determined by educational level of immigrants. There are also some impact of status and local language skill and status of immigrants on adjustment at societal level. As compared to illiterate immigrants, immigrants who have more than primary level education are 45 times more likely to adjust at societal level and it is significant at  $p < .001$  level. Similarly immigrants who have educational level up to primary only, they are 8 times more likely to adjust compared to illiterate immigrants and it is significant at  $p < .001$  level. Similarly legal immigrants are 2.1 times more likely to adjust at societal level compared to illegal immigrants (significant level  $p < .01$ ). Also immigrants who can speak Assamese are 1.7 times more likely to adjust at this level compared to immigrants who cannot speak Assamese (significant level  $p < .05$ ).

**Table 18: Results of logistic regressions analysis for determinants of adjustment**

Independent variables	Odds ratio (Exp. B)			
	Adjustment at different levels			Aggregate adjustment
	Individual	Community	Societal	
<b>Age</b>				
< 31 (Ref)	1	1	1	1
31-50	1.115	1.896*	.886	1.441
>50	.642	1.797	.795	.833
<b>Education</b>				
Illiterate (Ref)	1	1	1	1
Primary	1.137	1.802	8.083***	3.123**
Above Primary	1.657	1.273	44.777***	6.167***
<b>Residence</b>				
Urban (Ref)	1	1	1	1
Rural	1.765*	1.101	1.403	1.427
<b>Status</b>				
Illegal (Ref)	1	1	1	1
Legal	5.435***	1.654*	2.145**	3.698***
<b>Language Skills (Speak Assamese)</b>				
Cannot speak (Ref)	1	1	1	1
Can Speak	1.004	3.579***	1.689*	2.294**
<b>Having Documented Immovable Property</b>				
Not Having (Ref)	1	1	1	1
Having	1.354	1.250	1.020	1.159
<b>Experience of Ethnic Conflict</b>				
Experienced (Ref)	1	1	1	1
Not Experienced	21.521***	1.086	1.113	3.353***
<b>Registered Electoral</b>				
No (Ref)	1	1	1	1
Yes	.962	1.053	.960	.768
<b>Member of political party</b>				
No (Ref)	1	1	1	1
Yes	1.067	.738	.705	.639
Constant	.033***	.232**	.051***	.060***

\*p <.05; \*\*p <.01; \*\*\*p <.001

For aggregate or overall adjustment of immigrants there are many important determining background variables i.e. education, status, language skill and experience of ethnic conflict. Immigrants who have more than primary level education and only primary level education are 6.2 times and 3.1 times more likely to adjust compared to illiterate immigrants respectively and it is significant at  $p < .001$  and  $p < .01$  levels respectively. Legal immigrants are 3.7 times more likely to adjust than illegal immigrants (significant level  $p < .001$ ). Also immigrants who have not experienced any ethnic conflict are 3.4 times more likely to adjust than immigrants who have experienced ethnic conflict and it is significant at  $p < .001$  level. Similarly those immigrants who can speak Assamese are 2.3 times more likely to adjust than immigrants who cannot speak and it is significant at  $p < .01$  level.

### **Conclusion and Discussion:**

Looking at the perspective of human mobility, today international migration has become an important area for research from the point of view of social, economic, political, human rights, law, environmental and health related issues. Today 2.4 percent of the world's population is estimated migrants.

In India, Assam state has experienced incessant flow of Muslim immigrants from Bangladesh through out the twentieth century. Even before independence, the foreigners' issue in Assam, particularly of immigrants from Bangladesh was an important issue.

Since Bangladeshi immigration in Assam by and large is conflict oriented this study has made a modest attempt to examine the adjustment process of these Bangladesh immigrants in Assam in the midst of ethnic conflicts. In Assam, most of Bangladeshi Muslim immigrants settle in the adjoining districts on border of India and Bangladesh. They select such pockets or areas where co-religious and Bengali speaking people are large in number and they try to merge with those earlier settlers. So that, it becomes difficult to distinguish between the recent immigrants and the immigrants who have become citizens of India. Availability of fertile land in Assam, mainly in the river banks and *char* (river island) areas make it easy for those hard working immigrants to start their life as cultivator or agricultural labour. In spite of experiencing many ethnic conflicts, which has created ethnic fear among immigrants, there is no reduction in encroaching of land and this becomes one of the causes of potential conflict between local people and immigrants. Due to such high potentiality

of conflicts, for their security these immigrants prefer to settle in areas where Muslim population, particularly Bangladeshi origin population are settled in large number. Due to illegal status of many immigrants, they always maintain a gap in terms of personal interaction between themselves and local non-Muslim people. Also because of tension and fear of being apprehended by law due to their illegal status, they limit their interaction with local people. After the movement against foreigners in Assam, the adjustment process of Muslim immigrants had changed into different directions. Interaction between local people and Muslim immigrants has become highly vulnerable towards the conflict. Due to the fear of such conflict interaction between immigrants and local people had reduced. The reduction of interaction with local people has been observed not only in case of illegal immigrants or recent immigrants but it has been observed for earlier Bangladesh origin settlers also. This is because, during the anti-foreigner's movement there were many conflicts between illegal immigrants and local people. In reality, it seemed that the conflicts were not only between illegal immigrants and local people, but the conflicts was between two groups of people on one side the whole Bangladesh origin people and on other side the local people of the state. Due to such experiences, not only the illegal immigrants psychologically find difficult to adjust but also earlier settlers from Bangladesh face the same because of tension and fear of potential conflict.

Almost half of immigrants feel being a foreigner either frequently or occasionally. Only one-third of immigrants never have feeling of being foreigner. Illegal immigrants feel more frequently about such feeling compared to legal immigrants. More than half the immigrants have feeling of communal violence and riot frequently or occasionally. Here also a higher proportion of illegal than legal immigrants have feeling of communal violence frequently or occasionally.

Even though the mutual visits of these immigrants with local people are limited almost half of immigrants visit either frequently or occasionally. Even this is not less for illegal immigrants. Because such visits are mainly due to occupational purpose. Friendship pattern of these immigrants with local people show a strong friendship relationship for legal immigrants compared to illegal immigrants. Similarly participation in non-religious functions, local festivals and getting invitation for local Muslim's and non-Muslim's ceremony is much higher for legal immigrants than illegal immigrants.

Almost half of the immigrants are not adjusted at individual level or psychologically and more than one-third are not adjusted each at community and societal levels. Here also the proportion of illegal immigrants is much higher than legal immigrants in not adjusted category for each levels. Likewise, the proportion of legal immigrants is higher than illegal immigrants in strongly adjusted category for each level. This pattern is similar for both immigrants in rural and urban areas. But this difference for legal and illegal immigrants is not much high in urban area. It is also true that immigrants who are strongly adjusted at community and societal level are not necessarily strongly adjusted at individual level. The fear of being foreigner and fear of communal riots arise in their mind frequently and that restrict their psychological adjustment.

Less than one-fourth of immigrants are adjusted fully, where as more than 42 percent immigrants are in non-adjusted type and rest 36 percent are in transition type. Compared to legal immigrants, illegal immigrants are less adjusted as among illegal immigrants only 16 percent are fully adjusted compared to 30 percent among legal immigrants. In contrast half of the illegal immigrants are not adjusted compared to 34 percent legal immigrants. A comparison of rural and urban immigrants shows that urban immigrants are more fully-adjusted than rural immigrants. Similarly, the gap in the adjustment levels between legal and illegal immigrants is much wider in rural areas than in urban areas.

For total immigrants as well as for illegal immigrants whose adjustment is in transition, most of the immigrants are closer to non-adjusted type. Among legal immigrants, however, the transition type is reverse.

Thus we can see that, many Bangladeshi immigrants in Assam are still not adjusted and for a large number adjustment process is still in transition. Very few illegal immigrants could adjust fully with the local society and among the legal immigrants also a higher proportion is in non-adjusted type than in fully-adjusted type.

After determining the levels and degree of adjustment of these immigrants an attempt is made to study the determinants of adjustment. Logistic regression technique is used to study the determinants of adjustment process. At individual level, experience of ethnic conflict and status of immigrants are the prime determining factors for adjustment. Also there is impact of residence in the adjustment at individual level. At community level, skill of speaking Assamese is the major determining factor for adjustment besides the age of the immigrant and his status

(legal/illegal). At societal level educational level of immigrants is the main determining factor for adjustment. Also there is impact of legal and illegal status and language skill in the adjustment process at societal level. The overall adjustment or aggregate adjustment of immigrants is mainly determined by the educational level, status, experience of ethnic conflicts and language skill of immigrants.

### **Discussions:**

The flow from Bangladesh to Eastern India was started as a purely economic movement contributing to the 'development' to the Assam's agricultural economy. Muslim leadership in Assam encouraged this flow of Muslim migration from Bangladesh. Independence of India and partition and creation of Bangladesh added communal/ethnic and political contours to this flow. And, today an international dimension with security overtones has got added to population movement ethnic and religious conflicts. These conflicts are mainly because these illegal immigrants try to acquire constitutional and other political rights i.e. citizenship and electoral roll (voting right) and property rights. After all the whole issue of foreigners in Assam turned against the Bangladesh origin people and since most of those immigrants are Muslim it became a religious issue.

Hitherto the intrusion of illegal migrants has generally been looked upon as a local problem affecting only the people of Assam. Although Bangladeshi illegal migrants have come to several states of India and they are more numerous in West Bengal than in Assam, they pose a much great threat in Assam than in any other state. If not effectively checked, they may swamp the Assamese people and may sever the Northeast landmass from the rest of India.

Political parties have been underplaying the grave importance of this problem and have been viewing it as something affecting the Assamese people. Thus an issue of great concern for national security has been into partisan affair and a matter of vote banks. It must be lifted above the mire of party politics and viewed as a national security issue of great importance. For that it is to emphasise the integration of these immigrants as part of the local society it may bring the peace to the state again.

The onus of evolving a peaceful society in Assam lies on local people and immigrants. Since, most of the immigrants who have already settled in the state have to live in the state they have to adjust and adapt to local culture and society. At the same time local people have to leave the confrontation attitude and device the ways to exist peacefully.

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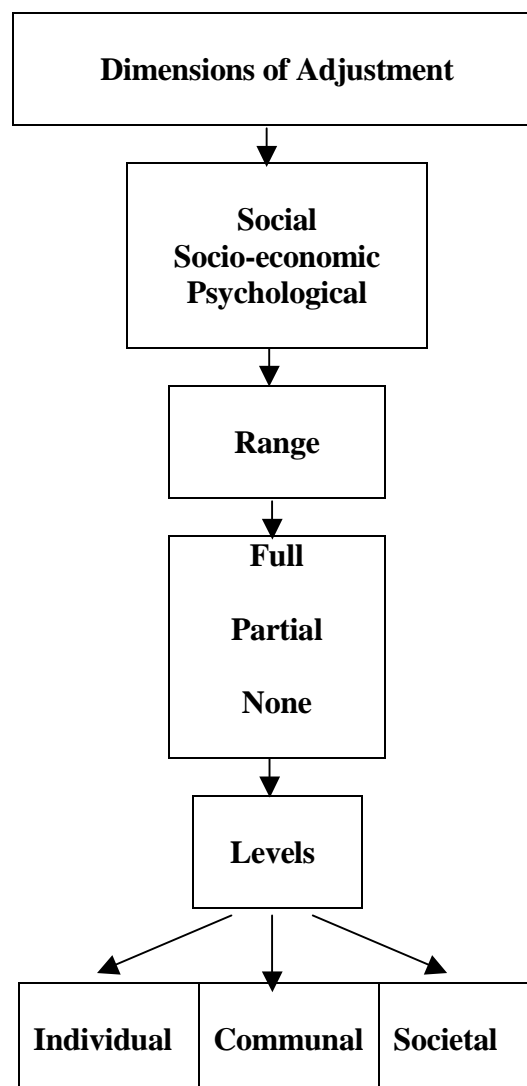
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## MODEL USED IN THIS STUDY

**MULTIDIMENSIONAL MODEL FOR INTERNATIONAL MIGRANT'S  
ADJUSTMENT**

The framework of interrelated Multidimensional Model which includes four main components: (1) *Dimension of adjustment*- Social adjustment as measured by the nature of the frequency of the immigrant social relationship in terms of friendship relationship and mutual visits; socio-economic adjustment as measured by the extent of immigrant's educational achievements; psychological adjustment as measured in terms of immigrant's feeling!



(2) *Range of adjustment*- within each dimension of adjustment there is a range of adjustment- none, partial (transition type) and full! (3) *Levels of adjustment*- the immigrant adjustment examined at three levels: at the individual level, at the communities and at the societal level. Individual level: which is measured in terms of psychological feeling of immigrants. Community level: which is measured in terms of mutual visit with local Muslim people i.e. frequency of getting invitation from them and participation in non-religious functions. Societal level: which is measured in terms of mutual visits and friendship relationship with local non-Muslim people, participation in local festivals, educational level of immigrants. (4) *Typology of aggregate adjustment*- the extent of immigrant adjustment in several dimensions at three levels will be aggregated in terms of qualitative measure as well as quantitative measure. In quantitative measure it includes three main types: non-adjusted type, fully adjusted type and partially adjusted or transitional type.

In the typology of International Migrant adjustment, there are 11 items, 2 for individual level, 4 for communal level and societal level. for each item adjustment is assigned by points ranging from 0-3. The maximum point one respondent can receive at individual level is 6, and minimum is 0. At communal level it is ranging from 0-12, and at societal level it is ranging from 0-15.

Based on the point the respondent obtained at different levels or together at three levels the he or she can be fall in any categories, which are based on standard range (non-adjusted, partially adjusted and fully adjusted) as shown in the step 1.

Level	Step 1	Step 2
Category		
<b>Individual Level</b>		
Non-adjusted	0-1	0
Partially adjusted	2-4	1
Fully adjusted	5-6	2
<b>Communal Level</b>		
Non-adjusted	0-3	0
Partially adjusted	4-8	1
Fully adjusted	9-12	2
<b>Societal Level</b>		
Non-adjusted	0-4	0
Partially adjusted	5-10	1
Fully adjusted	11-15	2

As the ranges at different levels in the same category are different, to bring them into a same platform, the different categories for each level are given fixed points as shown in the step 2, and the aggregate adjustment at three levels can be examined by summing up those points.

So, in case of total adjustment, a respondent can get maximum score 6 points and minimum is 0. Based on this range the following typology of aggregate adjustment is made.

## Typology of International Migrant's Adjustment

Individual Level	Point	Communal Level	Point	Societal Level	Point
1. Respondent's feeling that s/he is foreigner.		1. Mutual visits with local people within same community (Muslim).		1. Mutual visits with local non-Muslims.	
Frequently	0	Never	0	Never	0
Occasionally	1	Rarely	1	Rarely	1
Rarely	2	Occasional	2	Occasionally	2
Never	3	Frequently	3	Frequently	3
2. Feeling of fear about communal riot, ethnic conflict.		2. Local (Muslim non-migrants) friends among the five close friends.		2. Local non-Muslim friends among the five close friends.	
Frequently	0	No	0	No	0
Occasional	1	1-2	1	1-2	1
Rarely	2	3-4	2	3-4	2
Never	3	All	3	All	3
		3. Participation in non-religious ceremony or function.		3. Participation in local (Assamese) festivals.	
		Never	0	Never	0
		Rarely	1	Rarely	1
		Occasionally	2	Occasionally	2
		Frequently	3	Frequently	3
		4. Getting invitation from local Muslim's ceremony.		4. Getting invitation from local society, i.e. non-Muslim's ceremony.	
		Never	0	Never	0
		Rarely	1	Rarely	1
		Occasionally	2	Occasionally	2
		Frequently	3	Frequently	3
				5. Educational level	
				No education	0
				Primary	1
				Elementary	2
				Secondary & over	3

**Typology of Aggregate Adjustment:**

Individual level	Communal level	Societal Level	Range of total adjustment (to access the quantity of adjustment)	Type of adjustment (to access the quality of adjustment)
None	None	None	0	Non-adjusted I* C* S*
None	None	Partial	1	
None	Partial	None	1	
Partial	None	None	1	
None	None	Full	2	Transition(C) I* C* S****
None	Partial	Partial	2	
None	Full	None	2	
Partial	None	Partial	2	
Partial	Partial	None	2	
Full	None	None	2	
None	Partial	Full	3	Transition (B) I* C** S****
None	Full	Partial	3	
Partial	None	Full	3	
Partial	Partial	Partial	3	
Partial	Full	None	3	
Full	None	Partial	3	
Full	Partial	None	3	
None	Full	Full	4	Transition (A) I* C**** S****
Partial	Partial	Full	4	
Partial	Full	Partial	4	
Full	None	Full	4	
Full	Partial	Partial	4	
Full	Full	None	4	
Partial	Full	Full	5	Fully-adjusted I** C**** S****
Full	Partial	Full	5	
Full	Full	Partial	5	
Full	Full	Full	6	

I: Individual Level  
\*: Not adjustment

C: Community Level  
\*\*: Weakly adjusted

S: Societal Level  
\*\*\*: Strongly adjusted

To examine the quantity of adjustment there are mainly three types of adjustment, non-adjusted, partially adjusted or transition type and fully adjusted.

**Non-Adjusted:** for those who non-adjusted at three levels or partially adjusted at any one of level.

**Transition Type:** those who comes under overall partially adjusted category. This is for other combination of adjustment, classified into three degrees-- a,b, and c according to the distance from fully and non-adjusted types.

**Fully-Adjusted:** for those who fully adjusted at three levels or at two levels fully adjusted and another level partially adjusted.

If the sum of "c" and "b" is more than the sum of "b" and "a", or  $c+b > b+a$  then transition type is close to non-adjusted. If it is revers then transition type is close to fully adjusted. If both are equal the transition type is equally close to non-adjusted and fully adjusted.

To examine the quality of adjustment there are 27 types of adjustment based on the three levels and their degree of adjustment.