AGING AMONG TRIBAL OF HIMACHAL PRADESH: A CASE STUDY

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Abstract: This study has been undertaken to assess the ageing problem among tribal people of Himachal Pradesh. A total sample comprises 80 households from tribal region in Himachal Pradesh. Result shows that aged population (above 64 years) is very high in migrant households (15.7 percent) as compared to non-migrant households (5 percent) in tribal region. It shows that due to migration of young people from migrant households, old people are left alone in many households and nobody is to look after them. Out-migration rate has been very high (26.2 percent) as compared to in-migrant (2.8 percent) and return-migrant (1.7 percent) in tribal region. Young unmarried people have been out-migrated more as compared to old people from tribal region (to get higher education and for getting job) to non-tribal region.

Keywords: Aging, Fertility, Migrant and non-migrant, Mortality, Out-migration, Tribal region.

1. Introduction

Fertility, mortality and migration are three components that affect population change. The rate of growth of population reflects the difference in the rates of change in birth rates, and death rates and migration plays an important role in the population dynamics of the country. In population dynamics fertility and mortality bring about natural population change, where fertility is a positive force through which the population expands, counteracting the forces of attrition caused by mortality, whereas migration causes redistribution of population in region or area. Migration determines the size, rate of population growth, structure, characteristics, growth of labour force or old people in any area. The existing studies on migration show that migration is, by and large, closely linked with two basic arguments, development-driven factors and distress-driven factors. Migration is selective process, migrants respond positively to plus factors at destination and negatively to minus factors at origin. Economic, social, political and geographical push and pull factors are responsible for the movement of people within the nation and across the nations.

Migration affects both the area of origin (out-migration) and the place of destination (in-migration). The direction and volume of migration has considerably changed over the years. Migration flows are pronounced from economically backward or stagnation regions to prosperous or dynamic regions. The reason for movement of people from one place to another place may not be the same for all. Migration is an important livelihood

strategy in India and Indian history is full of migratory movements within the country as well as outside it. In India, there is no migration policy, except that people have a constitutional right to move, live, and work for their livelihood, in any part of country.

The world is aging rapidly. The aging of population is a term that is used to describe shifts in the age distribution of a population toward people of older ages. Population aging is an increasing median age in the population of a region due to migration, longer life expectancy (decreased death rate) and decreased birth rate (fertility rates). People are living longer because of better health care, nutrition, sanitation, education and economic well-being. In tribal areas due to out-migration of many young unmarried people from household especially for education and for employment purposes, many elder people are living alone. A population policy would address itself both to the situation arising out of fast rising population in any area as well as out of declining population in any particular area. The important issues of population policy are primarily to reduce fertility and mortality and to manage redistribution of population. The future population is to be so planned that the present and future of the existing numbers are not adversely affected.

2. Methodology

2.1 Objective

The present study has been undertaken to assess the ageing problem among tribal people of Himachal Pradesh.

2.2 Sampling design

A systematic, multi-stage stratified random sampling design has been adopted to collect data. The entire sample for the study has been designed in such a manner that comparison can be made according to migration status (migrant and non-migrant) in tribal region of Himachal Pradesh. Lahul & Spiti is tribal region in Himachal Pradesh and there is no urban area in this district. In Lahul & Spiti district, there are two development blocks i.e. Lahul and Spiti, and one sub-development block i.e. Udaiypur. In order to collect data from tribal region, Lahul development block and Udaipur sub-development block (from two development blocks and one sub-development block), two panchayats from each block and sub-block and two villages from each panchayat have been selected following simple random sampling, while arranging panchayats and villages in ascending order on the basis of their respective population. A sample of ten households has been selected from each village, and 80 households have been actually surveyed from eight villages in tribal region. In 80 interviewed households, data for 101 eligible ever married women aged 15-49 have been collected in 2015.

3. Distribution of the sampled household population by age-sex and migration status

In order to make comparison of sampled households on the basis of migration status all households are divided into two categories i.e. migrant and non-migrant households. Any household from where at least single migration of any type (i.e. out-migration, in-migration or return-migration) materialised by present members in

past or by any out-migrated member of household now living elsewhere has been named as migrant household. If no member of household migrated from household any time neither in the past nor in the present that household has been named as non-migrant. In the study, around 51 percent of the households reported at least one type of migration.

3.1 Age-Sex Distribution of the Household Population

Distribution of household population by age according to sex and migration is given in table 3.1.1. The highest percentage of population lies in the age group of 10-14 and 15-19 and the lowest percentage of population lies in the age group of 65-69 and 70-74 for tribal region. The child population (those below age 15 years) is very low in tribal region (17.1 percent). Around two-thirds of the total population in tribal region (71.4 percent) is in working age group (15-64). In tribal region 11.5 percent of the total population is above age 64 years.

Table 3.1.1 Percent distribution of household Population by age according to sex and migration status

Age (years)	Migrant			Non-migrant			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
< 5	4.5	4.5	4.5	6.8	5.6	6.2	5.5	4.9	5.2
05-09	2.3	3.0	2.6	1.1	5.6	3.4	1.8	4.0	2.9
10-14	5.3	6.7	6.0	17.0	10.1	13.6	10.0	8.0	9.0
15-19	9.8	8.1	8.9	11.4	16.9	14.1	10.5	11.6	11.0
20-24	6.1	5.9	6.0	6.8	12.4	9.6	6.4	8.5	7.4
25-29	5.3	8.1	6.7	8.0	9.0	8.5	6.4	8.5	7.4
30-34	7.6	6.7	7.2	8.0	10.1	9.0	7.7	8.0	7.9
35-39	8.4	6.7	7.5	6.8	4.5	5.6	7.7	5.8	6.8
40-44	6.8	7.4	7.2	8.0	5.6	6.8	7.3	6.7	7.0
45-49	6.8	9.6	8.2	5.7	6.7	6.2	6.4	8.5	7.4
50-54	6.8	5.9	6.4	5.7	2.2	4.0	6.4	4.5	5.4
55-59	6.8	8.1	7.5	4.5	3.4	4.0	5.8	6.3	6.1
60-64	6.1	5.2	5.6	4.5	3.4	4.0	5.4	4.5	5.0
65-69	2.3	3.7	3.0	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.8	2.7	2.3
70-74	5.3	0.0	2.6	2.3	0.0	1.1	4.1	0.0	2.0
75+	9.8	10.4	10.1	2.3	3.4	2.8	6.8	7.5	7.2
Total Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No. of Persons	132	135	267	88	89	177	220	224	444

The child population (below age 15 years) is very low in migrant households (13.1 percent) as compared to non-migrant households (23.2 percent) in tribal region. Whereas aged population (above 64 years) is very high in migrant households (15.7 percent) as compared to non-migrant households (5 percent) in tribal region. It shows that due to migration of young people from migrant households, old people are left alone in many households and nobody is to look after them.

4. Migration

In this study, movements that resulted in the change of usual place of residence (UPR)[1] of the individuals have been treated as migration, and a household member whose last usual place of residence (UPR) was different from present place at the time of enumeration has been considered as migrant. The other types of movements that do not involve change of usual place of residence, but are short-term (less than six months) or seasonal in nature have not been considered. The changes of usual place of residence of women due to marriage have been excluded from being treated as migration in this study.

4.1 Migration status

Table 4.1.1 Percent distribution of migrants and non-migrants

Region	Category of persons	Migration status				All	Number of persons
		Non-migrants	Out-migrants	In-migrants	Return-migrants		
Tribal	Male	62.5	30.2	4.4	2.9	100.0	315
	Female	76.7	22.0	1.0	0.3	100.0	287
	Persons	69.3	26.2	2.8	1.7	100.0	602

Table 4.1.1 indicates distribution of migrants (out-migrants, in-migrants and return-migrants) and non-migrants. Out-migration rate has been very high (26.2 percent) as compared to in-migrant (2.8 percent) and return-migrant (1.7 percent) in tribal region.

4.2 Age of the migrants

Distribution of migrants by age at the time of migration (all type of migrations included) is presented in table 4.2.1. In tribal region migration is dominated by population age 15-19 years (45.4 percent) as compared to other age groups. There is also much male-female differential in migration among different age group. Young unmarried people have been out-migrated more as compared to old people from tribal region (to get higher education and for getting job) to non-tribal region.

Table 4.2.1 Distribution (per 100 persons) of migrants by age

Region	Category of persons	Age (years)					All	Number of persons
		0-14	15-19	20-29	30-59	60+		
Tribal	Male	18.6	50.8	15.3	14.5	0.8	100.0	118
	Female	17.9	35.8	37.3	9.0	0.0	100.0	67
	Persons	18.4	45.4	23.2	12.5	0.5	100.0	185

[1]Usual place of residence (UPR) of a person was defined as a place (village/town) where the person had stayed continuously for a period of six months or more.

5. Fertility behaviour

The number of children a woman has ever reproduced is a cohort measure of fertility. Because it reflects fertility in the past, it provides different picture of fertility levels, trends and differentials than period measures of fertility such as crude birth rate and the total fertility rate. For the purpose of present study, fertility has been measured as the number of total children ever born to ever-married women, and is based on their complete birth history.

5.1. Fertility trends

Table 5.1.1 shows fertility trends for five-year time period at present and five years preceding the study. These results indicate substantial fertility declines over time in all age groups, in tribal non-migrant women. Among tribal migrant women in all age groups, fertility declines (except the age group 15-29) over a period of time.

Table 5.1.1 Trends in fertility (Ever-married women aged 15-49 years) Fertility measured as average number of children born

Region	Age (years)	Fertility at present				Fertility five years back			
		Migrant		Non-migrant		Migrant		Non-migrant	
		Average no. of children ever born	No. of women	Average no. of children ever born	No. of women	Average no. of children ever born	No. of women	Average no. of children ever born	No. of women
Tribal	15-29	0.78	09	1.15	30	0.67	12	1.24	21
	30-39	1.36	14	2.23	21	1.50	12	3.19	21
	40-49	2.12	08	3.20	29	2.50	02	3.25	16

6. Infant and child mortality

Mortality is one of the three components of population change, the other two being fertility and migration. Usually it is believed that end of life is death. In this study, complete history of births and deaths of child born to all ever-married women age 15-49 has been collected. The information collected has been used to calculate the following direct estimates of infant and child mortality:

Neonatal mortality (NN) - the probability of dying in the first month of life

Post neonatal mortality (PNN) - the probability of dying after the first month of life but before the first birthday

Infant mortality – the probability of dying before the first birthday

Child mortality – the probability of dying between the first and fifth birthdays

Factors such as biological, economic and cultural affect health of an individual and consequent by the mortality rate in the society. These factors affecting mortality can be classified as hereditary, constitutional and environment (Harold, 1959: 440). Demographers study mortality in reference to population size and structure rather than medical angle. The factors affecting mortality include the natural physical surroundings of the

individual as well as his/her social and economic environments and personal habits. The occurrence of death is one of the vital events. Factors that affect foetal and neonatal primarily endogenous (age of mother, the birth order, the period of spacing between successive births, prematurity, weight at birth and multiple births), while those that affect post neo natal deaths are mainly exogenous (social, cultural, economic and environmental).

6.1. Levels and trends in infant and child mortality

Levels and trends in infant and child mortality rates for tribal region have been presented in table 6.1.1. These levels and trends relate to the period 2 and 3 years preceding the study as well as those of current period when data for the study have been collected. Due to small size of the selected sample, the results cannot be generalized. Neonatal mortality among children of non-migrant women has shown a decline over time, it being 21.05 (three years preceding the study) and 16.95 (2 years preceding the survey), and it further declined to present level 12.12 (child deaths per 1000 live births). Child mortality also registered a decline among children of non-migrant women. It declined from 10.53 (three years before the study) to 8.47 (2 years before the survey), however it rose to 12.12 (at present). Infant mortality among children of migrant women (23.26) is lower than those of non-migrant women (30.30).

Table 6.1.1 levels, trends and differentials in infant and child mortality- Tribal region

Years preceding the survey	Neonatal mortality (NN)		Post neonatal morality (PNN)		Infant mortality		Child mortality (1-5 years)	
	Migrant	Non-migrant	Migrant	Non-migrant	Migrant	Non-migrant	Migrant	Non-migrant
3 years	0.00	21.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	21.05.	0.00	10.53
2 years	0.00	16.95	0.00	0.00	0.00	16.95	0.00	8.47
Present	0.00	12.12	23.26	18.18	23.26	30.30	0.00	12.12

7. Policy Implications

Migration has both positive and negative consequences, therefore, such policy should be framed that can focus on eliminating the negative impact. In tribal areas due to out-migration of many young unmarried people from household especially for education and for employment purposes, many elder people are living alone. More investment in the tribal region is required especially in education, health sectors, infrastructure and other areas of social sector to improve the income, employment and living conditions of tribal households and to abate undesirable flow of tribal region workforce to the non-tribal region. There must be provision for alternative non-agricultural employment opportunities in tribal region especially during off seasons. Self-employment programmes should be given more priorities. All weather better transport facilities are required in tribal region to have access to education and health facilities and also to sell agriculture products at reasonable prices. The study indicates the need to improve women's status, particularly providing education and employment opportunities to women for successful reduction in fertility and infant & child mortality.

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