

CHANGES IN PATTERNS OF INTERSTATE IN-MIGRATION IN HIMACHAL PRADESH: A DISTRICT WISE ANALYSIS, 1991-2001

Archana Sharma

Resource Person,

Department of Geography, Post Graduate Government College,
Sector 11, Chandigarh.

Received Dec. 10, 2017

Accepted Jan. 08, 2018

ABSTRACT

Migration is an important facet of population studies. Migration involves both space and time, and study of migration over both these dimensions is equally important. This research work is an attempt to analyse the changes in patterns of in-migration in Himachal Pradesh since 1991. Patterns of migration have changed substantially post globalization era. These changes in patterns of migration are all the more conspicuous in a hill state like Himachal Pradesh where magnitude of migration was quite low prior to 1990s. Census data for census years 1991 and 2001 has been analysed to study the changes in patterns of migration during the period under consideration. It has been found that the patterns of migration in the hill state have changed unexpectedly. Magnitude of migration is still quite low in absolute numbers, but change that has been seen over the past census years is substantial.

Keywords: migration, patterns, volume, change.

Introduction:

Migration involves both space and time, and study of migration over both these dimensions is equally important. An analysis of changes in patterns of migration is important to understand how movement of people is changing. Future population redistribution projections would be accurate only if changes in patterns of migration have been understood properly. Patterns of migration have changed substantially post globalization era. Globalization has led to structural changes which in turn have led to changes in economy as a whole. Resultant effect of these changes on the process of migration is all the more conspicuous in a hill state like Himachal Pradesh where magnitude of migration was quite low prior to 1990s. Not only magnitude of migration, but nature and patterns as well, have undergone a change. Present study is an effort to analyse the abovementioned changes. Census data have been used to carry out the study.

Changes in Patterns of In-migration

In-migration has traditionally not been a characteristic feature of migration in Himachal Pradesh. Mountainous topography, low level of urbanization and absence of industry have been acting as deterrents in the way of in-migration to Himachal Pradesh. But with the development of some industrial clusters, connectivity of the state with road network, flourishing tourism & hospitality industry and advanced horticulture, employment potential of Himachal Pradesh has increased manifold. So number of in-migrants has increased considerably during the past two decades. This research paper brings out the changes in patterns of in-migration in Himachal Pradesh during the intercensal decade 1991-2001.

Table 1 depicts the change in volume of in-migration in Himachal Pradesh during the period 1991-2001. Total volume of interstate in-migrants in Himachal Pradesh increased from 0.23 million to 0.35 million during the period 1991-2001 (Table 1). This constituted 4.58 percent and 5.77 percent of total population of the state during the census years 1991 and 2001 respectively (Census of India 1991 and 2001). Thus, share of migrant population in Himachal Pradesh was not very large.

An increase of 48.14 percent was registered in volume of in-migrants in Himachal Pradesh during the period 1991-2001. But owing to spatial inequalities in physical setting, differences in economic opportunities and on the basis of proximity to other states of the country, this change was not uniform in all districts of the state. Different districts of Himachal Pradesh experienced different change in volume of in-migrants.

Largest (456.93 percent) increase in volume of in-migrants was registered in district Bilaspur (Table 1). District Bilaspur shares border with the neighbouring state Punjab. So a large number of females migrated from across the border to border areas of district Bilaspur. District Bilaspur does not have large number of industrial units but it has some of the largest industrial projects of Himachal Pradesh. For instance, one of the largest and oldest industrial units of the state, ACC Cement Factory, is located at Barmana in district Bilaspur.

Other districts where change in volume of in-migration was more than the state average were Kinnaur, Kullu, Lahul & Spiti and Solan. These districts were relatively unexplored before 1990s. Afterwards these were explored more than ever before. This was because of developments taking place in the field of civil engineering. These districts are now connected with the rest of the country. Airports and helipads have been constructed wherever feasible. Additionally, cultivation of cash crops has been promoted which demands labour. This demand of labour is fulfilled by in-migration. Despite all the above mentioned physiographic and climatic hindrances, a large increase in volume of interstate in-migration took place because intercensal decade 1991-2001 saw an abrupt rise in employment potential of the two districts.

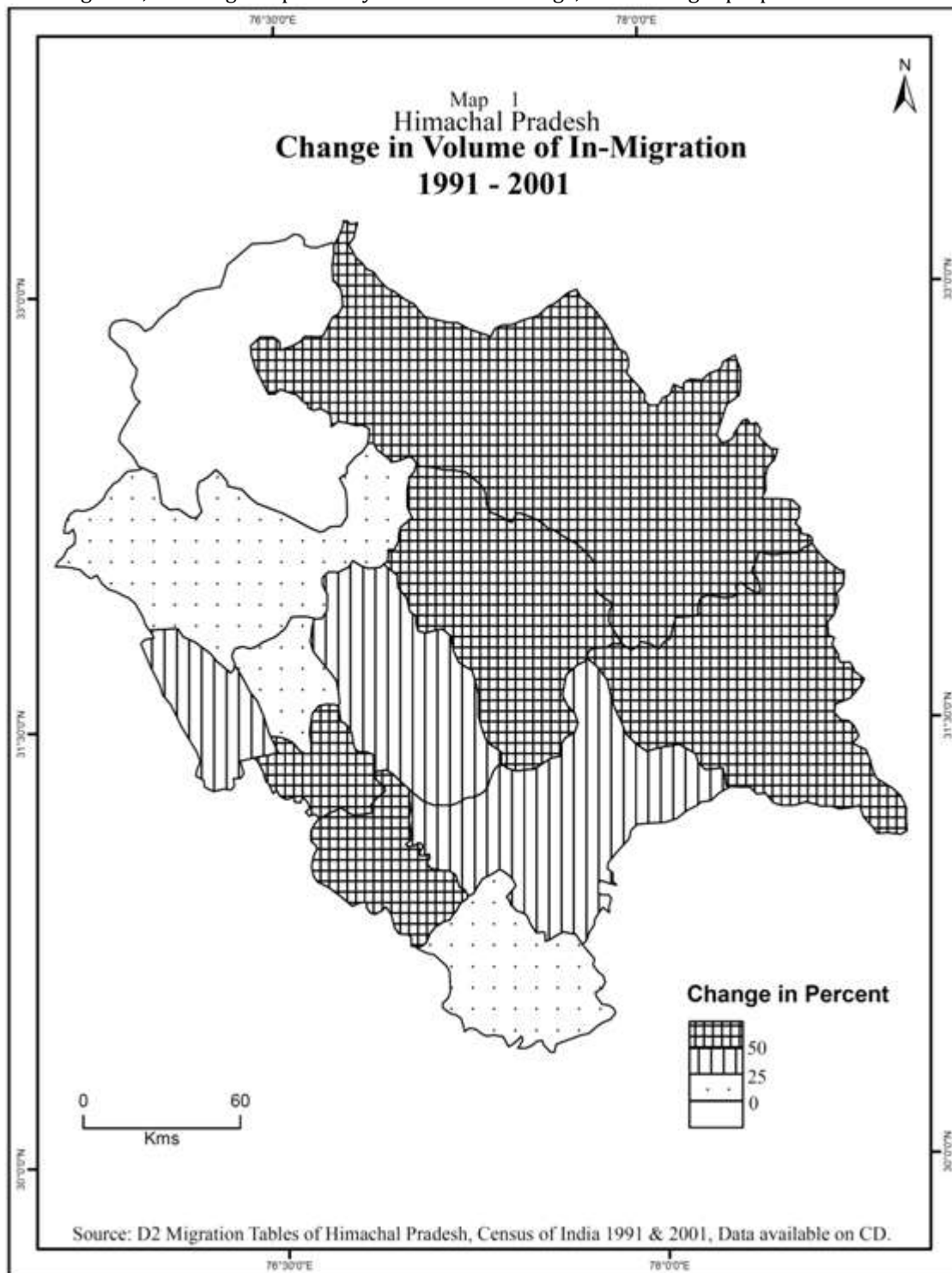
Table 1: Himachal Pradesh: Change in Volume of In-migration 1991-2001

Total				
State/ District	2001	1991	Change	Percent Change
Himachal Pradesh	350,834	236,830	114,004	48.14
Bilaspur	41,057	7,372	33,685	456.93
Chamba	13,290	14,563	-1,273	-8.74
Hamirpur	14,444	13,378	1,066	7.97
Kangra	63,624	56,655	6,969	12.30
Kinnaur	3,853	2,048	1,805	88.13
Kullu	9,081	4,207	4,874	115.85
Lahul & Spiti	801	423	378	89.36
Mandi	16,091	12,181	3,910	32.10
Shimla	38,340	26,603	11,737	44.12
Sirmaur	31,674	25,458	6,216	24.42
Solan	71,395	40,616	30,779	75.78
Una	47,184	33,326	13,858	41.58
Males				
Himachal Pradesh	165,326	116,853	48,473	41.48
Bilaspur	7,986	3,586	4,400	122.70
Chamba	7,070	7,907	-837	-10.59
Hamirpur	8,118	9,537	-1,419	-14.88
Kangra	29,145	26,164	2,981	11.39
Kinnaur	2,957	1,482	1,475	99.53
Kullu	5,889	2,406	3,483	144.76
Lahul and Spiti	724	363	361	99.45
Mandi	9,071	7,301	1,770	24.24
Shimla	22,431	14,364	8,067	56.16
Sirmaur	13,470	11,139	2,331	20.93
Solan	40,258	20,977	19,281	91.91
Una	18,207	11,627	6,580	56.59
Females				
Himachal Pradesh	185,508	119,977	65,531	54.62
Bilaspur	33,071	3,786	29,285	773.51
Chamba	6,220	6,656	-436	-6.55
Hamirpur	6,326	3,841	2,485	64.70
Kangra	34,479	30,491	3,988	13.08
Kinnaur	896	566	330	58.30
Kullu	3,192	1,801	1,391	77.23
Lahul and Spiti	77	60	17	28.33
Mandi	7,020	4,880	2,140	43.85
Shimla	15,909	12,239	3,670	29.99
Sirmaur	18,204	14,319	3,885	27.13
Solan	31,137	19,639	11,498	58.55
Una	28,977	21,699	7,278	33.54

Source: Computed from:-

D2 Migration Tables of Himachal Pradesh, Census of India 1991 and 2001, Data available on CD.

District Lahul & Spiti, though had more than state average change in in-migration, yet it did not apply to female migrants (Table 1). Only seventeen females migrated to Lahul & Spiti during a period of ten years. This is because district is highly mountainous and entirely tribal. Marriages are intra tribal. No doubt, changes are taking place in conventional setup, but inter tribal marriages seem to be a distant possibility. So female migrants, who migrate primarily because of marriage, are in meagre proportion.



Another district was Solan (75.78 percent) where increase in volume of in-migration was above the state average. Location and industrial development were the reasons for a higher increase in volume of in-migrants. A large number of interstate in-migrants from nearby areas of Punjab and Haryana are reported

because of physical proximity. In case of males, a large number of job seekers migrate to district Solan which is growing unprecedentedly in terms of industrial activity and urbanization. For females, it is largely marriage migration.

In six districts, namely Hamirpur, Kangra, Mandi, Shimla, Sirmaur and Una, change in volume of in-migration was below the state average. District Hamirpur (7.97 percent) where only 1,066 interstate in-migrants were added in a span of ten years, change in volume of in-migration was much below the state average. As per the Census of India reports 1991 and 2001, district Hamirpur had the highest literacy rate in Himachal Pradesh. This large number of literates, particularly males, move to other states in search of suitable jobs. District itself has very less employment potential. District Hamirpur is known for out migrating tendencies of its people. Neither agriculture nor industry is developed on a commercial scale. As far as, percent change in volume of female in-migrants is concerned it was above the state average for females because of marriage migration.

Districts Kangra, Mandi, Shimla, Sirmaur and Una reported less than state average percent change in volume of in-migrants. In districts Kangra, Mandi and Sirmaur change was below state average for both the genders. In districts Shimla and Una, change in volume of male in-migrants was above the state average. Though change in volume of in-migration was less, yet numbers of migrants were higher than many other districts; because process of development in these districts had started even before 1991 when districts like Lahul & Spiti, Kullu and Kinnaur were relatively unknown. So in these districts no abrupt increase was observable. Higher change in volume of male in-migrants in districts Shimla and Una is explicable in terms of their employment potential. Administrative and tourism activities enhance the employment opportunities. District Una has some special economic zones which generate employment and attract migrants.

A negative change in volume of in-migration was reported in district Chamba which is one of the 250 most backward districts of country. More than 45 percent population of district is inhabited by socially backward scheduled caste and scheduled tribe population. Agriculture is the mainstay of economy. There is nothing that could attract migrants. Hence, negative change in volume of in-migrants was reported.

Conclusions

What comes out of the study is that the patterns of migration in Himachal Pradesh have changed unexpectedly. Large part of Himachal Pradesh is highly mountainous and has remained secluded. Though with the advances made in the field of civil and geological engineering, most parts of the state have been connected via motorable roads, still reaching the mountainous areas is an exhaustive exercise.

Further, harsh weather and lack of facilities make the living inconvenient. This is more so in case of tribal districts namely Kinnaur and Lahul & Spiti which remained shrouded for centuries. Now with the connectivity via roads and dissemination of information through media, these districts have been explored.

As far as change in patterns of in-migration is concerned, unpredictable percent change in volume of in-migrants was reported in districts where either the developmental activities have started of late or industrial growth took place abruptly. Recent exploration of the remote districts namely Kinnaur, Kullu and Lahul & Spiti induced some migration where magnitude of migration used to be almost nil. Magnitude of migration is still quite low in absolute numbers, but change that has been seen over the past census years is incredible. Districts experiencing rapid industrial development were obvious to attract remarkable number of migrants because of unparalleled rise in employability.

What can be conjectured is that magnitude of migration in Himachal Pradesh will obviously increase in the times to come but proportion of migrant population in mid and high zone of Himachal Pradesh consisting of districts Hamirpur, Mandi, Chamba, Kinnaur, Kullu and Lahul & Spiti will remain low. It is quite plausible that some of these districts might experience a negative change in volume of migration. District Shimla lying in mid and high zone is an exception in this regard. This is because of high level of development and the administrative importance of the district. Districts lying in Shivaliks near to the plains of Punjab and Haryana, will continue to experience high migration because they enjoy both locational and physiographic advantages.

References:

1. Census of India (1981). Town Directory, Series-7, Part XA, Himachal Pradesh.
2. Census of India (1991). Town Directory, Series-9, Part IX, Himachal Pradesh.
3. Census of India (2001). Rural-Urban Distribution. Series-3, Paper 2, Himachal Pradesh.
4. Planning Commission (2009). Himachal Pradesh Development Report, Planning Commission of India, New Delhi.
5. Sharma, A. (2015). Changes in Patterns of Migration in Himachal Pradesh since 1991. Panjab University, Department of Geography. Chandigarh: Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis.