

SUB-REGIONAL POPULATION ANALYSIS OF UTTARAKHAND

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Abstract:

During the post-reorganisation period Uttarakhand experienced a stepped up acceleration in its demographic dynamics. In tune with rapid changes in its socio-economic contours the state has witnessed important changes in its demographic complexion (i.e. in various attributes of its population structure). In this paper an effort has been made to examine and analyse the spatio-temporal trends in growth and distribution of population in Uttarakhand, based on census data. The paper seeks to understand the patterns of population growth and distribution from the time of creation of state at sub-regional levels. While the first attribute focuses on population change, no matter whether the change is positive or negative, the second aspects highlights the population's distributive tendencies in a geographic space. The area of study stands marked by further decline in population growth rate and stepped up tempo of out-migration. Simultaneously, the area of study has witnessed a steady rise of in-migration as well. Consequently, The state of Uttarakhand is on a verge of new demographic threshold which pretends to usher in profound socio economic changes having far reaching implications. Research inquiries relating to growth and distribution of population, forms the very viewpoints for sustainable areal development and financial allocations.

Introduction:

'It is often believed that nature has equalising tendencies. However, throughout human life (i.e. in a demographic structure) nature appears to prefer inequality to equality (Jayaraj, D. 2008, p-61).' That's why population of a territory connote's as an area differentiating and area characterising element.

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When considered in relation to the total process of regional or sectoral development, population emerges as the pivotal point. Following this view, it is only appropriate and necessary to have a focused look at the sub-regional population situation in the Uttarakhand.

People have all the time-acquired prominence in the study of geography. Thus, population in the most dynamic element, which is helpful in understanding the process of spatial organization of a space (i.e. territory).

As per the figures of the new millennium census of India 2001, which also marks the 120 years of census of India, the state of Uttarakhand is having a total population 8,489,349 millions which is about 0.82 percent of the country's total population. Out of the 8,489,349 millions 4,325,924 millions or 50.96 percent are males and 4,163,425 millions or 49.04 percent are the females population respectively.

Database and Methodology

Time series data available in census publication (2001) in the form of Primary Census Abstract, Uttarakhand, Vol. 4 (CD-Rom) and Uttarakhand and Uttarpradesh: at a Glance – 2003 Districtwise Statistical overview was used. Various secondary sources were consulted and thorough perusals were carried out. The information gathered; was analysed, and; processed to give the study a geographic perspective.

The legion of literature has been produced about the nature, methodology and approaches, which was adopted in this case. If one reviews; two major approaches to any subject – matter can be detected (Illbery, 1979). They are empirical (inductive) approach and normative (deductive) approach. The geographic perspective was formed by co-relating empirical and normative approach. In addition, mapping work was accomplished by adopting requisite cartographic techniques.

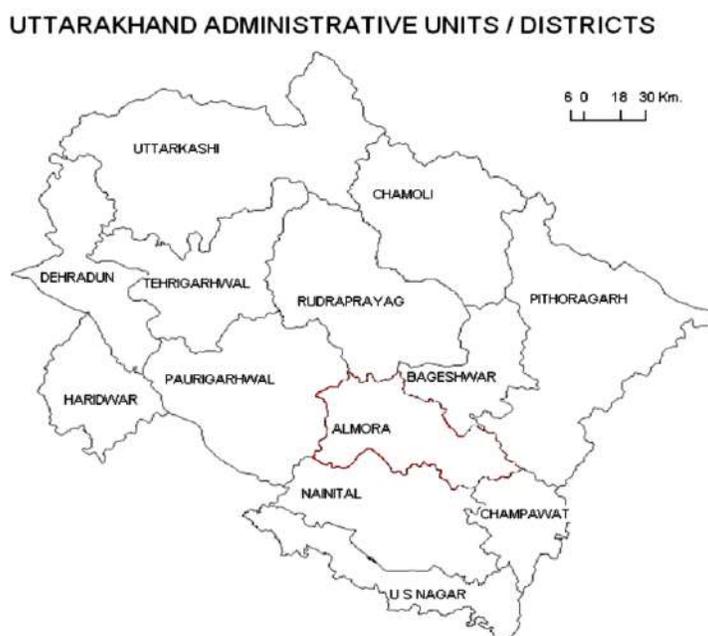


Fig. - 1

Unit of Study

In order to comprehend the sub-regional population analysis in holistic perspective, the study was conducted for all the thirteen districts of the state, meaning thereby is that the unit of study is district level and in term of scale , the macro level which is authentic and biable unit of planning as well as of the administration. The names of thirteen districts, its headquarters and the geographical area of each district is appended below:-

Table-1: List of Districts in Uttarakhand (2001)

S.No.	Districts	District Head Quarter	Geographical Area (in Sq. Kms.)
1	Dehradun	Dehradun	3088
2	Pauri Garhwal	Pauri	5397
3	Tehri Garhwal	New Tehri	3796
4	Uttarkashi	Uttarkashi	8016
5	Chamoli	Chamoli (Gopeshwar)	7626
6	Almora	Almora	3074
7	Nainital	Nainital	4767
8	Pithoragarh	Pithoragarh	7218
9	Udham Singh Nagar	Udham Singh Nagar	2027
10	Rudra Prayag	Rudra Prayag	2252
11	Bageshwar	Bageshwar	2311
12	Champawat	Champawat	1638
13	Hardwar	Hardwar	1994

Source: Savita Mohan (2004), pp. 15-16.

Working Definition

In this study sub-regional (level) confines to a district(s) with in the area of study. Broadly, Uttarakhand is divided into two (cultural) regions visa viz. Garhwal Region (Mandal) and Kumaon Region (Mandal).

The paper has been divided into three sections. Section I analyses the patterns of population growth. Section II examines the spatial patterns of distribution of population in the study area. While section III sums up the main findings of the study in the form of endnotes.

SECTION – I

Population growth

Dussions

The phenomenon of population growth has special significance; as it is a one of the core indicator of regions demographic dynamism. It is a vital index of a region's economic development, social awakening, historical and cultural background and political ideology. It is this attribute with

which all other characteristics of population are intimately related and from which they derive their significance. Thus, “the understanding of population growth in an area holds the key to the understanding of the entire demographic structure of the area (Chandna, R.C., 2002, p.132)”.

The growth of population or population change is often used to connote the change in the number of inhabitants of a territory during a specific period of time, irrespective of the fact whether the growth or change is negative or positive. Table-2 reveals that, the state of Uttarakhand during the past has experienced relatively low population growth due to the preponderance of natural calamities, superstitious social customs, such as polyandry and migration of young people in search of employment.

Table-2: Uttarakhand- Growth of Population (1901-1991)

Census Years	Percentage increase or decrease
1901	-
1911	(+) 11.0
1921	(-) 0.60
1931	(+) 8.3
1941	(+) 13.7
1951	(+) 12.3
1961	(+) 23.3
1971	(+) 23.0
1981	(+) 26.5
1991	(+) 24.23
2001	(+) 19.20

Source: Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh: At a Glance, 2003, Districtwise statistical overview, Kanpur.

The growth of population during 1901-91 reveals a regular upward trend excepting in the decade of 1911-21, when the total population of the region declined by 0.6 percent. During this period (1901-91), the state has recorded 257.6 percent increase in its total population with an annual average growth rate of 24.23 percent. The decline in population during 1911-21 was marked by rural population (-1.12 percent) only. As majority of the population in the state is rural, and hence, the trend of growth of total population and rural population is almost similar.

Population Growth (1991-2001)

The census of March 2001 had revealed a perceptible change in the Uttarakhand’s demographic scene, especially in its growth rate. Although the last inter-censal decade (1981-91) has recorded a growth of 24.23 percent as against 19.20 percent during 1991-2001. Thus, there was a fall in the growth rate of state’s population to the tune of 5.03 percent. It signals the beginning of a new era in the Uttarakhand’s demographic history. This establish beyond doubt that the state has reached the take-off stage in its demographic evolution. The process of demographic evolution in the state, which has started in the early decades of last century, is likely to get accentuated further

due to the improving levels of educational attainments, increasing age at marriage and increasing strain on an individual's purse.

Table-3: Uttarakhand- Population Growth Rates (1991-2001)

Districts	[Census yeas 1991-2001] Growth of population (in %)
Nainital	32.88
Udham Singh Nagar	27.79
Haridwar	26.30
Dehradun	24.71
Uttarkashi	22.72
Champawat	17.56
Tehri Garhwal	16.15
Chamoli	13.51
Rudra Prayag	13.44
Pithoragarh	10.92
Bageshwar	09.21
Pauri Garhwal	03.87
Almora	03.14
UTTARAKHAND	19.20

Source: Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh: At a Glance 2003, Districtwise statistical overview, Kanpur.

Inter-District Population Growth

Viewed in the spatial context, as many as 08 (Eight) districts out of 13 (thirteen) in the state had recorded (below the state average) growth in their populations (the state average being 19.20 percent) in 1991-2001. While, 05 (five) districts recorded (above the state average) growth in their population in the same censal period. The district of Nainital recorded the maximum population growth of 32.88 percent, while district of Almora recorded the minimum population growth of 3.14 percent during 1991-2001 censal period. The difference between the maximum and minimum population growth rate was 29.74 percent. What is significant to note in this regard is that 12 (twelve) districts out of 13 (thirteen) recorded a decline in their growth rates in comparison to previous decade appreciably. The only notable exception to this was Nainital district where the population grew from 30.01 percent to 32.88 percent.

Map prepared by using district level data on growth of population during 2001 (fig. 2) reveals that:-

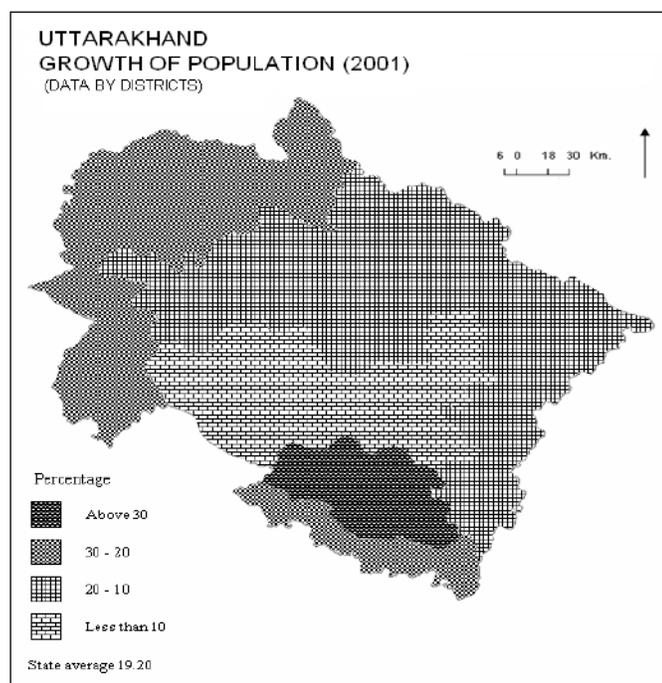


Fig.-2

1. The districts with high growth, either due to high rate of natural increases or due to net in-migration was very low. This is confined to the district of Nainital only, located in southern part of state. This district had recorded a growth rate of over 30 percent, 32.88 percent to be precise which is well over the state average. The location of Nainital is indicative of the fact that the in-migration from northern, central and north-eastern districts of state, coupled with in-migration from neighbouring state of Uttar Pradesh (particularly before the reorganisation of the state) and cross-border migration from countries, like Nepal and Tibet has constituted largely to their high growth.
2. Large parts of the state experienced growth rate of population well over the state average, confined mostly to north, north-west, south-west and south-east districts of Uttarkashi, Dehradun, Haridwar and Udham Singh Nagar respectively. These make the significant compact zone of population growth ranging between 20 to 30 per cent, which was above the state average. It signifies that in these districts the rate of actual increase was well above the state average. Thus the migration, if any, has not influenced the actual growth rate because both in and out migration seems to have cancelled out each other.
3. The areas of slow growth rate of population are spread largely in north-eastern and central parts of the state where population growth was below the state average. These districts include Champawat, Tehri Garhwal, Chamoli, Rudra Prayag and Pithoragarh. All these districts recorded growth rate of less than 20 percent, which is in fact in between 20 to 10 percent to be precise, This signifies that either the rate of natural increase in these districts had been brought down significantly through sharp decline in fertility rate; due to out-migration which was far in excess of in-migration, which has brought down the rate of actual growth in some of these districts listed above.

4. It was significant to note that about 23 percent of districts in the Uttarakhand recorded a growth of less than 10 percent in their population during 2001. The districts of, Bageshwar (9.21 percent), Pauri Garhwal (3.87 percent) and Almora (3.14 percent) fall in this category. The spread of such districts in the state is indicative of the fact that the spatial diffusion of the gains of demographic transition could be expected in next decade or so. Also, some of the ecological consequences and socio-economic backwardness are also responsible for their low population growth rates in the state.

SECTION – II

DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION

Discussions:

The analysis of distribution of population holds immense significance in the cultural set-up of Uttarakhand. As it's successful understanding holds the key to the analysis of entire demographic character of an area. "In the earlier years of history of human settlements when the distribution followed linear patterns, the explanation for such distributions was not difficult to discover. With the spread of population into vast areal units of irregular administrative size, the controls of such patterns have become more and more complex defying an easy interpretation" (Chandna, R.C.; 2002, p. 43).

When one is dealing with distribution of population, the concern is more for the pattern of spread of population. Thus, the distribution of population is more locational. Therefore, distribution of population refers to the spatial pattern in which the population finds its location, such as linear, dispersed, nucleated or agglomerated.

UTTARAKHAND: DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION (2001)

As per the 2001 census data, which shows that the total population of the state is about only 0.82 percent of the country's population, while the state is having only 1.63 percent geographical area of the country. It is in this context the state presents the patterns of unevenness in its intra-district population distribution.

Table-4: Uttarakhand: Inter-District Population - 2001

Districts	Distribution of population (in percent)
Haridwar	17.04
Dehradun	15.10
Udham Singh Nagar	14.55
Nainital	8.99
Garhwal	8.22
Almora	7.43
Tehri Garhwal	7.13

Pithoragarh	5.45
Chamoli	4.36
Uttarkashi	3.48
Bageshwar	2.93
Rudraprayag	2.68
Champawat	2.65

Source: Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh: At a Glance, 2003, Districtwise Statistical Overview, Kanpur.

It is evident from the Table No. (4) that the altitude and population have very close relationship in the study of population distribution in the area of study. As altitude and physiographic structure of the district/region exerts greater control over the distribution of population. Consequently, the different physiographic regions of the state has played active role in the distribution of population. As for instance, in the Tarai Region 23.54 percent, Bhabar Region 19.69 percent, Doon Valley 15.10 percent, Mountainous Region 28.39 percent and in Trans-Himalayan Region 13.29 percent respectively is the spatial spread in the state. Where still, the developed parts of the state i.e. Tarai and Bhabar supports 43.23 percent of the population. In different physiographic zones, relief introduces variety in gradation, which generally opposes human occupation, as in case of mountainous and Trans-Himalayan physiographic regions of the state.

As far as the inter-district patterns of population is concerned Haridwar with 17.04 percent, followed by Dehradun 15.10 percent and Udham Singh Nagar with 14.55 percent are the leading districts in terms of concentration of population in the state. These districts account for 46.70 percent of the state population. Whereas, that out of 13 (Thirteen) districts four districts viza-viz Nainital (8.99 percent), Pauri-Garhwal (8.22 percent), Almora (7.43 percent) and Tehri-garhwal (7.13 percent) supports 31.78 percent of the state population. While 06 (Six) districts namely Pithoragarh (5.45 percent), Chamoli 4.36 percent), Uttarkashi (3.48 percent), Bagheshwar 2.93 percent), Rudraprayag (2.68 percent), Champawat (2.65 percent) supports just 21.55 percent of the state population. This also testifies that, the physico-geomorphic determinant tends to influence the locational spread of population in the study area upto great extent.

UTTARAKHAND: RURAL POPULATION (2001)

According to the figures of the census of India: 2001, the rural population of the state accounts for about 74.33 percent of the population of the state. In absolute terms it is about 6,310,275 as ruralites population. The corresponding figure for India as whole was 72.18 percent. Meaning their by is that the state is having the majority of its population residing in rural areas of the state. Thus, unevenness of distribution was another core feature of the Uttarakhand's population.

TABLE-5: Uttarakhand: Rural Population - 2001

Districts	Distribution of rural population (in percent)
Rudraprayag	98.80
Bageshwar	96.88
Uttarkashi	92.24
Almora	91.35
Tehri-Grahwah	90.11
Pauri Garhwal	87.11
Pithoragarh	87.05
Chamoli	86.31
Champawat	84.95
Haridwar	69.16
Udham Singh Nagar	67.38
Nainital	64.77
Dehradun	47.06
State Average	74.33

Source: Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh: At a Glance, 2003, Districtwise Statistical Overview, Kanpur.

According to Table-5 the inter-district rural population distribution reveals that out of 13 (thirteen) districts, 09 (Nine) districts of the state is having the rural population well above the state average of 74.33 percent. The combined average of these districts was 62.68 percent whereas; just 04 (Four) districts are those, which were having their rural share well below the state average. The combined average of these districts was 19.11 percent respectively. The obvious implications of such a pattern were the conditions of chronic population pressure on rural land and resources and inadequate resource mobilisation in the study area.

UTTARAKHAND: URBAN POPULATION (2001)

According to the figures of census of India - 2001, the urban population of the state of Uttarakhand accounts for about 25.67 percent and, in absolute terms 2,179,074 population of the state lives in urban areas. While in the country the corresponding figure was 27.81 percent. Meaning thereby is that the percentage of urban population in the state is well below the national average of the country as a whole.

The inter-district distribution of urban population reveals that, the majority of districts of the state (about 69.23 percent) is having very meagre share of urban population. The percentage of urban population in these districts was below the state average. The district of Rudraprayag has the dubious distinction of having lowest urban population; the figure for the district was just 1.20 percent in 2001. Nine out of the thirteen districts of the study area was thus placed under least urbanised category. Likewise, the district of Bageshwar with 3.12 percent urban population was placed over Rudraprayag district in terms of share of urban population in the state. Thus, the region displays an uneven pattern of the distribution of urban population.

Table-6: Uttarakhand Distribution of Urban Population-2001

Districts	Percentage of Urban Population
Dehradun	52.94
Nainital	35.26
Udham Singh Nagar	32.62
Haridwar	30.84
Champawat	15.04
Chamoli	13.69
Pithoragarh	12.94
Pauri Garhwal	12.89
Tehri Garhwal	9.89
Almora	8.65
Uttarkashi	7.76
Bageshwar	3.12
Rudraprayag	1.20
State Average	25.67

Source: Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh: At a Glance, 2003, Districtwise Statistical Overview, Kanpur.

Table no. 6, reveals that the distribution of urban population as per 2001 census was found to be the highest in the district of Dehradun (52.94 percent), followed by Nainital (35.26 percent), Udham Singh Nagar (32.62 percent) and Haridwar (30.84 percent) respectively. There is a wide gap in the distribution of urban population with in the districts. This disparity can be attributed to factors like favourable climate and topography, easy accessibility, better economic and physical infrastructure and proximity to the plains. Infact, “sprouting of towns along the pilgrim routes has given a rather false image of distribution of urban population, as the areas away from the roads are still backward in development and inaccessible (Dave, B; 1999, pp. 55-57)”¹². The testimony to the above statement is the prevalent of majority of least urbanised districts in area of the study.

SECTION III

Endnotes:

- The physico-geographic determinents exert significant controls over the spatial spread of population in the state. The hilly states of India (including Uttarakhand) had over 77.90 percent, (out of their total population) as the proportion of rural population. Meaning thereby is that less urbanization, degradation of Himalayas (due to large rural base). This had led to areal variations in socio-economic development; and this situation in Hill states accentuates the spatial or area backwardness in majority of these states.
- Although the state of Uttarakhand had recorded a decline of 5.03 percent during 1991-2001 censal period. But wide inter-district differences in growth of population, indicates that

redistributive tendencies of population was lacking, which points towards poor feedback from prosperous areas towards poor areas. In other words, proper delivery system was still in its stage of infancy. Due to this trend, the state is experiencing male-dominated out-migration from the districts where population growth was below the state average.

- Uttarakhand presents unevenness in their spatial patterns of inter-district distribution of population because altitude and physiographic configuration influences distribution of population in the area of study.
- About 74.33 percent population of Uttarakhand confines to rural areas. The district of Rudraprayag, Bageshwar and Uttarkashi with 98.80 percent, 96.88 percent and 92.24 percent rural population continues to be least urbanised districts (L.U.D.) of the state.
- Only 25.67 percent population of Uttarakhand was urbanised. The district of Rudraprayag has the dubious distinction of having lowest urban population of 1.20 percent in 2001.
- The conferring of special category status to state itself justifies that the state requires central government intervention to resurrect its bottleneck in socio-economic development in general and area backwardness in particular.

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