Chapter I

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The provisional results of the 1991 Census of India have once again brought at the forefront India's population problem encapsuled as its enormous size and a very high growth rate which shows no sign of decline in the near future. India now accommodates above 84.43 million people (Census of India 1991, 1991,9), constituting nearly 16 per cent world population on 2.4 per cent land area of the globe. In fact, the post-Independence India's demographic scenario is marked with the substantial growth in the country's already large population and the attainment of the 1991 Census population figures is just in continuation of ongoing process of population increase in the country. Along with this population increase there have also been significant trends in demographic components of the country's population like in its distribution, growth, fertility, mortality and age structure. However, considering the distinct rural-urban division of this population owing to various socio-economic and cultural differences, there have been differentials in the trends of these demographic components between the two areas. In this regard, because of a more dynamic character of urban population and its direct relationship with urbanisation and the elements
of modernization as well as industrialization, the urban demographic trends draw special interest.

With this backdrop, the present doctoral research work entitled 'India's Population - A Demographic Profile with Special Reference to Urban Areas (1961-81)', attempts to analyse trends in important demographic components of India's population in terms of their rural-urban differentials while special emphasis is on urban areas. This state level study covers three censuses of 1961, 1971 and 1981 and two decades 1961-71 and 1971-81. However, to keep the work up-to-date, depending upon the availability of data, it also covers the period 1981-91. Particularly, since the provisional Tables of the 1991 Census have already started coming in, its available provisional results have been incorporated suitably.

Divided into six chapters, corresponding to the title of this study, the second Chapter analyses the rural-urban population distribution and urban growth trends in India, the third and the fourth chapters are devoted to the trends in the dynamics of India's fertility and mortality respectively, while the fifth Chapter is on the age transition in India during the period under study. The sixth and last Chapter presents the summary and conclusion.
Background of the Study

Historical Perspective of the Study

India's population as a major topic of study is not new. At the beginning of this century when the country's population was less than one-third of what it is now, it had already started becoming an important part of scholarly pursuits and drew considerable attention in socio-economic as well as political deliberations. With the inception of modern Indian Census in 1872 and under the influence of Malthus' classic theory that population tends to grow in a geometric progression whereas food supplies, at best, could increase in arithmetic progression, (Malthus, 1960, 8) between the 1880s and the first decade of the 20th century the issues concerning interrelationship between India's basic resources and population size as well as the country's capability or incapability to supply the means of support to its people were forcefully raised by the then prominent nationalist scholars like R.C. Dutt, G.V. Joshi, G.S. Iyer, Dadabhai Naoroji and others. They elucidated the pathetic poverty and destitute of the majority of Indian people in a broader politico-economic perspective and discussed India's population growth in relation to its corresponding economic development rather than food
production alone which was considered to be just a part of the country's pitious economic infrastructure. British rulers of colonial India, on the other hand, were wise enough to counter reply the standpoint of these scholars by arguing that growing poverty in India, actually the ultimate result of their own exploitive imperialist policies, (Chandra, 1966, 43) was the outcome of the size and growth of the country's population, which, by rapidly out numbering the means of subsistence, made poverty inevitable. These contentions led to the floating of a fallacious presumption of 'over-population' (Mitchell, 1942, 44) by the British writers and officers to blame for India's poverty and arrested economic development. Dadabhai Naoroji (1901, 217-269) made a scathing attack on this dubious allegation when he said:

"In fact it is absurd to talk of over population. ...Because a country increases in population it does not necessarily follow that it must become poorer; nor a country is densely populated that therefore it must be poor."

Similarly, the writings of other scholars of this period also reflected the reaction and condemnation towards British attitudes of making India's population responsible to cover their misdeeds. They also argued that the theory of 'over-population' was a mere attempt to divert public attention from the real problems faced by the Indian masses.
Therefore, under the influence of politico-economic approach of nationalist scholars in India, up to the second decade of this century, population as a discipline of study and as an area of its own identity largely centered around poverty, food production, carrying capacity and per capita and national income etc. rather than on demographic analysis.

It was only after 1921 when mortality began to decline gradually without any considerable decline in fertility that the accelerated population growth persuaded a number of scholars particularly during the decades of 1920s, 1930s and 1940s, to realize the gravity of the population problem and its future demographic implications. Their concern found expression broadly at two levels: First, under the influence of western knowledge, education and scientific outlook they produced a number of books giving a highly systematic and factual account of India's demographic situation and its population problem. P.K. Wattal (1916), Brij Narain (1925), B.T. Ranadive (1930), Gyan Chand (1939), S. Chandrasekhar (1946), D. Ghosh (1946) were a few such illustrious scholars amongst an impressive list. That coming to this period there was a growing tendency for scientific perception on demographic issues, may be proved by Brij Narain's observation (1925,
preface) regarding previously mentioned concept of 'over-population':

"India is not over populated in the absolute sense, that is we have not reached that stage where, on account of the exhaustion of the soil, or on the possibilities of industrial development, the national income has ceased to grow and therefore the population must cease to expand."

At the second level attempts were made to popularise measures of birth control by individuals as well as by provincial and princely governments, though in a limited sphere and in an unorganised manner. For example, Professor Karve opened a family planning clinic in Bombay in 1925 (Moraes, 1974, 5). The first government sponsored family planning clinics were opened in Bangalore and Mysore in 1930 (Rao, 1976, 3). A National Planning Committee with Jawaharlal Nehru as its president in 1938 recommended for birth control measures and limitation of the number of children in the interest of social economy, family happiness, and national planning (Indian National Congress, 1948, 67). This was followed by a course in family planning conducted by Dr. A.P. Pillai in 1940. A resolution providing to establish birth control clinics was moved in the British parliament in 1940, and Bhore Committee was appointed in 1943 by the Indian government to look into the matter (Government of India, 1946, 47). This Committee
recommended that provisions should be made to open birth control clinics in hospitals for maternity welfare.

Although the publication of books or introduction and expansion of birth control measures were more a recognition of a grave problem than any actual remedy, these steps aroused a greater interest among people, particularly educated, to understand and utilize the mass of statistics available in the volumes of the Census of India. Thus, despite the lack of authentic data and other demographic tools of scientific study and research the growing population drew attention of scholars to study the demographic characteristics of India's population. By the time of Independence in 1947 there was ample literature on the state of India's population which discussed such issues as differentials in population, its interrelationship with size and growth, different aspects of fertility and mortality, significance of high or low age of females at marriage, age structure, socio-economic correlates of population change and even urbanization.

Modern Perspective of the Study

In the modern times the issues concerning population have become a worldwide phenomenon. The increasing
availability of authentic and relevant data and other research materials have generated tremendous interest in understanding the dynamics of population growth and distribution. Today, leaving aside various governmental and United Nations organizations, a large number of voluntary institutions and individuals are conducting researches on population dynamics which are in themselves a sign of great interest, commitment and vitality (Population Crisis Committee, 1988,1). These researches have applied different approaches and highlighted distinct emerging trends in different aspects of population. In fact, present awareness of world population problem owes much to these researches and their findings. It would be, therefore, most appropriate to mention a few important findings briefly:

Contrary to popular belief, some writers have stressed favourable effects of population growth. Among them are Hicks (1957), who sees the Industrial Revolution itself as a vast secular boom brought about by the unprecedented rise in population, Simon (1980), who described in some historical details the economics associated with large population and Boserup (1981), who rejects the pessimism of Malthus and Ricardo about agriculture's ability to feed the growing population owing to the law of diminishing returns and asserts
that the pressure of population on the land has served as the principal inducement to the technological innovations.

Guided by the theory of demographic transition, for a long time it was held that as nations industrialize and urbanize, decline in fertility and mortality occurs. However, some findings suggest that the relationship between lower fertility and industrialization-urbanization may not be as automatic as it was previously assumed (Lorimer, 1954). Moreover, in several developing countries urban fertility is found higher than rural (United Nations, 1984,88). For instance, the estimates for Liberia show that urban general fertility rate of 218 live births per 1000 women aged 15-49 years was about 10 per cent above the corresponding rural rate (United Nations, 1979, 327). Average cumulative fertility in three important Asian countries Indonesia, Nepal and Pakistan is also higher in urban than in rural areas according to results of World Fertility Survey (ESCAP, 1982,8). Besides, a new ‘household model’ based on new economic approach of the west towards fertility, argues that as children become expensive, fewer will be born (Gardner, 1973, 99-123). The statistical data from developed countries have tended to confirm this new theory of fertility.
Refuting the general thinking and longstanding belief that decline in mortality makes people live longer, now it is found that mortality affects the age distribution much less than does fertility and prolongation of life by reducing death rates has the pervers effects of making the population younger (Coale, 1967, 36) unless it is accompanied by fertility decline.

In contrast to the western experience where high level of urbanization was also accompanied by a high level of industrialization, in some of the developing countries, the urbanization-industrialization nexus has been found divorced. Particularly in India, growing urbanization does not seem to have been able to create sufficient ground to alter the country's occupational structure (Peach, 1970, 297), since the proportion of workers in the primary sector has not declined significantly over time.

Some of the above mentioned observations and similar other findings don't have universal applicability and leave room for further analysis and research. For example, Hick's idea about the positive impact of large population and its increasing growth on human being just goes against the prevailing population scenario in the world where a number of
socio-economic problems are mainly the outcome of a large and increasing population which dilutes the results of development in different spheres of life. Likewise, it may be mentioned that besides exceptions urban living has negative influence on fertility. In fact, the analysis of World Fertility Survey data of 20 developing countries have shown the generally negative influence of urban living on fertility after the effects of such factors as age of women at marriage, marital duration and education of mother have been eliminated. Therefore, rural fertility is constantly higher in most of the countries although in many cases this difference may not be significant. Similarly, the 'household model' of fertility has also been criticised on the ground of its irrelevance for the developing countries (Schultz, 1974, 82-810) and Ketkar has applied its modified version for his study on Sierra Lion (1979, 479-488).

Nevertheless, in spite of conceptual differences many of the modern researches have provided a new scientific outlook in analysing the demographic trends in any population and, therefore, form an important basis for further carrying forward research in the field of population studies.
Emerging Demographic Trends in India: A Rural-Urban Perspective

As discussed earlier, by the time of India's Independence in 1947, there was a good deal of literature on demographic situation in the country. These works analysed the features and trends of different demographic components of the country's population like its size, distribution, growth and aspects related to fertility, mortality and age structure etc. During India's post-Independence period also with a net addition of people equivalent to the population of Australia every year, (Balasubramanyam, 1984, 15) such demographic components have shown important trends. However, being a predominantly agrarian society (Bhattacharya, 1983, 1) there exists a lot of socio-economic as well as cultural disparities between rural and urban population in the country. Resultantly, these disparities have generated heterogeneity in the trends of different demographic components of the country's population between these two areas and encouraged rural-urban differentials in their trends. The Census of India data and greater availability of reliable statistics on vital events during the recent decades provide information on this characteristic. These sources indicate that although the level of urbanization in India is still very low, there has been a noticeable increase in the proportion of urban population since
1961 and in this process rural and urban population proportions have observed changes. Although traditionally net rural-urban migration has been considered to be a major source of urban population growth, a sharp decline in mortality and a continued fairly high level of fertility is causing an expanding role of natural increase in the population growth of rural and urban areas in the country. Particularly, in the context of urbanization, the high mean percentage of population growth attributed to natural increase (Preston, 1979, 198) is reducing the pool of the potential of rural-urban migrants.

The significant role of natural increase in the population growth of rural and urban population in the country emphasises the contribution of fertility and mortality trends in these areas which reflect the effects of various socio-economic as well as exogenous factors. Besides, the interplay of these dynamics along with migration streams have tremendous impact on the transition in the age structure of these two populations. In fact, the attainment of the youthful character of the country's population is one of the most remarkable characteristics of the changing demographic scenario in India.

Therefore, in view of these emerging demographic
characteristics in the country, a study on rural-urban differentials in the trends of most important demographic components of the country's population since 1961 would be in continuation of ongoing world wide studies in the field of population. Moreover, since urban areas involve the process of urbanization and are considered to reflect the impact of the attributes attached to modernization and economic development (McGee, 1971, 75), while carrying out such study urban trends would require special reference.

Objective of the Study

Related with the preceding discussion, the objective of this study is to analyse the trends in most important demographic components of India's population in terms of their rural-urban differentials while special reference is of urban areas. Four major demographic components selected for this study for the state level analysis are - the rural-urban population distribution and urban growth trends, dynamics of fertility and mortality, and transition in the country's age structure.

The spatio-temporal variation in the trends of these components, in fact, indicates the cumulative impact of several
socio-economic and geographical factors. While geographical factor is always a physical determinant, sometimes social advancement leads towards economic development and sometimes economic development paves the way for social progress. The existing fluctuations in these two determinants have caused tremendous impact on the level of development in different parts of the country, although in some cases the exact importance of various factors coming under the purview of socio-economic variables are clearly not known due to multiplicity of these factors and their interdependence. Even then experiences do show that factors such as industrialization, urbanization, levels of education, per capita income and status of women etc. have been significantly affecting the trends in India’s demographic characteristics. Social advancement, greater exposure to the outside world, increasing facilities of transport and changing way of life have definitely made people increasingly conscious towards social problems and issues. In fact, in India, social change was to some extent adequate to alter the increase in the female age at marriage and popularizing literacy. At the same time, this change has proved insufficient to provide women with occupation or other benefits of development and motivate them to accept family planning norms.
The regional disparities in the levels of economic and industrial development, on the other hand, instead of reducing, have shown a tendency of growing divergence, affecting the agglomerated pattern of industrialization. Even within states industries have tended to gravitate towards existing urban centers. With the result, peripheries have suffered severly from the backwash effects and the dispersed patterns of industrialization could not be achieved (Kundu & Raza, 1982, 77-108). Not only the vertical disparities accentuated but the horizontal balance too showed a sign of deterioration (Tiwari, 1984,2).

However, the socio-economic disparities are not only reflected in regional variations but also in between rural and urban areas. It is, therefore, just not customary, as the Census of India asserts (Census of India 1971, 1975, 42), to classify population as rural-urban, but a necessity for its scientific study. In rural areas where a large proportion of population is engaged in agriculture the salient demographic features prevalent in the society are different from those in urban areas. High mortality, high fertility and slow natural increase, make the distinct demographic characteristics of rural areas. In urban areas things are different due to domination of non-agricultural economic set up and also because
data, the union territories which subsequently obtained the status of full fledged state anytime during the period under study, have been taken for the entire duration.

Period of the study

Basically, this study covers a time span of 20 years from 1961 to 1981. Since the objective of the study deals with the dimension pertaining to rural and urban areas, the reason behind selection of 1961 as starting point is to avoid the complexities involved in defining a place as urban because the criteria to define 'urban' has largely remained the same in the Indian Census since 1961. Besides, the selection of this year carries one more advantage of bringing out the post-Independence demographic scenario into limelight. However, to place the analysis in a proper perspective and make it up-to-date, through description and data presentation attempts have been made at appropriate places for establishing links with the periods preceding and following the duration of the study. Particularly, since 1991 Census provisional results have by now started coming in and fertility and mortality data for the 1980s are also available, these data, subject to limitations of availability have been suitably included in the analysis.
Data Base of the Study

Since this work is basically a secondary source based study, relevant volumes of the Census of India form a major data base. These have been further substantiated by the Sample Registration System and the National Sample Survey data which have been particularly important in the interpretation of fertility and mortality trends in the country. Relevant publications of the United Nations and its allied organizations like Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and Department of International Economic and Social Affairs (DIESA) have also been used for obtaining statistical informations particularly with reference to international comparability of India's demographic characteristics. Besides, this study suitably cites useful data from various reports, occasional papers, survey findings and other statistical documents prepared by different organisations and individuals.

Methodology of the Study

This study follows the systematic approach in analysing the trends in the demographic components of the country's population during the period under study. While
dealing with the objective the suitable statistical techniques have been employed for furtherance of the analysis and to explain the data and test the theoretical predictions given in demographic literature. Therefore, the quantitative and statistical tools adopted for this study vary according to needs of arguments. For example, in discussing the trends India's rural-urban population distribution the interpretation is guided by the results obtained from the calculation based on Census of India data showing the size, distribution and growth of the country's population. For analysing the trends in the dynamics of fertility and mortality, there has been greater dependence on regression techniques. Besides, different types of ratios, coefficient of correlation and ginni coefficient are some of the other statistical exercises which have been suitably employed in the text of the study.

Chapterization Scheme of the Study

This study has been divided into six chapters. The demographic character of any population operates through three vital components of fertility, mortality and migration. Although while dealing with the demographic trends of any population, fertility and mortality are given prime importance, in the context of rural-urban distribution of the population
migration also becomes an important determinant.

Furthermore, demographic trends do not operate in a demographic vacuum and to separate migration from fertility, or mortality, would not only be artificial but it can, to some extent, be misleading. Therefore, before analysing the trends in dynamics of fertility and mortality, Chapter II entitled 'Rural-Urban Population Distribution and Urban Growth Trends in India', while discussing the process involved in the distribution and growth pattern of rural and urban population, deals with the role of different factors including net rural to urban migration as a contributory factor for causing a higher urban population growth and through increasing level of urbanization reduce the proportion of rural population. This Chapter, highlighting the significance of the natural increase as a single major component of the country's population growth in rural as well as urban areas, paves the way for chapters III and IV which discuss the trends in the dynamics of fertility and mortality respectively. The emerging trends in these dynamics during the last 20 to 30 years are crucial indicators of the country's contemporary demographic situation and also serve an important measure of socio-economic progress. These two chapters are followed by Chapter V which deals with the transition in India's age structure owing to changes in the
patterns of fertility, mortality and migration. The last Chapter VI presents the summary and conclusion of the study. It may be re-stated that in analysing the trends in the foregoing mentioned demographic components the emphasis is to bring out rural-urban differentials, while the special focus is on urban areas.