CHAPTER VII
SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC IMPLICATIONS
OF DEMOGRAPHIC DYNAMICS
Production of wealth is a means to the sustenance of man and man himself is the chief means of the production. It clearly explains the existence of inseparable linkages between population dynamics and socio-economic conditions. However, the analyses of these linkages have too many complexities.

One source of complexity is that the nature of the linkages is not unidirectional. "The growth of population lowers the growth of per capita income" does not carry much significance in all circumstances, because growth itself is determined by a host of factors. Economically, growth may be determined by factors such as capital accumulation, technological progress and the quantity as well as the quality of labour force. Similarly, large scale migration to urban areas is often associated with a high growth of population growth rate, which may create a series of problems in the form of degradation of the environment, pressure on economic and social infrastructure such as transport, housing and education, a rise in delinquency and crime, exploitation of women and children. On the other hand, urbanization may have the effect of reducing fertility and population growth also. Therefore, it can be noted that the linkages are complex and unidirectional.

The second source of complexity relates to the fact that the socio-economic implications of the population dynamics depend on the initial conditions and time frame. For instance, high fertility is likely to change the age structure of the population so as to increase the dependency ratio of the young, leading in turn to a possible reduction in savings, a lowering of investment and a decline in the rate of
growth of output. In a labour-constrained economy, high fertility may be desirable as the dependency could be expected to join the labour force a few years later.

The third source of complexity relates to the impacts of demographic dynamics, practically in all the elements of social and economic development. It is not easy to disentangle the effect in an individual explanatory variable; however many have intuitions among themselves.

The above snapshot picture of the manifold complexities makes it abundantly clear that all aspects of the interrelationship between socio-economic and population elements are complicated owing to many dimensions of each factors. This chapter focuses on the potentially adverse consequences of the prevailing demographic dynamics for some aspects of economic and social development and its measures for curtailment in respect to the existing resources prevalent in Nagaland.

Poverty is a complex phenomenon and its incidence is determined by many factors including level of per capita income, the rate of economic growth, distribution of assets and income, quality of governance, access to credit, education, health and other services related to human development. However, high population pressure cannot be dismissed as a notable cause of poverty. With a fixed amount of land and other natural resources, it becomes more difficult to provide a specified standard of living for a large and rapidly growing population particularly in the rural areas of the state. As per national sample survey (55th round) 1999-2000, 32.67 percent of the state population lives below poverty line and according to National Health Survey...
11 (1998-1999), 27 percent of the population has low standard of living and 60 percent is in medium category. Even though birth rates have been declining in the state, the population growth momentum is such that the net absolute addition to population numbers in the state each year is higher than in the previous year. Such demographic dynamics may lead to what one call the “population poverty trap.” The avoidance of this trap requires proactive family planning policies with a close cooperation between the government, NGOs and other private sectors. Another linkage between high population growth and poverty in the state is often manifested in large family size. A large family size obviously strains the capacity of the poor families to provide adequate health care and educational opportunities for the children. The low level of human resources development of the young in turn tends to perpetuate poverty. However, it can be argued that the large family size is not only a cause but a result of poverty. The poor tend to have more children because typically they face higher child mortality, cheaper child rearing cost, and a greater need for income from the child labour. In both rural and urban areas of the state, the children of the poor start to help their parent at an early age which prevents them for attending school. The lack of education in turn helps to transfer poverty from generation to the next. The high dependency ratio among the total population of the state can also be attributed to the large size of poor household particularly in the rural areas. Among many factors, the presence of large number of children and elderly people in the
household results in a high dependency ratio. It is true that children of the poor start working at a young age but their earnings are extremely low.

Rapid growth of population also affects the environment adversely, as more people consume more natural resources and produce more waste. The high density of population particularly in the urban centers of the state is likely to pose serious challenges to environmental management in the coming years. Mismanagement of environment in turn can cause demographic changes by influencing health, mortality and even fertility. In addition to this linkage, poverty has also had interrelationship with the environment, which results into a population-environment-poverty nexus. In this nexus the poor are considered both victims and agents of environmental damage. Population growth increases demand for goods and services particularly food and fuel. A growing demand for food can be met through increased agricultural production on land previously unused and through intensification of agriculture on land already in use. The increase in total area used for agriculture in the state has contributed largely to the loss of natural vegetation. Further, deforestation as a result of excessive Jhuming and cutting fuel wood for domestic consumption by the rural dwellers has also contributed significantly to the loss of forest cover. It is evident from the fact that according to the state forest reports of 1997 and 1999, published by the Ministry of Environment and Forest, there has been a decline of 70 sq km in 1997 and 57 sq km in 1999, out of around 862930 hac forest cover in the State.
Growing population leads to increased demand for fossil fuels and non-renewable natural resources and the sustainable use of the resources is undermined. Air pollution in the urban centers is increasing at an alarming rate. The distribution of people between rural and urban areas also has important implications. As discussed earlier, urbanization is on the increase and the urban residents are facing many environmental problems such as air pollution, noise pollution, overflowing sewage, contaminated drinking water, piles of garbages, etc. The consequences of environmental degradation are however heavily borne by the poor partly because they depend directly on the natural environment for their livelihood. In fact, in Nagaland agriculture and allied activities continue to be the source of livelihood for around 65 percent of the population. This indicates that the pressure of poor people not absorbed by the fast-growing sectors remains on land and forest, etc. This is strengthened by the dismal picture of encroachment on the cultivable forest land, leading to over exploitation of forest resources.

Population change also affects both the opportunities for investment in human resource development and the possibilities for adequate use of these resources. The effects of population change on investment in human resource occur primarily through changes in the demographic structure of society and household. At the societal level, this is expressed partly through the age structure and partly through the spatial distribution of the population. At the household level, change operates through household size and composition to affect household investment in the
human resource of the members. Whether improvements in the levels of human resources are utilized or not are indirectly related to population change and the ability of groups in society to make use of the opportunities.

Demographic changes directly affect the labour force as it is determined by the size and age structure of the population, which in turn is determined by economic, social and cultural factors. Compared to other states in India, Nagaland exhibits a low work participation rate with 42.29 percent of the total population in 1991 and 35.37 percent in 2001, engaged in different economic activities. It reveals a high dependency rate amongst its population. The rate of female labour force participation tends to be lower than of men; however there is a large share of proportion of female labour force in the total working force.

In general, Nagaland with nearly half of its population under working force, it has relatively high unemployment rate. Moreover, a large rural population depending solely on agriculture leads to the increase of underemployment rate. Persistently high unemployment and underemployment rates are the important cause of incidence of poverty among the people. Agriculture is still the source of employment in the state and the proportion share of workers in agriculture and allied services is as high as 68.40 percent in 2001. As a result of heavy pressure on rural agricultural sector and lack of other employment opportunities, there has been a rapid migration of the labour force from rural to urban areas. In urban areas these new migrants usually end up in the informal sector because of limited job
opportunities in the formal sectors. The challenge before the state is not only to ensure the generation of adequate employment opportunities for the growing labour force but also to devote a greater share of resource to enhance the educational attainment and productivity of the labour force.

Population change can also act to increase children access to education. At the household level, increased investments in the education of children are simultaneously a motivating force behind fertility decline and also an outcome of the fertility decline. At the societal level, fertility decline acts to decrease the number of children for whom educational infrastructure needs to be provided. Thus, improving the possibilities of extending the coverage and quality of educational system. Family size also affects the educational level of the children; the increase in the level of investment in human capital appears to motivate parents to have fewer children.

The effects of changing age structure on educational investment operate primarily through increasing per capita investment in students or increasing the number of students. Decrease in the rate of population growth results in fewer school age children, which might have otherwise accounted a greater level of investment per child. Population change can also help to improve the access to education by females to the extent that it declines the fertility rate related to expanded coverage of education systems. The greater the expansion of educational opportunities, greater the probability that girls will be provided with access to opportunities. Higher levels
of female education have ramifications for the development of human resources. These effects operate partly through feedback effects on population variable and partly through increasing women's access to employment and income opportunities. High levels of education increase the opportunity cost of the women's labour and increase their decision making power. This is associated with women being more likely to delay marriage having fewer children, greater geographical mobility and bigger participation in the labour force.

In fact, Nagaland with a rapid growth of population the literacy level among the people is quite high compared to other states of mainland India. With 66.6 percent literacy rate when India literacy rate was only 64.8 percent of the total population in 2001, Nagaland shows a high quality of human resource in terms of education. Further, with a population proportion of nearly 37.79 percent under the age group of 0-14 Nagaland shows a high fertility rate. However, this high proportion may have a negative effect upon the adequate and proper development of education infrastructure for the improvement of educational system in the state. The literacy level among the females which is less than that of the males in the state may also put constraint on the development of educational level in the state.

Investment in health infrastructure can be affected by population change. Fertility decline can reduce the overall levels of dependency and hence, increase the per capita levels of resources for investment in health services for the dependent population. Further, urbanization can also contribute to improved health by
increasing the proportion of the population who have access to better health condition and coverage of health services, and lack of access to healthy living conditions affects the level of mortality and morbidity. Nagaland marked by rapid growth of rural population and the family size basing big access to health services among its children is limited and not satisfactory. Low literacy rate among the rural females population in the state also contributes to a low level of health care development in the state.

Population growth has a direct bearing on savings also. In Nagaland where unemployment and underemployment exist at an alarming rate, population growth does not lead to higher output. Rather, consumption increases and savings fall. Savings are also influenced by changes in the age composition. As the dependency rate grows aggregate savings falls since working age group is mostly responsible for producing goods and services.

The movement of people from one geographical area to another is another factor that leads to rapid population growth and in turn results in changes in socio-economic character of the society. Rural to urban migration is a major factor that underlies the process of urbanization which inevitably occurs as economic development progress. The flow of people from rural areas occurs mainly for economic reasons, although other factors such as education and health are also relevant. Accordingly, a rapid growth of urban population is evident in case of Nagaland since the last few decades. Rural-urban social and economic disparities
and lack of job opportunities in rural areas have resulted into the increase rural-to-
urban migration. Since population mobility is related to sustainable development,
population. People who move out of unsustainable system in rural areas to rapidly growing
urban centers often move into urban poverty, which indicates a strong relationship
between socio-economic development and migration. Urbanization tends to increase
income differentials between rural and urban dwellers which imply that there is a
close linkage between rural and urban areas. Therefore, while attempting to solve
problems of rural to urban migration, sustainability of the socio-economy of both
areas should be considered. Policy measures should be adopted to channel the flow
of migrants efficiently with a view to create a greater balance between population,
resource and the carrying capacity of the local environment and labour market.