

CHANGING POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS IN PARSA

Keshav Kumar Yadav
Department of Population Studies

Abstract

The populaton of Nepal has been growing steadily for the last several decades. The rapidly growing population, at alarming state in Parsa (Nepal), is an indicator of the change in population status. This paper explores the changing population characteristics of Parsa district in terms of size, growth rate, density, distribution, composition, dependency ratio, marriage age, literacy status, religion, caste/ethnicity as well as the major mother tongue which is vital for local planning. It is based on the secondary data collected from different censuses of Nepal.

Keywords

Population distribution, density, age dependency, sex ratio, literacy status

Introduction

Population characteristics can be described by various indicators. The growth rate of population is one of the most important indicators. It is still high in Parsa district. Population distribution by rural and urban areas is also an important population characteristic. Majority of Parsa people live in rural areas. Though the proportion of population living in rural area is declining in Parsa over time, it is still more than 77 percent in 2001. The pressure of population is increasing in Parsa, the high increasing pattern is observed that is 367 persons per

sq. km. Sex ratio of Parsa is 110 males per 100 females in 2001 which is higher than past. The proportion of child population is declining, but it is still very high. The young age dependency ratio is declined, but old age dependency ratio is observed increased. A significant increase in age at marriage particularly for females though age at marriage is observed increasing for both males and females over the period. Literacy rate is very low than nation, which is also a very crucial population characteristic. The proportion of Hindus is found declining over the period and other religious followers are increasing but it is still predominant

religion. The proportion of Muslim is highest in Parsa with 15.41 percent. The Bhojpuri speakers as mother tongue are the highest constitute 83.56 percent in 2001 at Parsa. The Changing population characteristics indicates the changing picture of Parsa. It might be useful for academia, development planner including the political parties.

District setting

Parsa district lies between the geographical coordinates extending from 27° North to 27° 26' North latitude, and in between 84° 8' East to 84° 27' East longitude. The district has an area of 1353 Sq. Km. and population is 497219 (male: 260411 and female: 236808) in 2001. It is located in central region of Nepal and Bara district in the East, Chitwan district and Bihar State of India in the West, Makwanpur and Chitwan districts in the North and Bihar State of India in the South. The head quarter of the district is Birgunj. The district has 83 VDCs and one Sub-metropolitan city named Birgunj.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of the study was to analyze some changing population characteristics of Parsa and also sketch its population status.

Methods

The study was based on the secondary data collected from different censuses in Nepal. The data regarding the population characteristics of Parsa district were taken from the district profile published by CBS. The study is quantitative in nature. The relevant data have been analysed in terms of indicators mentioned above.

Results and discussion

Population Size, Its Growth Rate and Density

Table 1 shows that the population of Nepal is growing very rapidly. In the Tenth Census of Nepal conducted in 2001, the population was 23151423 with an annual growth rate 2.25 percent during 1991– 2001. Also in the same

decade the population of Parsa district is growing very fast at the rate of 2.89 percent.

Table 1: Population Size, growth rate, and Density (1971 – 2001)

Year	Population Size		Annual Growth Rate (%)		Density Per Sq. Km	
	Parsa	Nepal	Parsa	Nepal	Parsa	Nepal
2001	497219	23151423	2.89	2.25	367	157
1991	372524	18491097	2.70	2.08	275	126
1981	284338	15022839	3.41	2.66	210	102
1971	202123	11555983	3.84	2.07	160	79
The Total Physical Area of Parsa is 1353 Sq.Km. since 1981 and 1266.41 Sq.Km. in 1971						

(Source: CBS, Population Monograph, 2003, Vol. I, BBS, Birgunj, 2061)

The annual growth rate during 1981–1991 of Parsa was 2.70 percent while during 1971 – 1981 it was 3.41 percent. It shows the population of Parsa is growing quite rapidly than during past 30 years.

The density is an effective index to measure the pressure of population on land. The population density is the population per square kilometer of the total land. The pressure of population is increasing in Parsa, the high increasing pattern is observed in Parsa density from 1971 to 2001. It is mainly due to flow of people from Mountain and Hill to Parsa. The population pressure is also high in Parsa district.

Population distribution by urban and rural

Table 2 reveals the proportion of urban population is increasing over time in each census. The proportion of urban population may be the result of migration of rural to urban area and the change the border of Birgunj (urban) time to time.

Table 2: Population distribution by urban and rural (1971 – 2001)

Area	Population (Percent)							
	2001		1991		1981		1971	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Parsa	22.6	77.4	18.5	81.5	15.4	84.6	6.4	93.6
Nepal	14.2	85.8	9.2	90.8	6.4	93.6	4.0	96.0

(Source: CBS, 2003)

Sex ratio

Sex ratio of Parsa is 110 males per 100 females in 2001 which is higher than 108 in 1991 as Table 3 shows. It is highest than past. It may be due to the high number of male migration from other districts of the country as well as neighbours country.

Table 3: Population by sex and sex ratio, (1971 – 2001)

Year	Population by Sex				Sex Ratio (Males per 100 Females)	
	Parsa		Nepal		Parsa	Nepal
	Males	Females	Males	Females		
2001	260411	236808	11563921	11587502	110	100
1991	193174	179350	9220974	9270123	107	99
1981	146342	137996	7695336	7327503	106	105
1971	104815	97308	5817203	5738780	108	101

(Source: CBS, 2003)

Age dependency ratio

Table 4 shows that the proportion of child population of Parsa under age 15 years is 40.8 percent and that of old age population is 5.1 percent. The working age population (aged 15 – 59) is 54.1 percent of the total population in 2001. The proportion of child population is declining from 42.5 percent in 1991 to 40.4 in 2001, but it is still very high. The decline in child population indicates the slight decline in fertility in recent times. But the child population of Parsa is higher than the nation.

Table 4: Population distribution by broad age group(1971 – 2001)

Year	Age composition (Parsa)			Age composition (Nepal)		
	0 - 14	15 - 59	60 +	0 - 14	15 - 59	60 +
	2001	40.8	54.1	5.1	39.4	54.1
1991	42.5	52.5	5.0	42.4	51.8	5.8
1981	42.1	51.7	6.2	41.4	52.9	5.7
1971	38.8	56.3	4.9	40.5	53.9	5.6

Source: CBS, 2003

As Table 5 shows the young age dependency ratio of Parsa is declined at 75.3 in 2001 from 80.8 in 1991, but old age dependency ratio is observed increased since 1971 from 8.8 to 9.4 in 2001 except in 1981. The total dependency ratio is still 84.7 in 2001 which can be considered as high. It means that every 100 people of working age have to look after 84.7 young and old age population in terms of food, clothes, health, education, housing etc.

Table 5: Population distribution by age dependency Ratio(1971 – 2001)

Year	Dependency Ratio (Parsa)			Dependency Ratio (Nepal)		
	Young	Old	Total	Young	Old	Total
	2001	75.3	9.4	84.7	72.7	12.0
1991	80.8	9.4	90.2	81.9	11.2	93.1
1981	81.4	12.0	93.4	78.1	10.8	88.9
1971	68.8	8.8	77.6	75.0	10.4	85.4

(Source: CBS, 2003)

Age at marriage

Table 6 shows that a significant increase in age at marriage particularly for females though age at marriage is observed increasing for both males and females over the period. It is 21.1 years for males and 17.2 years for females in 2001. Age at marriage for females is increased more years than males i.e. from 13.7 and 18.0 years in 1981 to 17.2 and 21.1 years in 2001 for females and males respectively. The increase in age at marriage may contribute to lower the fertility but it is still very low age at marriage

of females at Parsa. Age at marriage for girl of Parsa are lower than the nation.

Table 6: Age at marriage(1981 – 2001)

Area	2001		1991		1981	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Parsa	21.1	17.2	18.9	15.1	18.0	13.7
Nepal	22.9	19.5	21.4	18.1	20.7	17.2

(Source: CBS, 1995 and 2003)

Literacy status

Table 7 reveals that literacy rate of Parsa is increasing from 14.7 percent in 1971 to 42.6 percent in 2001. The literacy rate for female is increased by more than five times in the period 1971 – 2001 during 30 years but it is increased to only more than twice during the same period. The data on literacy rate show that it is improving gradually in Parsa, it is still lower than the national level.

Table 7: Literacy status (1971 – 2001)

Year	Literacy Status (Parsa)			Literacy Status (Nepal)		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
2001	42.6	55.5	28.2	54.1	65.5	42.8
1991	32.5	46.2	17.9	39.6	54.5	25.0
1981	21.3	29.9	12.4	23.3	34.0	12.0
1971	14.7	23.5	4.9	13.9	23.6	3.9

Source: CBS, 1995 and 2003

Religion

Followers of Hindu constitute 82.37 percent in Parsa in 2001, as shown in Table 8. The proportion of Hindu is found declining over the period and other religious followers are increasing but it is still predominant Hindu religious in Parsa. Followers of Islam are second largest proportion constitutes 15.40 percent.

Table 8: Population distribution by religion(1971 – 2001)

Religion	Population Parsa (%)				Population Nepal (%)			
	1971	1981	1991	2001	1971	1981	1991	2001
Hindu	86.21	79.26	85.83	82.37	89.39	89.50	86.50	80.62
Budhist	0.50	2.47	1.76	1.98	7.50	5.32	7.78	10.74
Islam	13.28	8.87	12.26	15.40	3.04	2.66	3.53	4.2
Christian	0.00	0.02	0.05	0.06	0.02	0.03	0.17	0.45
others	0.02	9.38	0.10	0.23	0.05	2.49	2.01	4.0

Source: CBS, 1995 and 2003

Major caste / ethnicity

The proportion of Muslim is highest in Parsa with 15.41 percent followed by Tharu (8.24%), Kurmi (8.21%), Yadav (6.37%) and other caste groups are less than 6 percent in Parsa as shown in Table 8. It is almost similar in 1991 as shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Population distribution by caste/ethnicity (1971 - 2001)

Caste/Ethnicity	Population (%)			
	2001		1991	
	Parsa	Nepal	Parsa	Nepal
Muslim	15.41	4.27	12.26	3.53
Tharu	8.24	6.75	8.78	6.46
Kurmi	8.21	0.94	8.55	0.90
Yadav	6.37	3.94	6.92	4.14
Kanu	5.46	0.42	5.19	0.38
Teli	3.59	1.34	5.03	1.36
Chamar	4.23	1.19	4.56	1.10
Koiri	2.39	1.11	3.33	-
Brahmin(H)	3.30	12.74	3.10	12.92
Sudi, Kalwar	2.77	0.91	3.08	0.88
Newar	2.18	5.5	2.52	5.6
Chhetri	3.07	15.80	2.50	16.05
Dusad	2.35	0.70	2.48	0.50
Kami	0.31	3.94	2.08	5.21
Brahmin(T)	1.57	0.59	2.01	0.88
Tamang	1.75	5.6	1.89	5.5

Source: CBS, 1995 and 2003

Major mother tongue

Table 10 reveals that the Bhojpuri speakers as

mother tongue are highest constitute 83.56 percent in 2001 at Parsa which is followed by Nepali (8.15%), Tamang (1.58%), Newari (1.41%) and Maithili (1.41%). Nepali speakers are slightly declined whereas other speakers increased slightly. In Nepal there are 48.6 percent Nepali speakers and second mother tongue are Maithili speakers.

Table 10 : Population distribution by mother tongue (1971 - 2001)

Mother Tongue	Population (Percent)							
	2001		1991		1981		1971	
	Parsa	Nepal	Parsa	Nepal	Parsa	Nepal	Parsa	Nepal
Bhojpuri	83.56	7.53	81.49	7.46	58.05	7.61	91.88	6.98
Nepali	8.15	48.61	10.53	50.31	24.12	58.36	4.66	52.45
Tamang	1.58	5.19	1.56	4.89	1.16	3.48	0.12	4.80
Newari	1.41	3.63	1.19	3.73	3.18	2.99	0.89	3.94
Maithili	1.12	12.30	0.81	11.85	3.22	11.11	0.54	11.49
Hindi	0.91	0.47	0.54	0.92	-	-	-	-

(Source: CBS, 1995 and 2003)

Conclusion

Population of Parsa district was 497219 (male: 104815 and female: 97308) with sex ratio 110 males per 100 females. Population growth rate is still high in Parsa, it is 2.89 percent per annum during the period 1991 – 2001. Population density is 367 per sq. km. and population is decreasing in rural area over time but it is still rural in character with 77.4 percent.

Population of Parsa can be considered as young with 40.8 percent because the proportion of children is very high in Parsa. This may be due to women marrying at early ages. The female

age at marriage is still very low with 17.2 years in Parsa.

Literacy rate is increasing from 14.7 percent in 1971 to 42.6 percent in 2001. Female literacy rate is increased more than five times in the period 1971 - 2001 during 30 years while male literacy rate is twice in the same period.

Followers of Hindu constitute 82.37 percent in Parsa in 2001. The proportion of Hindu is found declining over the period and other religious followers are increasing but it is still predominant Hindu religious in Parsa. The proportion of Muslim caste is highest in Parsa with 15.41 percent.

The Bhojpuri speakers as mother tongue are highest constitute 83.56 percent in 2001 at Parsa. Nepali speakers are slightly declined whereas other speakers increased slightly.

References

Central Bureau of Statistics, (1987). *Population Monograph of Nepal*. Kathmandu: CBS.

Central Bureau of Statistics, (1995). *Population Monograph of Nepal*. Kathmandu: CBS.

Central Bureau of Statistics, (2003). *Population Monograph of Nepal*. Vol. I Kathmandu: CBS.

Branch Bureau of Statistics, (2062). *Parsa Jila Ko Bastugat Bibran 2061*. Birgunj: BBS.

Central Bureau of Statistics, (2003). *Mapping Nepal Census Indicators 2001 and Trends*. Kathmandu: ICIMOD.

The Author

Keshav Kumar Yadav is a Lecturer in Population Education in Thakur Ram Multiple Campus Birgunj. He has been involved in teaching for the last fourteen years. His subjects of interest include Population Analysis, Population of Nepal and Indirect Techniques. He has published about half a dozen articles in various journals.