

Introduction

Suresh Jungari

The present monograph includes a selection of research papers that were presented at the XVII Bhopal Seminar 2019. The theme of the XVII Bhopal Seminar 2019 was Population and Sustainable Development in India. The Seminar was organised by MLC Foundation and 'Shyam' Institute at Bhopal during 23 through 25 January 2019. During the Seminar 35 research papers were presented on different aspects of population and sustainable development in India, out of which 12 research papers were selected for publication as a monograph. The papers included in the present monograph were selected following a three-step selection process. The first step of the selection process involved the Chairperson and the Rapporteur of different Technical Sessions of the XVII Bhopal Seminar 2019 who were requested to select at the most two research papers presented in their Technical Session. On the basis of the recommendations put forward by the Chairperson and the Rapporteur of each Technical Session, the presenting author of the research paper was informed about the selection of the paper for publication in the monograph and was asked to submit the revised paper on the basis of the discussions and deliberations at the Seminar. The revised papers were then peer-reviewed and the papers were revised by the respective author(s) on the basis of the review. Finally, all papers were edited by the editors and the edited version of the paper was sent to the presenting author for her or his final approval for publication in the monograph.

The present monograph is the thirteenth in the series of the annual monograph published by the MLC Foundation and the 'Shyam' Institute. Earlier monographs have covered wide-range of topics pertaining to population and development including sustainable development and health related issues of marginalised communities. The Annual Bhopal Seminar was instituted by the 'Shyam' Institute in 2007 to promote and facilitate research and debate on contemporary population and development related issues. Over the years, the Annual Bhopal Seminar has emerged as an important platform for presenting and debating population and development research in India, especially by young researchers. Many research

scholars, especially, young ones, from reputed universities from India and abroad have presented their research papers in the Bhopal Seminar and have benefited from the discussion and debate at the Bhopal Seminar.

This monograph includes twelve research papers covering different aspects of population, sustainable development and health in India. The first paper of the monograph focuses on human progress in India and states/Union Territories during the period 1995 through 2015. The paper is aimed at comparing the progress in human development in terms of the trend in human development index. This is the first study of its kind that has used panel data on the human development index (HDI) covering all states and Union Territories of the country as they exist today and the period 1995 through 2015 to analyse the progress in human development in India using robust statistical analysis. The paper highlights the fact that the state of human development in the country remains average, in general, and there is strong disparity in human progress across states/Union Territories. There are, however, indications that states and Union Territories of the country have converged over time as far as human development is concerned. The paper also indicates the likelihood of some divergence in human development across states/Union Territories in the coming years if the trend in human progress during 1995-2015 continues in the near future which implies an increase in the diversity or the inequality in human progress across states/Union Territories. On the whole, the human progress in the country is the most likely to remain average by international standards if the trend observed during 1995-2015 is continued in the coming years.

The second paper of the monograph highlights the challenges in the implementation of Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna (PMJAY) on the basis of the experience in the implementation of Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojna (RSBY). The study uses both primary and secondary data to analyse the performance of RSBY. The primary data for the study come from a survey carried out in a village in Odisha in 2014. The secondary data come from the 71st round of the National Sample survey and shows the coverage of RSBY across states of the country. The primary data, on the other hand, suggests that although 75 per cent of the households in the surveyed village were enrolled under the RSBY, yet the utilisation of RSBY was not optimal leading to high levels of out of pocket expenditure. The primary data also show that there was lack of proper awareness about the scheme; lack of interest of the population to get benefited from the scheme and the lack of helping system from the providers of RSBY. The study also found that out migration was the leading factor behind the under utilisation of RSBY.

The third paper of the monograph proposed an alternative approach of estimating the mean duration of post partum amenorrhoea (PPA) from the mean duration of breast feeding and compared results based on the new approach with the results based on methods proposed earlier. The main advantage of the method proposed is that it is simple and straightforward and does not require intricate mathematical calculations. Because of its simplicity, the method proposed in the paper can be very effectively used in the field by field functionaries and programme managers. Results based on the new approach have also been found to be comparatively better than the results based on earlier methods.

The fourth paper of the monograph analyses the role of the Navajatan Yojna launched by the Government of Chhattisgarh in reducing child mortality through the reduction in the prevalence of child under nutrition. The paper is based on a household survey carried out in a village of the state. The study also attempts to document the contribution of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) to address the challenge of under nutrition in children below five years of age. The study finds that around one-third of the children surveyed were under weight; around 46 per cent were stunted; and around 17 per cent were wasted. The literacy level of the mother has been found to have an impact on the nutritional status of children as the proportion of under nourished children was found to be lower in children of literate mothers as compared to children of illiterate mothers. The prevalence of under nutrition was also found to be higher in children with history of diarrhoea, fever, and cough.

The fifth paper of the monograph analyses the phenomenon of return migration in rural northern Madhya Pradesh. The paper explores the extent of return migration among rural out migrants and identifies factors that influence return migration. The paper is based on the data available through a demographic survey carried out in the rural areas of one of the districts of the region in 2013 which covered 22 villages and 3867 households. This study has found that the prevalence of return migration was quite high in the surveyed households, although it varied by individual and socioeconomic characteristics of the out migrants including the age of the out migrant. The analysis reveals that the rate of return migration has particularly been very high in the upper social class of the society primarily because the upper social class had immovable property in the native village.

The sixth paper of the monograph examines factors affecting child morbidity in a fishing community of West Bengal. The study attempts to portray the association between socioeconomic status and demographic conditions in the fishing community with the health status of children. The study also analyses hygiene and sanitation practices in the fishing community, measures the level of child morbidity and explores the association of child morbidity with the socioeconomic status of the household. Results reveal that the chance of having skin infections is lower when cooking is done outside the house or in open compared to when cooking is done inside the house. Similarly, cleaning of the water storage pots at least once in a week appears to reduce the prevalence of both acute respiratory infections and skin infections compared to when the water storage pots are cleaned occasionally. The study finds a telling impact of household level hygiene and sanitation practices on the morbidity in children below five years of age and advocates for improving living conditions and adopting safe hygiene and sanitation practices for reducing morbidity in children below five years of age.

The seventh paper of the monograph analyses the association between the interval between the marriage and the first birth or the first birth interval with anthropometric measures - height and body mass index (BMI) - of women of Madhya Pradesh. Based on the data available through the latest National Family Health Survey 2015-16, the study shows that there is a statistically significant association between the length of the first birth interval and anthropometric measurements of reflecting the body physique of women. The study concludes that

the body physique and the nutritional status of women play an important role in determining their reproductive behaviour.

The eighth paper of the monograph focuses on exclusion and regional disparities in Kerala model of development. The paper sheds light on the history of development in Kerala, particularly in its different regions. The paper brings out important arguments on Kerala model of development and emphasises that the model has not been able to reduce disparities in development within the state. The paper also points out that the growth of private and philanthro-capitalist institutions in the fields of education and health is an indication of the limitations of Kerala model of development in reducing regional disparities and highlights that this trend has adversely affected the process of development in the state and a large section of the weaker and vulnerable people appears to be the victims of this unwarranted trend. The study concludes that, in order to address these challenges, local self governments - local bodies in urban and Panchayats in rural areas - must bear the responsibility of providing universal access to education and health care. The study also recommends that the state government must provide the necessary back up support to local governments in this endeavour. In the absence of such a support, the paper emphasises, regional disparity in almost all dimensions of development that is so pervasive in the state will continue to have a deteriorating effect on the development of the state.

The ninth paper included in the monograph analyses the variation in the use of contraceptive methods by birth order and by the sex of the previous birth in India and in its selected states. The paper also examines the change in the birth order and gender specific contraceptive prevalence rates during the ten years between 2005-06 and 2015-16 using the data available from the third and the fourth rounds of the National Family Health Survey. Results of the study show that the variation in the practice of contraception by birth order and by the sex of the previous child reflects the variation in the family building strategies adopted by couples in India. The analysis also suggests that the decision to adopt contraception is closely associated with the preference for son as the contraceptive prevalence rate as well as the prevalence of female sterilisation is found to be generally higher when the previous child is male as compared to when the previous child is female. The study further reveals that the contraceptive prevalence rate in the country has shown a declining trend over time and this decrease is not confined to any specific birth order. The results of the study have also been discussed in the context of the National Population Policy 2000.

The tenth paper of the monograph is directed towards exploring the relationship between the nature of illness and the type of treatment seeking behaviour among different social classes in India. The paper attempts to identify and address the challenge of untreated morbidities across different social groups in the country. The study is based on the data available through the 71st round of the national sample survey (NSS) which was carried out in 2014 and which covered all states and Union Territories of the country. The analysis reveals that the morbidity pattern in the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes population is essentially different as compared to the disease pattern in Other Backward and Other Social Classes. Communicable diseases appear to be more prevalent in Scheduled Tribes and

Scheduled Castes whereas non communicable diseases appear to be relatively more prevalent in Other Backward Classes and Other Social Classes. The paper also reveals that people, irrespective of their social class, prefer private health care facilities rather than public health care facilities for the treatment of their ailments. However, preference for the public health care facilities is relatively more in Scheduled Tribes whereas Other Social Classes have relatively higher inclination for treatment in private health care facilities. The study, however, reveals that a substantial proportion of ailments are left untreated simply because people do not think that the ailment is serious enough to seek treatment in a health care facility. In addition, the time to travel to a health care facility, especially, the public health care facility and the quality of services available at the public health care facilities are major constraints for not availing facilities available at public health care institutions.

The last but one paper of the monograph analyses the trend in the prevalence of stunting and underweight in children in selected states of India in the context of the progress towards the targets set under the Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations. Based on the data available from the four rounds of the National Family Health Survey - 1992-93; 1998-99; 2005- 2006; and 2015-16, the study reveals that there has been a reduction in the prevalence of severely stunted children in the Empowered Action Group states of the country during the two and a half decade between 1992 and 2016. The largest reduction in the proportion of the stunted children occurred in Odisha where the proportion of stunted children in child below five years of age decreased from 25 per cent in 1992 to 12 per cent in 2015. The proportion of the severely stunted children, however, has remained the highest in Bihar throughout the period under reference, although, the prevalence of stunting in the state decreased from 38 per cent in 1992 to 21 per cent in 2015. Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan have also reported a decrease in the prevalence of stunting in children during this period from 32 to 20 per cent and from 25 to 17 per cent respectively. The study concludes that the main challenge in these states to combat child under nutrition is the formulation of policy up to the village level. The study also observes that lack of awareness about many programmes and interventions launched by the government for combatting child under nutrition in these states is a major issue because of the low level of female literacy. The study also discusses the Mothers' Absolute Affection (MAA) Programme launched by the Government of India throughout the country. This programme is directed towards the promotion of breastfeeding in the context of improving the nutritional status of children.

The twelfth and the last paper of the monograph examines the relationship of the body mass index (BMI) with three health-related indicators - glucose level, haemoglobin level and blood pressure - which are particularly relevant to the adult and the old population. The primary objective of the study is to explore whether BMI can be used as a population-based screening tool to identify individuals who are at relatively higher risk of diseases associated with high blood glucose level, low haemoglobin level and high and low systolic and diastolic blood pressure. The study uses the data available through the National Family Health Survey 2015-16. The study reveals very low correlation between the body mass index (BMI) and mean

haemoglobin level. The study, however, reveals positive correlation of BMI with blood glucose level, although the association has not been found to be statistically significant. The study concludes that there is a need for increasing the awareness in the population about the role of nutrition and life style factors in dealing with non communicable diseases.

The papers included in the present monograph present a range of perspectives in population and sustainable development, especially, in the context of human development and human progress in the country. The papers presented in the monograph also highlight the fact that the challenge of sustainable development should be addressed at the local level in a country like India where social, economic, cultural and regional diversities in almost all aspects of development and human well-being are perhaps the starkest. In the prevailing context, decentralising the sustainable development processes appears to be the need of the time.