

## **SPATIAL PATTERNS OF MIGRATION IN HIMACHAL PRADESH, 1991-2001**

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### **Abstract**

This research work was carried out to analyze the spatial patterns of migration in Himachal Pradesh. The state has conventionally not been a place of migration primarily because of physico-geographic factors. During the recent past, particularly in 1990s, there has been an upsurge in migration, both in and out, in response to establishment of three small Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in the state. It was rather an interesting venture to explore the patterns of migration in a state which has traditionally been isolated without any considerable migratory tendencies amongst its population. The analysis has been done at the district level as district is the smallest administrative unit for which the census of India brings out the migration data. It was found that number of out migrants exceeded the number of in-migrants. Hence net migration in Himachal Pradesh was negative for the time period under consideration.

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### **Keywords:**

Patterns;  
Volume;  
Reasons;  
In-migration;  
Out-migration.

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### **1. Introduction**

This work deals with the most fundamental attribute of any study in the discipline of geography i.e. the spatial patterns. Migration is a complex phenomenon and varies spatially in response to physical, economic, socio-cultural and political factors. Himachal Pradesh has twelve constituent districts, each having a physiography and culture distinct from the other. Owing to these physiographic and socio-cultural variations, patterns of migration also vary between various districts of the state. These variations in spatial patterns of interstate migration in different districts of Himachal Pradesh have been explored in this study. The findings of the study have been discussed in two different sections: In-migration and Out-migration. At the end, an overall picture of migration in Himachal Pradesh has been given by comparing in- migration and out-migration.

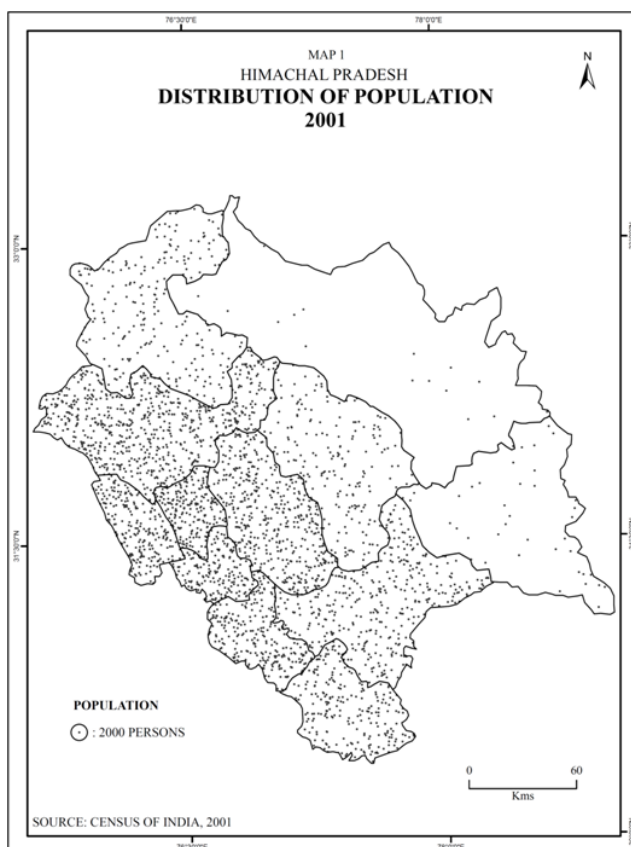
### **2. Research Methodology**

This research work was based on secondary sources of data. Main source of data for the study was Migration Tables of India and Himachal Pradesh released by the Census of India 1991 and 2001. Various maps prepared in GIS environment demonstrated the spatial patterns of migration in totality. Flow maps have been prepared to show the volume and direction of migration.

### **3. Patterns of In-migration**

Past trends of in-migration in Himachal Pradesh show that the state has not been a preferred destination of migrants; but this trend has witnessed a shift during last two decades because of developmental activities being undertaken in the state. An in-depth study of patterns of in-migration in the study area has been taken up in this section during the census years 1991 and 2001.

As per the Census of 1991, out of a total of 5.2 million persons enumerated in Himachal Pradesh, 0.23 million were in-migrants from other states and union territories of India as classified by place of last residence. This constituted 4.58 percent of the total population (Census of India, 1991).



Largest number of in-migrants was enumerated in district Kangra where 23.92 percent of the total in-migrants were reported. District Kangra was part of the British province of Punjab. At the time of independence in 1947, Punjab province was partitioned between India and Pakistan, and the eastern portion which included present day Kangra as well, became the Indian state of Punjab. District Kangra remained a part of Punjab till Punjab Reorganization Act, 1966 came into force. It was added to Himachal Pradesh in 1966, which became a union territory of India and was granted statehood in 1971. So a large number of people in district Kangra consider themselves to be migrants from Punjab though that they have not migrated in actual terms. There was a change in administrative identity of their place of residence. This bunch of people usually reports their place of last residence in Punjab.

District Kangra was followed by districts Solan, Una, Shimla and Sirmour respectively where 17.15 percent, 14.07 percent, 11.23 percent and 10.75 percent of the total in-migrants were enumerated. Hence these five districts viz. Kangra, Solan, Una, Shimla and Sirmour received 77.12 percent of the total in-migrants in the state.

Districts Solan and Una were also a part of Punjab till 1966. Some parts of Sirmaur were also included in Punjab till reorganization which is present day Haryana. Apart from locational and evolutionary factors, in case of district Sirmaur there is a historical and religious factor governing higher volume of interstate migration. Paonta Sahib in district Sirmaur is an important historical and religious place for Sikhs. Famous *Gurdwara*\* *Sri Paonta Sahib* is located in this town. This place is of immense religious significance to Sikhs. So, a large volume of Sikh population is found in Paonta Sahib. They report themselves to be *Punjabis*. Although they have now become residents of Himachal Pradesh in technical terms; but they call themselves to be *Punjabis* to preserve their historical association with Punjab from where their ancestors came. So a large number of people in these districts reported their place of last residence in neighbouring states Punjab and Haryana. Apart from that, these districts are lower semi-hilly districts where accessibility and connectivity is not a problem (Maps 4 and 5). Apart from ease of accessibility, these districts share their boundaries with the neighbouring states. So these districts represent social and cultural transition zones. As a result of social and cultural similarity, matrimonial ties between border areas of these districts and neighbouring states are not uncommon. So a large proportion of migrants to these districts from neighbouring states comprises of females who move to their respective spouses' places after marriage as a part of social custom.

**Table 1****Himachal Pradesh: Volume of In-migration****1991**

State/ District	Total	Percent
<b>Himachal Pradesh</b>	<b>236,830</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Kangra	56,655	23.92
Solan	40,616	17.15
Una	33,326	14.07
Shimla	26,603	11.23
Sirmaur	25,458	10.75

\* *Gurdwara* is the Place of Worship for Sikhs.

Chamba	14,563	6.15
Hamirpur	13,378	5.65
Mandi	12,181	5.14
Bilaspur	7,372	3.11
Kullu	4,207	1.78
Kinnaur	2,048	0.87
Lahul & Spiti	423	0.18

**Source:** Computed from:-

**D2 Migration Tables** of Himachal Pradesh, Census of India 1991, Data available on CD.

In two inaccessible and barren districts, Kinnaur and Lahul & Spiti, less than one percent in-migrants were enumerated. A lowest of 423, which was mere 0.18 percent of the total, was enumerated in district Lahul & Spiti. Though the number of in-migrants in District Kinnaur was almost five times as that of district Lahul & Spiti, yet it was mere 0.86 percent of the total in-migrants reported in the state.

In remaining districts i.e. Chamba, Hamirpur, Mandi, Bilaspur and Kullu, proportion of in-migrants was 6.15 percent, 5.65 percent, 5.14 percent, 3.11 percent and 1.78 percent respectively (Table 1).

Table 2 reveals that there were a total of 0.35 million interstate in-migrants in Himachal Pradesh during the census of 2001. This accounted for 5.77 percent of total population of the state. A look at the district wise distribution of in-migrants in the state reveals that largest chunk of in-migrants went to district Solan where 20.35 percent of the total in-migrants arrived. It was followed closely by district Kangra which received 18 percent in-migrants. Fifty percent in-migrants were concentrated in districts Solan, Una and Kangra which are located in lower semi-hilly tracts of the state. Districts Chamba, Kullu, Kinnaur and Lahul & Spiti collectively received 7.71 percent in-migrants. This despite the fact that 57.96 percent of the total geographical area of the state was under these four districts.

Though Lahul & Spiti is the largest district of the state in terms of area covering 24.85 percent of the total geographical area of the state, yet it received only a fraction (0.23 percent) of in-migrants which in absolute numbers was mere 801. Not only Lahul & Spiti but Chamba, Kinnaur and Kullu as well are large districts of the state. Districts Chamba, Kinnaur and Kullu are the second, third and the fifth largest districts of Himachal Pradesh in terms of geographical area covering 11.73 percent, 11.50 percent and 9.88 percent area of the state respectively.

This pattern of distribution of in-migrants is a result of multitude of factors working simultaneously. This is not explicable in terms of a single factor alone. First and foremost determinant is physiography of Himachal Pradesh (Maps 4 and 5). Physiography of a place is chief determinant of distribution of population at any place. Analysis of Map 1 shows that distribution of population in Himachal Pradesh follows a defined pattern. Highly mountainous districts lying in the greater Himalayas/ alpine zone (altitude above 4,500 meter above mean sea level) have lowest density of population, districts in inner Himalayas/ mid mountains (altitude 1500-4500 meter above mean sea level) have moderate density of population and largest volume of population resides in districts lying in Shivalik Hills/ outer Himalayas (altitude 350-1500 meter above mean sea level).

**Table 2**

**Himachal Pradesh: Volume of In-migration**

**2001**

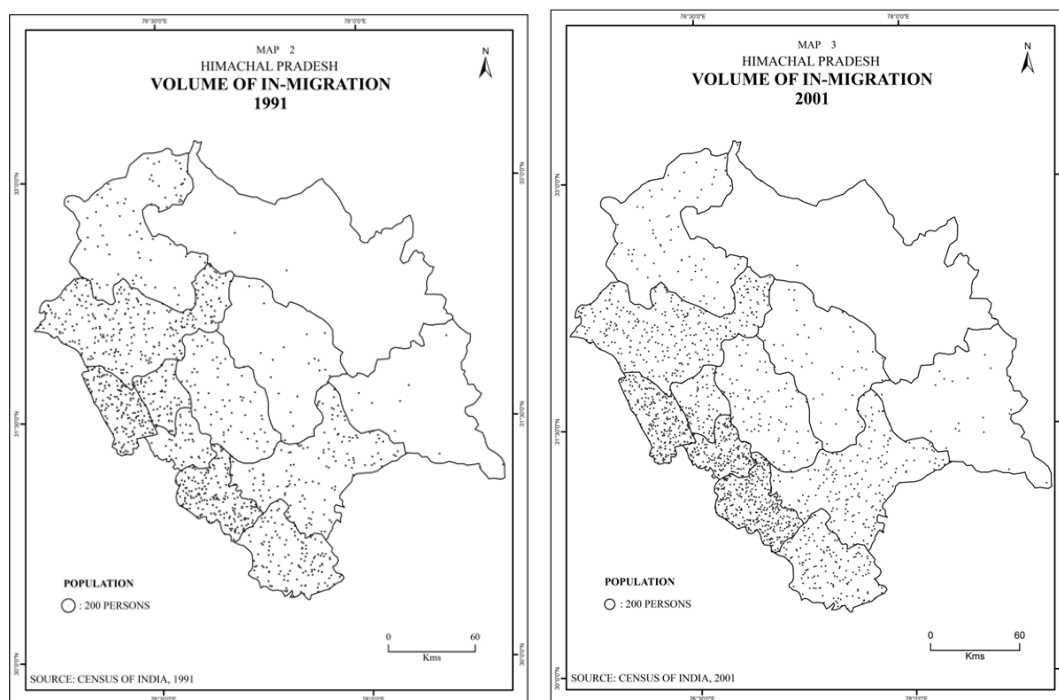
State/ District	Total	Percent
<b>Himachal Pradesh</b>	<b>350,834</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Solan	71,395	20.35
Kangra	63,624	18.14
Una	47,184	13.45
Bilaspur	41,057	11.70
Shimla	38,340	10.93
Sirmaur	31,674	9.03
Mandi	16,091	4.59

Hamirpur	14,444	4.12
Chamba	13,290	3.79
Kullu	9,081	2.59
Kinnaur	3,853	1.10
Lahul & Spiti	801	0.23

**Source:** Computed from:-

**D2 Migration Tables** of Himachal Pradesh, Census of India 2001, Data available on CD.

Maps 2 and 3 show the distribution of in-migrants in Himachal Pradesh during census years 1991 and 2001 respectively. A glimpse at these maps shows that distribution of in-migrants in Himachal Pradesh conformed to distribution of population in general (Map 1). Unexpectedly less volume of in-migration in larger districts of the state is attributable to unfavourable topographical and climatic conditions which result in limited arable land, poor means of transport leading to limited accessibility, and resultant low level of economic development. There are some additional constraints associated with these kinds of physio-geographic regions. For instance, there is almost no scope of developing alternative means of transport with the existing technology.



In addition to the physical barriers put by nature, cultural factors also play a notable part as far as low volume of interstate in-migration in these districts is concerned. A major area of the districts Chamba and Kullu, and whole of districts Kinnaur and Lahul & Spiti are inhabited by tribal population. Each of these districts is inhabited by a particular tribe having a distinct culture. These cultural differences, apart from physical factors, are also accountable for less volume of migrants in these districts.

Smaller districts namely Solan, Una and Sirmaur received a good volume of in-migrants. Tables 1 and 2 show that around forty percent in-migrants were concentrated in these three districts during both the census years under consideration. Another district where a large number of in-migrants were reported was Kangra.

Reasons for concentration of migrants in the four districts are both physio-geographic and economic. These districts are lower semi-hilly districts where accessibility and connectivity is not a problem (Map 1). Apart from ease of accessibility, these districts share their boundaries with the neighbouring states. So these districts represent social and cultural transition zones. As a result of social and cultural similarity, matrimonial ties between border areas of these districts and neighbouring states are not uncommon. So a large proportion of migrants to these districts from neighbouring states comprises of females who move to their respective spouses' places after marriage as a part of social custom.

It is evident that patterns of migration varied considerably between various districts of Himachal Pradesh. On the basis of volume of migration, three zones are clearly identifiable in maps 2 and 3. These zones coincide with physiographic divisions of Himachal Pradesh and patterns of distribution of population (Map 1). Lower districts of Himachal Pradesh, parts of which are plain and larger proportion is semi hilly, reported larger number of migrants from other states/ union territories of India. These districts are Solan, Kangra, Una and Bilaspur. These are the districts which formed a part of Punjab before Punjab Reorganization Act, 1966 came into force. Ease of accessibility, physical proximity to neighbouring states and comparatively favourable topography for the development of industrial & urban centers which has generated jobs; are the factors that favour migration to these parts of the state in comparison to the other parts where conditions are not that conducive. Districts lying in the mid-Himalayas where population density



and distance from the state boundary are moderate, registered moderate volume of migrants. These districts because of moderate altitude offer only a moderate number of employment opportunities. Friction of distance from the state boundary also reduces the volume of migration. These districts are Shimla, Sirmaur, Mandi and Hamirpur. Mountainous districts lying in alpine zone of Himalayas had only a few migrants. High mountains and extremely cold weather during most parts of the year do not offer much of a pull to the migrants. Added to this is the geographical isolation and cultural distinction which further deters the migration to these districts namely Chamba, Kinnaur and Lahul & Spiti.

#### **4. Patterns of Out-migration**

Himachal Pradesh has been an area of out-migration. It is an isolated and comparatively less accessible state because of mountainous and rugged topography. Physiography of a place determines its economic potential. Mountains prevent the development of big towns. Agriculture is handicapped by factors like hilly terrain, extremity of climate, small and scattered landholdings, stony soil, limited means of irrigation and limited cultivable area. Expansion of cultivable land is out of question because of sustainability issues. Industrial potential of the state is one of the least in the country. As a result, job opportunities are comparatively less as compared to the plains. All these factors have been pushing the natives of Himachal Pradesh, particularly rural males, to out migrate to other states/ union territories of the country to pursue employment. Migration to other parts of the country has been more dominant than emigration.

But there has been a change in patterns of out-migration from Himachal Pradesh since 1991 with the industrial development in the state gaining momentum in response to monetary and fiscal benefits as incentives and subsidies to industry provided by the state as well as the central government. Added to this was the factor of resort to horticulture to overcome the limitations of availability of cultivable land and extremity of climate. These developments have generated ample employment opportunities in Himachal Pradesh itself. It is interesting to study the changes in patterns of out-migration from Himachal Pradesh in response to changed economic scenario in the state. An analysis of interstate out-migration in Himachal Pradesh has been taken up in this section.

In this section, volume of interstate out-migration from Himachal Pradesh during the census years 1991 and 2001 has been discussed. Data on out-migration has not been provided

straightway for any of the census years under consideration. It has been compiled by taking relevant entries from migration tables of other states and union territories where in-migrants from Himachal Pradesh were enumerated.

According to the census figures of 1991 on place of last residence, 0.34 million people of Himachal Pradesh were enumerated as migrants in other states/ union territories of India (Table 3).

**Table 3**  
**Himachal Pradesh: Volume of Out-migration 1991**

<b>Destination</b>	<b>Person</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
India	344,176	157,120	187,056
Punjab	38.14	31.42	43.79
Delhi	16.47	20.70	12.93
Chandigarh	11.75	15.32	8.75
Haryana	9.68	8.42	10.74
Uttar Pradesh	8.18	7.21	8.99
Remaining States/ UTs	15.78	16.94	14.80
<b>Rural</b>			
India	220,521	94,600	125,921
Punjab	41.59	32.92	48.10
Delhi	14.29	19.93	10.05
Haryana	9.42	7.84	10.62
Uttar Pradesh	8.66	7.46	9.56
Chandigarh	8.60	12.45	5.70
Remaining States/ UTs	17.44	19.40	15.96
<b>Urban</b>			
India	120,560	61,013	59,547
Punjab	32.07	29.09	35.12
Delhi	20.83	22.32	19.29
Chandigarh	17.80	20.12	15.42
Haryana	9.98	9.16	10.82
Uttar Pradesh	7.10	6.57	7.64
Remaining States/ UTs	12.23	12.73	11.71

**Source:** Computed from:-

**D2 Migration Tables** of all states and UTs of India, Census of India 1991, Data available on CD.

Migrants from Himachal Pradesh were reported in each and every state/ union territory of India with a lowest of one migrant in union territory Lakshadweep (D2 Migration Tables of all states and UTs of India, Census of India 1991).

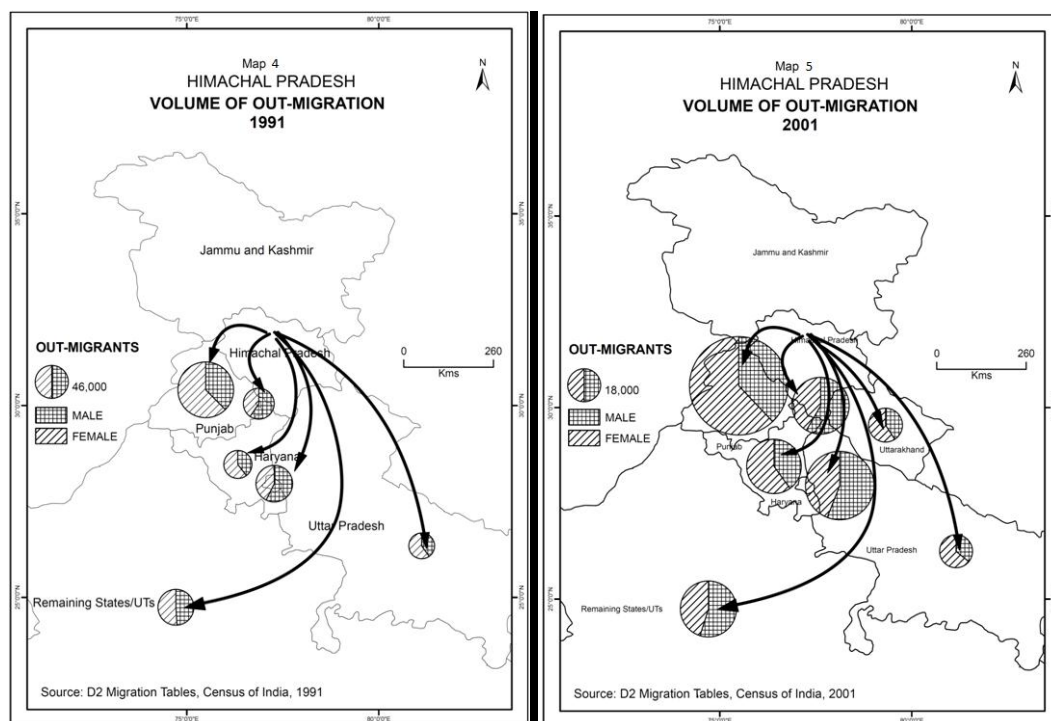
Highest proportion (38.14) of people migrated to the neighbouring state Punjab. Delhi was a distant second where 16.47 percent out-migrants from Himachal Pradesh were reported. Number of migrants from Himachal Pradesh reported in Delhi was half of what was reported in Punjab. Volume of people who migrated to Chandigarh, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh was 11.75 percent, 9.68 percent and 8.18 percent respectively.

These figures suggest that around eighty five percent interstate out migrants from Himachal Pradesh were reported in Punjab, Delhi, Chandigarh, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. Remaining states and union territories (which were twenty one and six in number respectively when the census of 1991 was conducted) attracted merely fifteen percent out migrants from Himachal Pradesh. This is clearly a distance decay effect. Number of migrants decreases with increase in distance from source region.

Map 4 depicts out flow of *Himachali* migrants to other states/ union territories of India. Almost sixty four percent migrants were enumerated in rural areas of India (Table 3).

In 2001, number of out-migrants from Himachal Pradesh increased to 0.43 million and nearly thirty two percent of these migrants were enumerated in urban areas of India, indicating the increasing inclination of *Himachali* out migrants towards urban centres.

Out migration from Himachal Pradesh was mainly directed towards neighbouring states and union territories, which received around eighty five percent interstate out migrants from Himachal Pradesh (Table 4).



These were places in Punjab, Delhi, Chandigarh, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. Out of a hundred persons migrating from Himachal Pradesh to different places in India, 38 went to Punjab, 16 to Delhi, 12 to Chandigarh, 9 to Haryana and 8 to Uttar Pradesh. Remaining fifteen were scattered unevenly in other states and union territories of India (Table 3 and 4). Above states/ union territories collectively were home to eighty five percent interstate out migrants from Himachal Pradesh. This points out towards prevalence of short distance migration from the state.

Rural-urban distribution of out migrants from Himachal Pradesh revealed some disparities. As identified earlier, sixty four percent out migrants went to rural areas of India. Largest number of migrants went to rural areas of neighbouring state Punjab (41.59 percent), another 14.29 percent to rural areas of National Capital Territory Delhi, 9.42 percent to neighbouring state Haryana and 8.66 percent to Uttar Pradesh. Remaining 15.78 percent were enumerated in remaining states and union territories.

In 2001, recipient states were same as that of 1991 but with a different proportion of migrants (Table 4).

Number of out migrants was a little more than 0.43 million. More than eighty percent out migrants migrated to neighbouring states Punjab (37.30 percent), Delhi (18.08 percent), Chandigarh (12.49 percent), Haryana (11.43 percent) and Uttaranchal (4.43 percent). Even amongst these, Punjab seemed to be the favourite destination of out migrants from Himachal Pradesh receiving an overwhelmingly high proportion of migrants (37.30 percent). Only 16.28 percent migrants migrated to remaining twenty four states and six union territories of India.

In 2001, the preference of destination had not changed much. It was quite similar to that of 1991. Considerable volume of migrants went to Punjab, Delhi, Chandigarh, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh (place of Uttar Pradesh was taken by Uttaranchal/ Uttarakhand during the census of 2001 as Uttaranchal/ Uttarakhand was carved out of Uttar Pradesh on November 1, 2000) during both the census years. The only change was in the number of migrants and resultant change in proportion. These states and union territories have well defined stream of in-migration from Himachal Pradesh and migrants tended to follow these streams.

This was in accordance with the hypothesis forwarded by Lee in 1966 regarding the streams of migration. According to him *“migration tends to take place largely within well defined streams”*. It is a common observation that migrants proceed along well defined routes and to highly specified destinations. Therefore out migrants from Himachal Pradesh followed the pre defined routes of migration.

Underlying reasons for this kind of pattern of out-migration from the state are explicable in terms of physical, social and economic factors. Highest number of migrants to neighbouring state Punjab can be explained both in terms of physical proximity and cultural similarity between the areas lying on either side of the state border.

**Table 4**

**Himachal Pradesh: Volume of Out-migration 2001**

Destination	Person	Male	Female
India	426,040	196,263	229,777
Punjab	37.30	30.74	42.90
Delhi	18.08	21.94	14.78

Chandigarh	12.49	15.84	9.63
Haryana	11.43	9.93	12.72
Uttaranchal	4.43	3.91	4.87
Remaining States/ UTs	16.28	17.65	15.11
<b>Rural</b>			
India	136,379	41,835	94,544
Punjab	51.81	37.97	57.94
Haryana	14.68	13.90	15.03
Uttaranchal	8.92	10.57	8.19
Uttar Pradesh	5.28	3.68	5.99
Chandigarh	3.72	7.92	1.86
Remaining States/ UTs	15.59	25.97	10.99
<b>Urban</b>			
India	299,504	158,912	140,592
Punjab	29.46	27.97	31.15
Delhi	24.70	26.01	23.22
Chandigarh	16.07	17.48	14.48
Haryana	9.58	8.60	10.68
Maharashtra	4.14	4.58	3.64
Remaining States/ UTs	16.05	15.35	16.84

**Source:** Computed from:-

**D2 Migration Tables** of all states and UTs of India, Census of India 2001, Data available on CD.

A substantial volume of migrants to the National Capital Territory Delhi and Union Territory Chandigarh can be explained in terms of employment potential of the two places. Haryana again is a neighbouring state where a considerable number of migrants from Himachal Pradesh was reported owing to physical proximity and similarity of culture between the border districts of the two states. Volume of migration to remaining states and union territories of the country was disproportionate to the geographical area under them. It was rather determined by distance. This

shows that migration from Himachal Pradesh was primarily short distance. Volume of out migrants in farther states was lower in comparison to the nearby states (D2 Migration Tables of all states and UTs of India, Census of India 1991).

Tables 3 and 4 are evidences to preference of *Himachalis* to short distance out migration oriented towards neighbouring states and union territories. Volume of out migration decreased with increase in distance from the state. This is in conformity with the laws of migration given by Ravenstein in 1885. Out migration from Himachal Pradesh is directed towards those states/ union territories from where there is large scale in-migration. Thus, in migration to Himachal Pradesh is generating a counter stream of out-migrants to source region of in-migrants. This, too, conforms to hypothesis regarding streams of migration envisaged by Lee (1966) which states “for every major migration stream, a counter stream develops”. Once migration takes place to a particular destination, people become aware of opportunities available at the place of origin. This is likely to generate counter streams of migration. Thus, counter streams of migration are being generated from Himachal Pradesh to the places from where in-migrants were reported.

Hence, as far as out migration from Himachal Pradesh is concerned, though *Himachalis* were reported in each and every state and union territory of the country, they were concentrated mainly in the neighbouring states and union territories. With the increase in distance from Himachal Pradesh number of migrants decreased. This proves the applicability of geographical law of distance decay. More of the migrants were reported in rural areas. Number of female migrants exceeded their male counterparts. In short, migration from Himachal Pradesh was female dominated and was directed towards rural areas of neighbouring states.

## 5. Conclusions

Himachal Pradesh was an out migrating state during both the census of 1991 and 2001. Number of out migrants exceeded the number of in-migrants. Hence net migration in Himachal Pradesh was negative for the time period under consideration. It was -1.07 million during the census of 1991. Corresponding figure for the census year 2001 was -0.75. Though there was an increase in both the number of in-migrants and out-migrants during the intercensal decade 1991-2001; a decrease in net migration was observed because of higher proportionate increase in in-migration

in comparison to the corresponding increase in out-migration. Main districts of arrival of in-migrants were Solan, Kangra, Una and Sirmaur. These were semi-hilly border districts of the state. Male-female differential was apparent in spatial patterns of distribution of migrants in Himachal Pradesh. Migrants were reported mainly in rural areas owing to low level of urbanization in the state. Number of females migrating to urban areas was even lower in comparison to their male counterparts. Short distance migration was prevalent in the state with women migrating over even shorter distances. This is attributable to reasons for migration. Males migrated primarily because of work/ employment and women because of marriage. Male migration was driven by economic factors whereas familial/social factors were prime determinants for relocation of females.

Out migration from Himachal Pradesh was directed mainly towards Punjab, Delhi, Chandigarh and Haryana. Male migrants from Himachal Pradesh were reported in large numbers in Delhi & Chandigarh; and females were reported mainly in the neighbouring states Punjab & Haryana. Exceptionally high volume of female migrants was reported in rural areas of other states/ union territories of the country. Significant proportion of male migrants from Himachal Pradesh was reported in highly urbanized destinations namely Delhi and Chandigarh. This was because of difference in motives behind movement of the two genders. Male migration was driven primarily by economic factors whereas females migrated because of familial/social reasons.

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