

Chapter II

AGE AND SEX COMPOSITION

A. Introduction

The importance of data on the age-sex composition of the population need hardly be emphasized. Social scientists of practically all types population for several reasons. Social and economic relationships within a community are considerably affected by the relative numbers at each age and the balance of the sexes. Data on age and sex from the basis for many types of planning: community institutions and services, productions and sales programmes, etc. Age-sex data are also very important in measuring the potential school population, voting population and the labour force.

“Age is the most important variable in the study of mortality, fertility, nuptiality, and certain other areas of demographic analysis. Tabulations on age are essential in the computation of basic measures relating to the factors of population change, in the analysis of study of the problems of economic dependency. The importance of census data on age in studies of population growth is even greater when adequate vital statistics from a registration system are not available.”¹

In spite of their importance, age and sex data relating to the Nepalese population are available only from the three censuses taken in and after 1952/54. Hence the analysis of the age-sex composition of the population will be limited to the period 1952 to 1971.

B. Sex composition

1. *National pattern*

The population of Nepal classified by sex together with the masculinity proportion (percentage of males in the total population) and the masculinity ratio (number of males per 100 females) for the three census years 1952/54, 1961 and 1971 is shown in table 7. It is clear from this table that females outnumbered the males in 1952/54 and 1961, but that in 1971 there was an excess of males over females in the total population. It is also evident that both the masculinity proportion and the masculinity ratio have shown a steady increase from 1952/54 to 1971.

The situation observed in regard to the balance of the sexes in the total Nepalese population of 1952/54 and 1961 appears to have been different from the situation in most developing countries of the region where males have outnumbered females. The high masculinity in these countries has usually been

“due to the operation of one or more of three factors. In the first instance, the sex ratio at birth is always in favour of males; that is more male than female babies are born every year . Secondly, the female mortality rates in almost all age groups have consistently been higher than the respective male rates. Thirdly, it is suspected that there has been an underenumeration of females at most of the censuses. There is no reason to conclude that these demographic conditions have not been obtaining in Nepal. The higher female proportion in the total population observed in the 1952/54 and 1961 censuses has therefore

¹ Henry S. Shryock, Jacob S Siegel and associates, *The Methods and Materials of Demography*, vol. I, (Washington, DC, United States Bureau of the Census, 1971), p. 201.

to be explained in terms of a large net out migration of males from the country”²

According to the 1952/54 census, there were 198,120 Nepalese living abroad of whom 173,619 were males and 24,501 were females. If the persons absent from home were included, then the number

Table 7. Population classified by sex, masculinity proportion and masculinity ratio, 1952/54 to 1971

	1952/54	1961	1971
Enumerated population			
Males	4050607 ^a	4636033	5817203
Females	4184472 ^a	4776963	5738780
Total	8235079 ^a	9412996	11555983
Masculinity proportion ^b	49.2	49.3	50.3
Masculinity ratio ^c	96.8	97.0	101.4

Source: Reports of the censuses for 1952/54, 1961 and 1971.

a These figures were obtained from table 6 (population present by sex and age by region, districts, and principal cities) of the report on the census of population , Nepal, 1952/54 A.D. the total population shown in this table is 21,546 less than the total of 8,256,625 persons given in table 3 of this monograph and which was obtained from table one of the 1952/54 census report . According to the census report, 21,546 persons were inadvertently omitted from the tabulations of personal and economic characteristics.

b Refers to the percentage of the total population.

c Refers to the number of male per 100 females.

of males in Nepal would have been 4,224,226 as against 4,208,973 females and the masculinity ratio or the number of males per 100 females would have worked out to 100.4. According to the 1961 census, 313,500 Nepalese were living in foreign countries but their sex breakdown was not known. The 1961 Indian census, however, reported that there were 498,236 persons born in Nepal residing in India, of whom 280,009, or 56.2 per cent, were males and 218,227, or 43.8 per cent, were females . These figures seem to suggest that more males than females have been

emigrating from the country resulting in a lower proportion of males in the total population residing in Nepal.

As was noted earlier, males outnumbered females at the 1971 population census of Nepal. This was probably due to a higher proportion of males among the Nepalese domiciles returning from Burma and India and among the immigrant Indian working population crossing the borders, and to a relatively larger number of females emigrating from the country between 1961 and 1971. To a great extent, these suggestions seem to be confirmed by a comparison of the estimates based on 1 per cent sample data of the 1971 Indian census and the data of the 1961 Indian census.

“The estimates based on the one per cent data show that there were 486,600 persons born in Nepal residing in India in 1971 and of these 247,000 or 50.8 per cent were males while 239,600 or 49.2 per cent were females, in comparison with 280,009 males and 218,227 females in 1961. In other words, while the number of males of Nepalese origin residing in India had declined by about 33,000 during the 1961- 1971 period, the number of females increased by about 21,000 during the same ten-year period. Other factors such as improved male mortality may also have contributed to the greater proportion of males in 1971.”³

2. Regional Pattern

The return of an increased number of male Nepalese domiciled abroad in the immigration of more male than female Indian workers apparently occurred after 1969 when panchayat democracy was ushered in introducing a healthy climate for socio-economic development. As will be seen from table 8, the increasing in the proportion of males has been shared by all developmental and ecological regions. Among the various developmental regions, the lowest increment in the masculinity rates between 1961 and 1971 was

² S.Selvaratnam, “the population of Nepal”, a note prepared for use by the ARTEP mission to Nepal (Bangkok, ILO, 1973), p. 4 (mimeo).

³ Ibid. , P. 5.

observed in the central development region where the masculinity ratio was the highest in these two years. Masculinity ratio above 106 in 1971 were recorded in 4 ecological regions: eastern terai, Kathmandu valley, western terai and far western terai it is in these 4 region that there has been a concentration of developmental activities in the form of agricultural and industrial expansion. In all three census year, the masculinity ratio was very low in the eastern and western hill regions from which the greatest exodus of males took place. However there was an increase in the masculinity ratio for these two regions in 1971, suggesting a slowing down in the emigration of males.

3. Age-Specific sex ratios

The masculinity ratio by 5 year age groups for 1952/54, 1961 and 1971 are shown in table 9. An interesting feature about the Nepalese sex ratio is that in the child age group 0-4 years the number of females has been consistently and increasingly larger than the males. Female children out numbered the males by 9,280 in 1952/54; by

Table 8. Masculinity ratio by developmental and ecological region, 1952/54 to 1971

Regions	1952/54	1961	1971
Developmental region			
Eastern region	96.1	97.2	102.3
Central region	98.2	100.2	103.3
Western region	93.9	92.8	97.7
Far- western region	99.1	97.5	102.4
Ecological region			
Eastern hills	93.6	93.7	97.7
Eastern inner terai	94.8	93.9	99.3
Eastern terai	98.9	101.8	106.1
Kathmandu valley	101.0	103.2	106.4
Western hills	92.9	91.7	96.4
Far western hills	97.6	95.6	98.5
Central inner terai	100.8	102.6	104.8
Western inner terai	99.2	99.6	101.4
Western terai	103.1	103.7	106.9
Far western terai	109.6	109.4	110.8
Nepal	96.8	97.0	101.4

Source: Reports of the census for 1952/54, 1961 and 1971.

16,964 in 1961 and by 52,914 in 1971. But in the subsequent 3 age groups, males out numbered the females.

“In the absence of registration data, it is not possible to attribute the higher female proportion in the 0-4 age-group to more female than male births in the country. In any event, such a possibility could be ruled out as it has not been borne out by the experience of any other country. Nor could this phenomenon be explained by higher male than female infant and child mortality rates because a comparison of corresponding cohorts at various census dates does not suggest this conclusion. For instance, those aged 10-14 in 1971 should normally be the survivors of those aged 0-4 in 1961. A comparison of the data for the two years show that while the male children aged 0-4 in 1961 numbered only 660,342, their survivors to the 10-14 age group in 1971 numbered 703,023. But in the case of the females, the 677,306 persons in the 0-4 age group in 1961 have reduced themselves to 594,192 person aged 10-14

Table 9. Masculinity ratio by five-year age group, 1952/54, 1961 and 1971.

Age group	Masculinity ratio		
	1952/54	1961	1971
0-4	98.3	97.5	93.7
5-9	102.9	102.9	103.3
10-14	113.6	113.5	118.3
15-19	102.1	101.9	109.5
20-24	88.0	86.4	92.9
25-29	89.0	90.4	96.5
30-34	89.4	90.5	90.6
35-39	100.1	103.9	107.8
40-44	89.1	88.9	98.2
45-49	101.9	101.4	113.9
50-54	92.4	91.9	104.9
55-59	102.4	99.8	106.6
60-64	76.2	80.2	88.9
65+	83.8	86.2	95.0
All ages	96.8	97.0	101.4

Source: Reports of the census for 1952/54, 1961 and 1971.

years in 1971. There thus appears to be a peculiar problem of gross under-enumeration of male children relative to females in Nepal.’⁴

In fact, it has been observed that “a male child in almost all agrarian societies (where infant deaths are very frequent) is considered as a valuable asset to his parent and if he survives, is a guarantee for their mother may not disclose in an interview the right number of male children she has.”⁵

It is also evident from table 9 that, in all three census years, the variation of the masculinity ratio with ages follows almost a regular pattern with the peak at ages 10-14, thereafter declining to reach to reach another peak at ages 10-14, thereafter declining to reach another peak at ages 35-39, again at 45-49 and again at 55-59. Thus at the prime working ages, 20-24 years, females have consistently outnumbered the males. “This pattern indicates that out-migration in Nepal is typical of the individual type rather than the family type where all dependents used to follow the head of the family after securing a convenient job in the place of destination.”⁶ At all ages over 60, females outnumber the males largely because of the mortality pattern. In 1971, there was an increase in the masculinity ratio at all ages reflecting the fact that compared to the previous census years, there was a considerable increase in the male population at all ages.

C. Age structure

1. Data limitation

The proportion of people in different age groups, or the age structure of population, is determined by the fertility, mortality and migration schedule

of that population. It is in fact a living record of a nation’s biological history. Information regarding age has been one of the core topics canvassed in the Nepalese censuses of 1952/54, 1961 and 1971. However, census data on the age distribution of the population is usually subject to errors caused by inaccurate reporting or mis-statement of age, failure to report age, and incomplete or underenumeration at particular ages. For instance, in regard to the 1952/54 census. It was observed that:

“Not many persons could give their exact age. In most cases the age reported was a round number estimate based on the relation of the data local event. The error in age reported was reduced somewhat by combining the ages in five years age groups.”⁷

Errors in age reporting appear to have occurred in the Nepalese censuses of 1961 and 1971 as well. A recent study undertaken by the Central Bureau of Statistics reported.

“The first prominent feature of all population censuses of Nepal including 1952/54 census is the outstanding underenumeration of the age-group 0-4 and heaping in reporting age by single years at ages ending in zero and five. This phenomenon is very common not only in the consecutive censuses of Nepal, but also in all developing countries. The second aspect is the severe distortion in the age structure as a result of age mis-statement which leads to the sift of people from one age group to the higher or lower age groups. Subsequently, the systematic decline in number, as well as proportion from the lower age groups to the higher age group, was upset by the apparent concentration in certain age group.”⁸

⁴ Ibid., p. 6.

⁵ Government of Nepal, The Analysis of the population Statistics of Nepal (Kathmandu, Central Bureau of Statistics, 1977), p. 58.

⁶ Ibid.p.70

⁷ Department of statistics, *Census of population: Nepal 1952/54 A.D* (Kathmandu, 1958), p.14.

⁸ Government of Nepal, op.cit. p.53.

In spite of the various limitations, the census data do provide a fairly clear picture of the age structure of Nepal's population since 1952/54.

2. *Five-year distribution*

The percentage distribution of the male, female and total population of Nepal according to the conventional five-year age groups as reported at the censuses of 1952/54, 1961 and 1971 is shown in table 10 and in figure 1. In a normal population, that is, one not disturbed by heavy migratory movements or violent change in birth or death rates, the age distribution tends to be a smooth one, in the sense that the proportion of person in each successive age group is less than in previous one. The age structure of the Nepalese population appears to have remained more or less unchanged or stable through the three census years reflecting a past history of constant fertility and mortality schedules. The age-sex pyramids

for the three censuses are similar in appearance and are typical of those countries characterized by high birth and death rates with an extremely broad base and consistently diminishing proportions through the remaining portion of the age structure. The only deviation appears at the lowest slab, 0-4, years, which is slightly shrunken in comparison with the next upper slab, 5-9 years. This would suggest that in all three censuses, children below five year of ages were under enumerated.

According to the Central Bureau of statistics, the underenumeration was more pronounced in respect of male than female children aged 0-4 years. The underreporting of children was due to certain socio-cultural factors. First, according to the Hindu traditions, the religious ceremony for giving the name to a newly-born baby is not held until after the ninth day of its birth; in fact, several

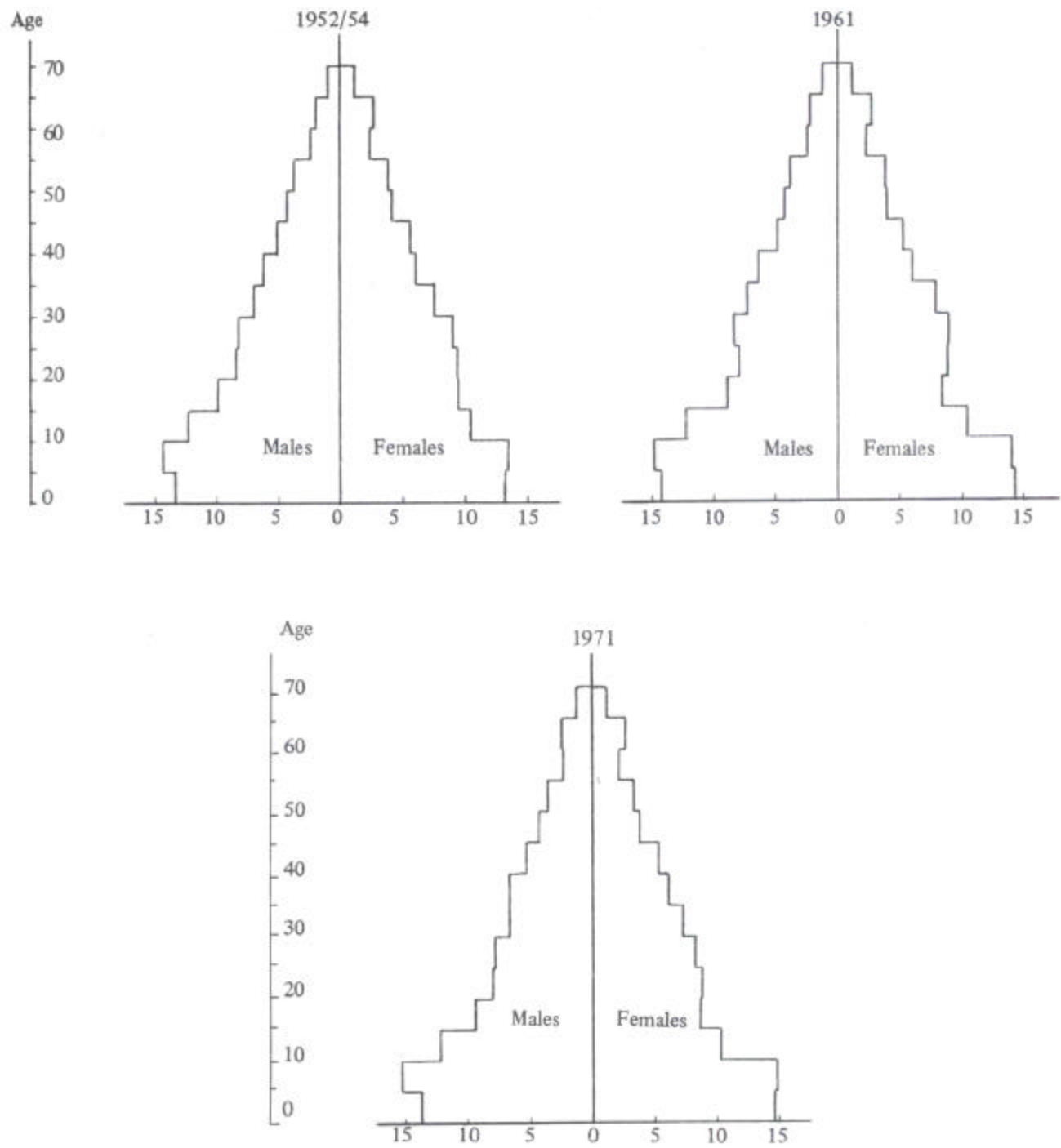


Figure 1. Age pyramids of the population, 1952/54, 1961 and 1971

Table 10. Percentage distribution of the population by five-year age group, 1952/54, 1961 and 1971

Age group	1952/54			1961			1971		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
0-4	13.3	13.1	13.2	14.2	14.2	14.2	13.6	14.7	14.1
5-9	14.3	13.4	13.9	14.8	14.0	14.4	15.2	14.9	15.1
10-14	12.3	10.4	11.3	12.2	10.4	11.3	12.1	10.4	11.2
15-19	9.9	9.4	9.6	8.8	8.4	8.6	9.4	8.7	9.1
20-24	8.4	9.3	8.8	7.9	8.8	8.4	8.0	8.8	8.4
25-29	8.3	9.0	8.7	8.3	8.9	8.6	7.8	8.3	8.1
30-34	7.0	7.5	7.2	7.2	7.8	7.5	6.6	7.4	7.0
35-39	6.2	6.0	6.1	6.4	6.0	6.2	6.6	6.2	6.4
40-44	5.1	5.6	5.4	4.8	5.2	5.0	5.2	5.4	5.3
45-49	4.3	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.0	4.1	4.2	3.8	4.0
50-54	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.9	3.8	3.5	3.4	3.5
55-59	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.2	2.2
60-64	2.0	2.6	2.3	2.2	2.7	2.5	2.4	2.7	2.5
65-69	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.2
70+	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.5	1.7	1.6	1.8	1.9	1.8
Age unknown	0.3	0.6	0.5	0.2	0.4	0.3	-	-	-
All ages	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Reports of the censuses for 1952/54, 1961 and 1971.

months may lapse before the child is named. Until the child is named he is not considered a regular member of the household. Secondly, during the first one or two years, or more precisely during lactation, a child is not considered an important member of the household and hence may not be reported in any enumeration by the head of the household. Further, as noted earlier, parents may not disclose the exact number of male children they have in order "to drive out the evil eye".

The absolute as well as percentage increase in population by five-year age groups during the intercensal periods 1952/54-1961 and 1961-1971 is shown in table 11. It will be noted that there were increases in all age groups during the two intercensal periods. However, while between 1952/54 and 1961 the percentage increase ranged from a very low figure of 1.9 per cent for the 15-19 age group to a high of 22.8 per cent for the 0-4 and 65-69 age groups, between 1961 and 1971

the lowest increase of 12.6 per cent was recorded for the 50-54 age group and the highest increase of 40.0 per cent was observed for those aged 70 years and over. It is also interesting to note that the 15-19 age group recorded an increase of nearly 30 per cent between 1961 and 1971 compared to an increase of only about 2 per cent during the earlier intercensal period.

The analysis of the percentage increase by broad age groups indicates that in both intercensal periods the highest percentage increase was recorded in respect of the 60 and over age group, and the second highest in respect of the 0-14 age group. While the increase in the very young age groups reflects largely the fertility levels, increases in other age groups may be due to decreases in mortality and/or return of domiciled Nepalese from abroad, especially of advanced age groups.

3. *Distribution by broad age groups*

The percentage distribution of the Nepalese population by three broad age groups and sex is

summarized in table 12. It will be seen that while

Table 11. Intercensal increase in population by age group, 1952/54 to 1971

Age group	Enumerated population			Absolute increase		Percentage increase	
	1952/54	1961	1971	1952/54 to 1961	1961 to 1971	1952/54 to 1961	1961 to 1971
0-4	1088932	1337708	1634110	248776	296402	22.8	22.2
5-9	1142788	1355231	1743253	212443	388022	18.6	28.6
10-14	933925	1060126	1297215	126201	237089	13.5	22.4
15-19	792956	807844	1047459	14888	239615	1.9	29.7
20-24	728491	788582	969675	60091	181093	8.2	23.0
25-29	714825	813215	930287	98390	117072	13.8	14.4
30-34	596547	706637	811401	110090	104764	18.5	14.8
35-39	502786	584304	744788	81518	160484	16.2	27.5
40-44	440280	470708	609461	30428	138753	6.9	29.5
45-49	344300	384619	461098	40319	76479	11.7	19.9
50-54	309269	356005	400834	46736	44829	15.1	12.6
55-59	192685	226529	257699	33844	31170	17.6	13.8
60-64	189219	231265	294230	42046	62965	22.2	27.2
65-69	87009	106854	142763	19845	35909	22.8	33.6
70+	133533	151227	211710	17694	60483	13.3	40.0
Unknown	37534	32142	-	-5392	-32142	-14.4	-
All ages	8235079 ^a	9412996	11555983	1177917	2142987	14.3	22.8
0-4	3165645	3753065	4674578	587420	921513	18.6	24.6
15-59	4622139	5138443	6232702	516304	1094259	11.2	21.3
60+	409761	489346	648703	79585	159357	19.4	32.6

Source: Reports of the census for 1952/54, 1961 and 1971.

^a Excludes 21,546 persons who were inadvertently omitted from the tabulations of personal and economic conditions.

for the total population the proportion of children under 15 years of age had recorded a gradual increase from 38.4 per cent in 1952/54 to 40.4 per cent in 1971, the increase was very marked in the case of female children; the corresponding proportion for male children fluctuated around 41 per cent. The proportion of persons in the working ages, 15-59 years, recorded a steady decline from about 56 per cent in 1952/54 to 54 per cent in 1971, while the proportion of the older persons, that is those aged 60 years and over, has increased from 5.0 to 5.5 per cent during the same period.

The age structure of the Nepalese population is typical of the pattern obtaining in most developing countries with high birth rates and

declining death rates. In these countries, children under 15 years of age form about 40 per cent or more of the total population while persons in the working ages, 15-59 years, constitute around 55 per cent. This is in contrast to the situation obtaining in developed countries where the proportion of children in the age group 0-14 years varies from 20 to 30 per cent, while people of working age usually account for about 60 to 70 per cent of the total population. In Nepal, since children aged 0 to 14 years and young people aged 15 to 24 years together constitute about 58 per cent of the total population, the Nepalese population may be termed a "young" or "youthful" population.

Table 12. Percentage distribution of the population by broad age group, 1952/54, 1961 and 1971

Sex and age group	1952/54 ^a	1961 ^a	1971
Males			
0-14	39.9	41.2	40.9
15-59	55.3	53.7	53.6
60 and over	4.5	4.8	5.4
Females			
0-14	36.9	38.6	40.0
15-59	57.0	55.4	54.2
60 and over	5.5	5.6	5.8
Both sexes			
0-14	38.4	39.9	40.1
15-59	56.1	54.6	54.0
60 and over	5.0	5.2	5.5

Source: Computed from data given in table 10.

a The total percentages for 1952/54 and 1961 do not add up to 100 since the category of "age unknown" has not been included in the computations.

The "youthful" character of the Nepalese population is reflected in the median age of the population. It will be seen from table 13 that the median age of the total population which was 21.0 years in 1952/54 had increased to 23.2 in 1961 and decreased to 22.8 in 1971. What this means is that in 1971 exactly half of the Nepalese population was below 22.8 years. It is also interesting to note that in Nepal the median age for females has always been higher than that of males owing perhaps to the emigration of a relatively larger number of young males.

The distribution of the population by broad age groups for the various development regions and selected districts and selected urban areas is given in table 14. It will be noted that, while for the country as a whole children aged 0-14 years constituted 40.4 per cent of the total population, this proportion was somewhat lower than the national average in two of the development regions, equal to the national average in a third region and higher in the fourth. Only in one of the five selected mountain districts was this proportion higher than the national average; in all the others it was lower. The situation was reversed in the Terai where the proportion of children below 15 years was higher than the

national average in all but one of the five selected districts. In all selected

Table 13. Median age of the population, 1952/54 to 1971

Census year	Median year of the population		
	Males	Females	Both sexes
1952/54	20.0	21.8	21.0
1961	22.4	24.1	23.2
1971	22.3	23.2	22.8

Source: Reports of the censuses for 1952/54, 1961 and 1971

Table 14. Percentage distribution of the population according to broad age group by development region and selected districts and urban areas, 1971

Areas	Percentage of total population in age groups		
	0-14	15-59	60 and over
<i>Development regions</i>			
Eastern region	41.9	52.7	5.4
Central region	39.8	54.5	5.7
Western region	40.4	53.5	6.1
Far-western region	39.8	55.3	4.9
<i>Selected mountain district</i>			
Taplejung	42.6	51.5	5.9
Dolakaha	39.9	53.5	6.6
Manang	34.8	59.3	5.9
Mugn	37.0	57.7	5.3
Humla	35.2	58.3	6.5
<i>Selected terai district</i>			
Jhapa	43.1	53.3	3.6
Saptari	40.9	54.2	4.9
Sarlahi	40.8	54.4	4.8
Chitawan	44.6	51.2	4.2
Banka	37.3	57.2	5.5
<i>Selected urban places</i>			
Kathmandu city	35.0	59.5	5.5
Lalitpur city	37.5	55.9	6.6
Bhaktapur city	38.2	55.1	6.7
Nepal	40.4	54.0	5.6

Source: Government of Nepal, *The Analysis of the Population Statistics of Nepal* (Kathmandu, Central Bureau of Statistics, 1977), table 3.10, p. 75.

urban areas, this proportion was substantially lower than the national average.

The proportion of persons in the working age, 15-59 years, was higher than the national average of 54.0 in two of the development regions, and lower than the national average in the other two

regions. This proportion was higher than the national average in three of the five selected mountain districts and three of the five selected Terai districts and in all three selected urban districts. As is to be expected, the highest proportion of persons in working age, 59.5 per cent, was recorded in Kathmandu city.

4. Implications of the age structure

A heavy concentration of the population in the very young and dependent ages has economic and demographic significance and implications. The economic significance lies in the correlation between age and economic activity and productivity. For the economy as a whole, the number of gainfully employed is disproportionately small in relation to the unproductive groups who are dependent on them. This means a heavy burden for the economically productive sector of the population and a major hindrance to economic progress.

Children below 15 years and those aged 65 years and over are conventionally regarded as non-productive in the sense that they usually do not work. The burden of supporting those two unproductive ends of the age scale would therefore fall on those who are normally gainfully employed, that is, those in the age group 15 to 59 years. On the basis of the conventional classification, the dependency ratios (children under 15 plus those aged 60 and over as proportion of those aged 15-59 years) in Nepal at the three censuses since 1952/54 are as follows:

Census year	Dependency ratio		
	Childhood	old age	total
1952/54	68.5	8.9	77.4
1961	73.0	9.5	82.6
1971	75.0	10.4	85.4

The dependency ratio has recorded a steady increase from 77.4 in 1952/54 to 85.4 in 1971. This means that in Nepal today every 100 persons in the productive ages have to support about 85 dependents in terms of food, clothing, health, education and the like. This is in contrast to the situation obtaining in developed countries where there are only about 45 to 65 dependents per 100

persons in the working ages. what is significant about the dependency ratios is that in developing countries like Nepal childhood or youth dependency is a major problem. The child dependents are not only numerically larger, but even on a *per capita* basis, the expenditure on children is much more than the expenditure on aged dependents. The children

"have to be fed, clothed, educated and provided with health services and recreation. This increased burden on the smaller proportion of the employed population means that resources available for economic development will have to be directed to provide various facilities for the children. The comparatively heavy expenditure on social overheads has been one of the chief causes for the slow rate of economic growth in many developing countries of Asia. An increase in population will substantially increase the number of young children and further complicate the problems created by dependency."⁹

Another significant feature of the youthful age structure of the Nepalese population lies in its enormous built-in potential for further rapid increase in the future. A high proportion of persons in the pre-reproductive years means that each year, as the young people grow up and move into the reproductive years, the size of the childbearing fraction of the population will increase tremendously. In turn, their children will further inflate the size of the younger age groups. In other words, potential parents are much more numerous than the present reproducing cohorts. If the current patterns of family formation and fertility levels were to continue, the population of Nepal would be bound to expand faster in the future. Thus, the high percentage of young people in the total population constitutes an explosive growth potential of the Nepalese population.

⁹ S. Selvaratnam, "Implications of population growth: the Asian context", background paper presented to the ILO Asian Regional Workshop for Trade Union Education Officers and Teaching Staff of Workers Education Institutions on Population and Family Planning, Quezon City, Philippines, March 1974, pp. 37-38 (mimeo).