

Differences in Fertility in Highlander and Lowlander Bods of Himachal Pradesh

Mohinder Parkash and S.L. Malik

Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi, Delhi 110 007, India

KEYWORDS Demography. Adaptation. High Altitude. Bods. Fertility

ABSTRACT Demographic data were collected from 153 Bod families living in high altitude (3200 m approx.) Gahar Valley and 225 Bod families-living in low altitude (1000-1400m) Kullu Valley. Analysis of fertility data reveal marginally higher fertility in high altitude sample than in ethnically similar lowlander Bods. The altitudinal differences in fertility have been explained in terms of socio-cultural factors such as education, awareness, urban contact, advancement in medical facilities, which are better at low altitude. The differences have also been accorded to a stronger feeling at high altitude that children are economic assets. Age specific fertility rates do not show wide difference with altitude except that the population growth continues at high altitude even in later age groups, specially between 35-45 years culminating in their overall higher fertility.