

Out-Migration in Salt Block of Almora District: Study of Demography, Status and Nature of Migrants

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Abstract:

Out-migration from hill areas is a significant demographic and socio-economic phenomenon impacting regions worldwide. These areas, characterized by rugged terrain, limited infrastructure, and challenging climatic condition, often experience high rates of population movement to lowland areas and urban centers. This process, driven by various push and pull factors, results in substantial changes in the demographic composition, economic activities, and social fabric of the originating areas. The consequences of this out-migration are profound, impacting both the areas left behind and the destination to which people migrate. This study aims to provide an overview of the nature and extent of migration in Salt block of Almora district, highlighting the demography, extent and nature of this dynamic process and addressing the root causes of out-migration through comprehensive policies and community based approaches which is essential for sustainable development in hill region.

Keywords: Mountains, Out-migration, Demography, Households, Permanent migrants

1. Introduction:

District Almora forms nearly 5.78% of the state's total geographical area. The district has a population of 6,22,506, as per the census 2011, of which the male population is 2,91,081 and the female population is 3,31,425. District's population forms nearly 6.15% of the state's population and more than 90% of the population resides in rural areas. Population density of the district for 2011 census is 198, which has increased from 170 in 2001, making it a fifth most densely populated district in the state. Almora has a Sex Ratio of 1139, higher than the State and National average. The district has an average birth rate of 15.80 per thousand population and an average death rate of 6.00, as on 2016-17. (Source: Statistical Magazine, Almora)

1.1 Population

The district has experienced a negative decadal population growth of -1.64% for the census period of 2001-2011. For this period the population has declined from 6,30,567 in 2001 to 6,22,506 in 2011. The rural population constitute more than 90% of the total population and there has been an increase of 25.51% in the urban population during 2001-2011 census. The Sex Ratio for the rural region is 1177 and for urban regions it is 848 females per 1000 males. District Almora in one of the top districts with highest Sex Ratio in the country. The average birth rate and the death rate of the district is 15.80 and 6.00 per thousand population respectively for the year 2016-17.

Out of 11 Development Blocks 7 have negative population growth. Although the district's decadal population growth is -1.63%, but for rural population it is -4.20% clearly indicating that the rural population is migrating towards the urban centres. The majority of the population i.e., 39.35% is engaged in Agriculture, followed by daily wage labour (34.13%). According to the Commission's report on State's Migration Status, around 42.22% of the migrants fall into the age group of 26-35 years.

1.2 literacy

The district has a literacy rate of 80.47%, wherein the male and female literacy is 92.86% and 69.93% respectively. The decadal change in literacy rate is shown in figure 2.5 above. Within the district, Blocks Hawalbagh and Tarikhet have maximum literacy rate of 83.69% and 83.36% respectively.

1.3 Economy

Almora is a hill district, majority of the economy depends on traditional agriculture, horticulture, livestock, forest & logging, and mining & quarrying. The size of the economy i.e., GDDP at Current Prices is estimated Rs.4,28,018 lakh in year 2011-12, Rs.4,90,303 lakh in year 2012-13, Rs.5,63,108 lakh in year 2013-14, Rs.5,58,426 lakh in year 2014-15, Rs.5,98,345 lakh for year 2015-16 & Rs.6,60,378 lakh for the year 2016-17. In terms of percentage growth, the size of the economy increases by 14.55% in year 2012-13, 14.85% in year 2013-14, -0.83% in year 2014-15, 7.15% in year 2015-16RE & 10.37% in the year 2016-17 with respect to previous year respectively. Growth of the economy i.e., GDDP at Constant Prices is estimated Rs.4,28,018 lakh in year 2011-12, Rs.4,58,385 lakh in year 2012-13, Rs.5,06,144 lakh in year 2013-14, Rs.4,88,369 lakh in year 2014-15, Rs.5,11,911 lakh for year 2015-16RE & is provisionally estimated Rs.5,45,139 lakh for the year 2016-17. In terms of percentage growth, GDDP at constant price i.e., economy registered growth of 7.09% in year 2012-13, 10.42% in year 2013-14, -3.51% in year 2014-15, 4.82% in year 2015-16RE & 6.49% in the year 2016-17 with respect to previous year respectively as compared to the state average of 7.9% in 2016-17. It has been reported in the HDR 2018 that the district has 30.7% of the population below poverty line as against the state average of 15.6%.

1.4 Agriculture

Although the share of agriculture in Gross District Domestic Product is declining, but still nearly 39% of the district's population is engaged in agriculture as its main occupation. The major crops in the district are cereals like Paddy, Wheat, barley, Maize, Mandua, Sawaan; Pulses like Urad, Lentil, Gram; Oilseeds like Mustard, Soybean, Sesame; Potato and Turmeric. Due to the hilly terrain large scale irrigation is not possible but still the valley parts of the districts are being irrigated by connecting rivers canals. A total of 5751.00 Hectare of area is under irrigation in the district. The Department of Agriculture has divided the agriculture land into two categories based on the availability of irrigation, viz. *Talau Bhumi* and *Upraru Bhumi*. The *Talau Bhumi* is an even area where irrigation facilities are present and the farmers can take Rabi, Kharif and Zaid crops. *Upraru Bhumi* is an unirrigated area where only Kharif crop is taken but not Rabi.

The land use pattern of the district. Nearly 51% of the total area is covered under forest and 10% of the land is either cultivable wasteland or kept fallow. Due to hilly terrain and unavailability of irrigation facilities, majority of the agriculture is rainfed, therefore the gross sown area is more in Kharif season. Other than irrigation, the farmers are facing problems with wild animals like monkeys, wild boars etc. As a result of which there is a dismal interest in agriculture amongst the farmers of the district.

2.1 Objective of the study:

1. To study the demographic characteristics of migrant households.
2. To study the extent and nature of migrant households.

3.1 Analysis of study area:

3.1.1. Demographic profile of the study area

The presentation of data and how it is interpreted are critical components of not just research but also economic and commercial activities, as well as professional standards. It is necessary to make use of the data that has been acquired despite the fact that it is still regarded as raw data and has to be processed before it can be utilized in any application. The interpretation of the data and the making of decisions are both helped by data analysis, which also contributes to the resolution of the research paper. Here we have taken a sample of 150 households from the study area which have been randomly selected. This may be accomplished with the use of data processing tools and software. The first step is to collect the data, after which comes sorting the data, various forms of data processing, and finally, data analysis. Due to the fact that raw data is necessarily lacking in completeness, it is much simpler to derive information from processed data.

3.1.2. Characteristics of the population in Salt Block, Almora district

The demographic included mainly respondents who belonged to migrant and non-migrant families. The demographic variables used in the study include group name, respondent's marital status, number of family members, number of migrant members, gender status, caste status, religious status, education qualification, etc. 150 households respondents were used as a sample in this study. The frequency distribution for each demographic characteristic is constructed as follows:

3.1.3. Age group of Salt Block respondents

The demographic profile of the age of the respondents was captured in Table 3.1. The percentage of the age profile of the respondents has been used to analyze the data. It is observed from the below table that 11% of respondents are in the age group of 20-30 years, 23% of respondents belong to the age group of 31-40 years, 34% of respondents lie in between 41-50, 19% of respondents are in the age group between 51-60 and finally, only 13% of respondents belong to the age group of 61-70. So from this, it is evident that the maximum number of respondents is 41-50 years old.

Table 3.1. Age interval of Salt block respondents with percentile values

Sr. No.	Age	Respondents (Households)	Percentages
1.	20-30	17	11%
2.	31-40	34	23%
3.	41-50	51	34%
4.	51-60	28	19%
5.	61-70	20	13%
6.	Total	150	100%

Source: Primary Survey

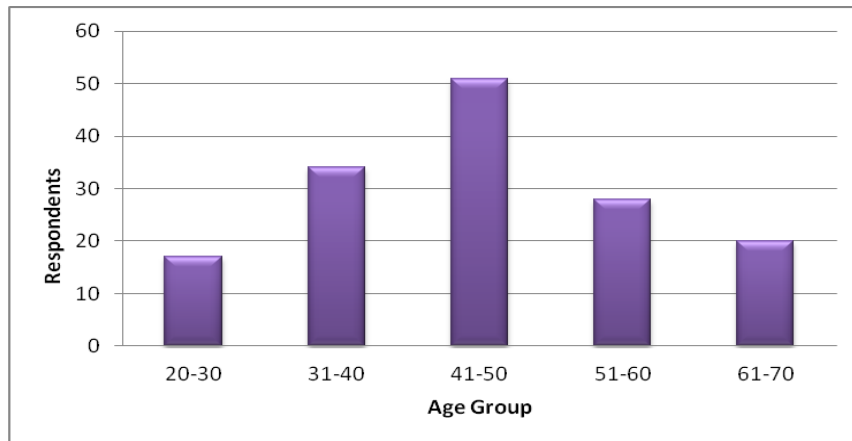


Figure 3.2. Demographic profile of Salt block respondents' age

3.1.4. Gender distribution in Salt Block of Almora district

The demographic profile of the gender of the respondents is shown in Table 3.2. The percentage of the gender profile of the respondents has been used to analyze the data. It is observed from the below table that 65% of respondents were males and 35% of respondents belonged to females during over research period.

Table 3.2. Gender categorization of Salt block respondents with percentile values

Sr. No.	Gender	Respondents (Households)	Percentages
1.	Male	98	65%
2.	Female	52	35%
3.	Total	150	100%

Source: Primary Survey

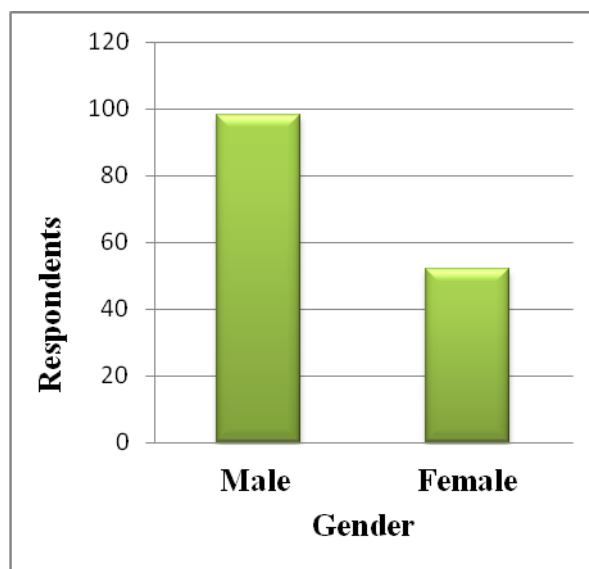


Figure 3.3. Gender categorization of the sample (respondents)

3.1.5. Caste status of Salt Block respondents in Almora district

The caste status of both male and female respondents had three categories general, other backward class and schedule caste. Around 57% of respondents belong to general categories and 11% of the total

respondents belong to other backward classes (OBC). The scheduled caste (SC) respondents have 32% of the 150 respondents in the Salt block of Almora district (Figure 3.4 and Table 3.3).

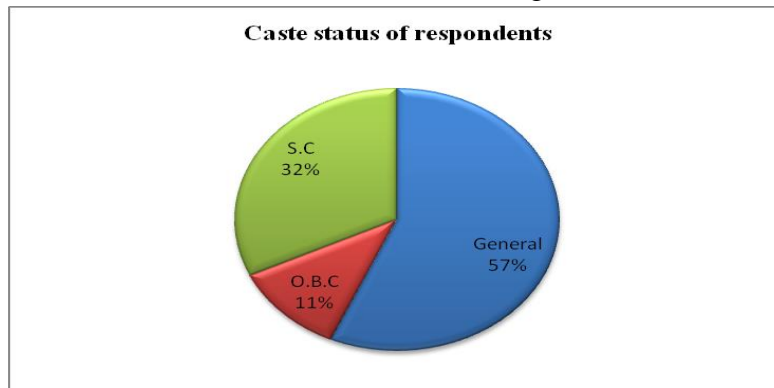


Figure 3.4. Caste distribution of Salt block respondents in Almora district

Table 3.3. Caste distribution of Salt block respondents with percentile values

Sr. No.	Caste	Respondents (Households)	Percentages
1.	General	85	57%
2.	OBC	17	11%
3.	SC	48	32%
4.	Total	150	100%

Source: Primary Survey

3.1.6. Religious position of respondents in Salt Block

The analysis of the data was done using a percentage of the religious distribution of the people who responded to the survey. Figure 3.5 displays the demographic profile of the respondents according to the religion of those who filled out the survey. According to the data shown in Table 3.4, throughout the course of the research endeavor, 93% of the respondents were Hindus and 6% of the respondents were Muslims. Christian religious respondents were 1% of the total Salt block demographic data.

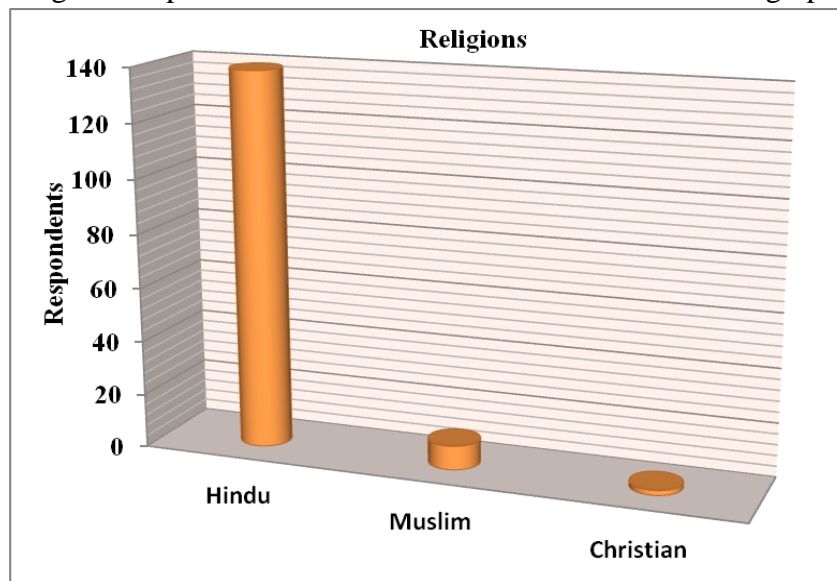


figure 3.5. Religion status of Salt block respondents in Almora district

Table 3.4. Religion status of respondents with percentile values in Salt Block, Almora

Sr. No.	Gender	Respondents (Households)	Percentages
1.	Hindu	139	93%
2.	Muslim	9	6%
3.	Christian	2	1%
4.	Total	150	100%

Source: Primary Survey

3.1.7. Marital status of the respondents in Salt Block area –

The processed data were used for determining the Salt block respondents' overall marital status. Table 3.5 shows that out of 150 respondents, 79% of the women respondents are married, 12% of those questioned were not married and lastly 9% of the respondents are widows or widowers. People who were married and people who were not married were included in this group.

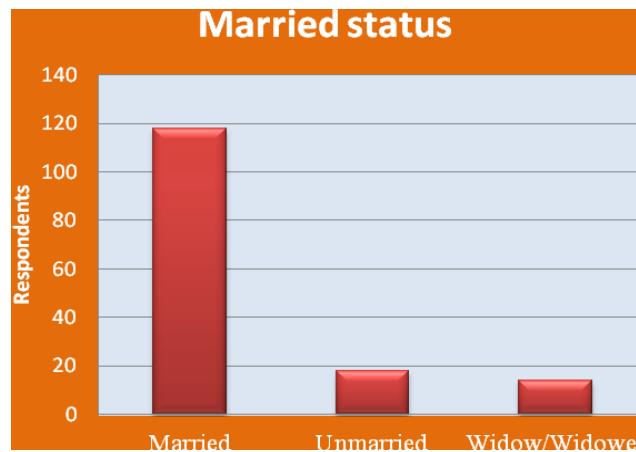


Figure 3.6. Salt block respondent's marital status

Table 3.5. Marital status of the Salt block (Almora district) respondents

Sr. No.	Married Status	Respondents (Households)	Percentages
1.	Married	118	79%
2.	Unmarried	18	12%
3.	Widows/Widowers	14	9%
4.	Total	150	100%

Source: Primary Survey

3.1.8. Respondent's education qualification in Salt Block, Almora district-

The Latin word Educare is derived from the English word education, which means to develop a person's ability to think. People's awareness of what's going on in the world may be raised to a higher level via the use of education as a kind of wake-up call. The following describes the educational position of Salt Block (Almora) during the research data collection period. A bar chart is used to illustrate the distribution of the respondents' addresses throughout the different geographic regions (Village). The following table reveals that out of 150 respondents, 3% of man and women respondents are illiterate, 21% of both respondents have not completed high school, 38% of the respondents have completed high

school, 26% of them are qualified up to the intermediate level, 10% of respondents have graduated, and only 2% of respondents have completed post-graduate studies. According to the data shown in Table 3.6, the vast majority of the women who participated in the survey had a high school level of education.

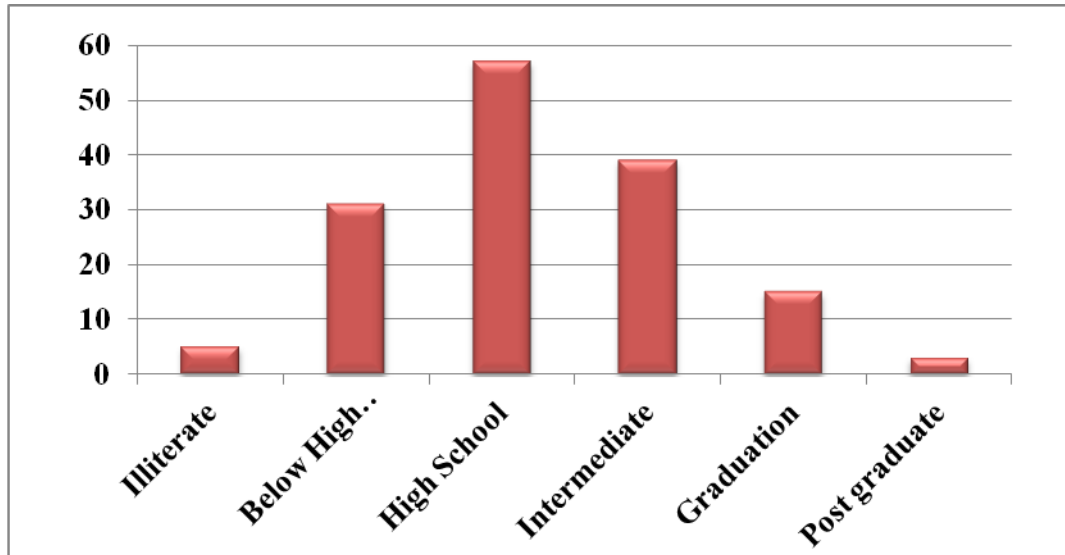


Figure 3.7. Education Status of respondents in Salt block, Almora

Table 3.6. Educational qualification of the Salt block, Almora respondents

Sr. No.	Education Qualification	Respondents (Households)	Percentages
1.	Illiterate	5	3%
2.	below High School	31	21%
3.	High School	57	38%
4.	Intermediate	39	26%
5.	Graduation	15	10%
6.	Post-graduate	3	2%
7.	Total	150	100%

Source: Primary Survey

4.1. Respondent's family member's status in Salt Block areas -

Figure 4.1 shows the number of household members of the respondents. 25% of the respondents have 5 members in their families, 26% of the respondents have 6 members in their families, 11% of the respondents have 7 members in their families, and 10% of the respondents in Salt Block have 9 members in their families. In the sample of Salt Block, there are only four members in the household of 6 respondents.

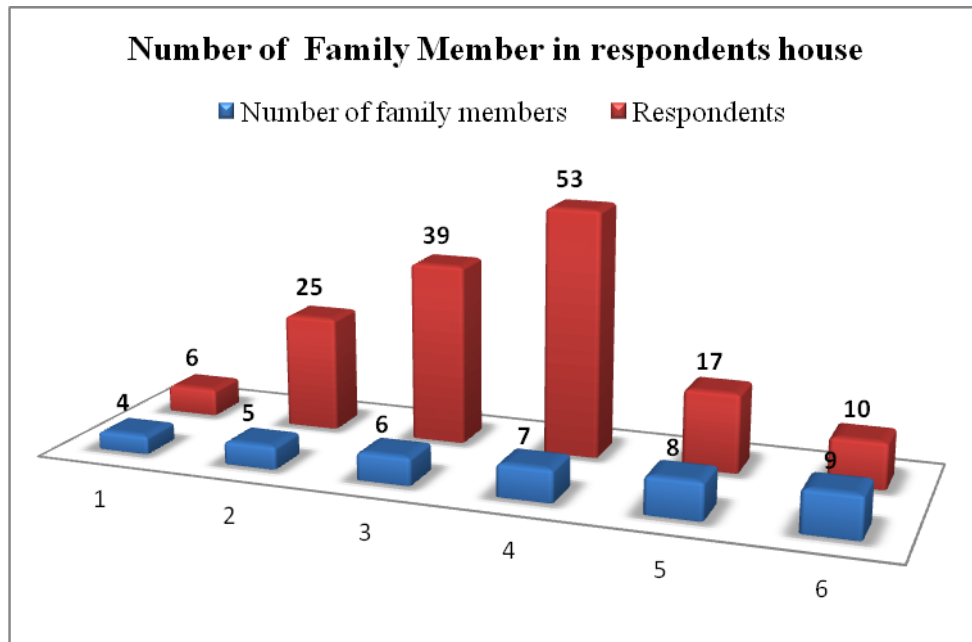


Fig. 4.1 Status of Salt Block respondents in a number of household members

Table 4.1. Status of number of dependents of respondents

Sr. No.	Number of family members	Respondents (Household)	Percentages
1.	4	6	4%
2.	5	25	17%
3.	6	39	26%
4.	7	53	35%
5.	8	17	11%
6.	9	10	7%
7.	Total	150	100%

Source: Primary Survey

3.2.1. Number of migrant persons in Salt Block of Almora district-

Table 3.8 reveals that out of 150 respondents in the Salt block of Almora district, Only 3 respondents have zero migrants during the study period. 38 (25% of the total respondents) respondent's families had one member who migrated from Salt Block, 60% of the respondent's families notified that only 2 family members migrated, and 8% of the respondent's families clearly responded that the 3 members migrated from Salt Block area. 4 family members migrate from the 5 % of respondents' families. According to the data shown in Figure 3.8, the vast majority of migrant persons belong to 90 respondent families who participated in the survey.

Table 3.8. Migrant individuals percentage in Salt block, Almora district

Sr. No.	Number of migrants	Respondents (Household)	Total Migrant	Respondents Percentages	Migrant Percentages
	0	3	0	2%	0%

1	38	38	25%	13%
2	90	180	60%	64%
3	12	36	8%	13%
4	7	28	5%	10%
Total	150	282	100%	100%

Source: Primary Survey

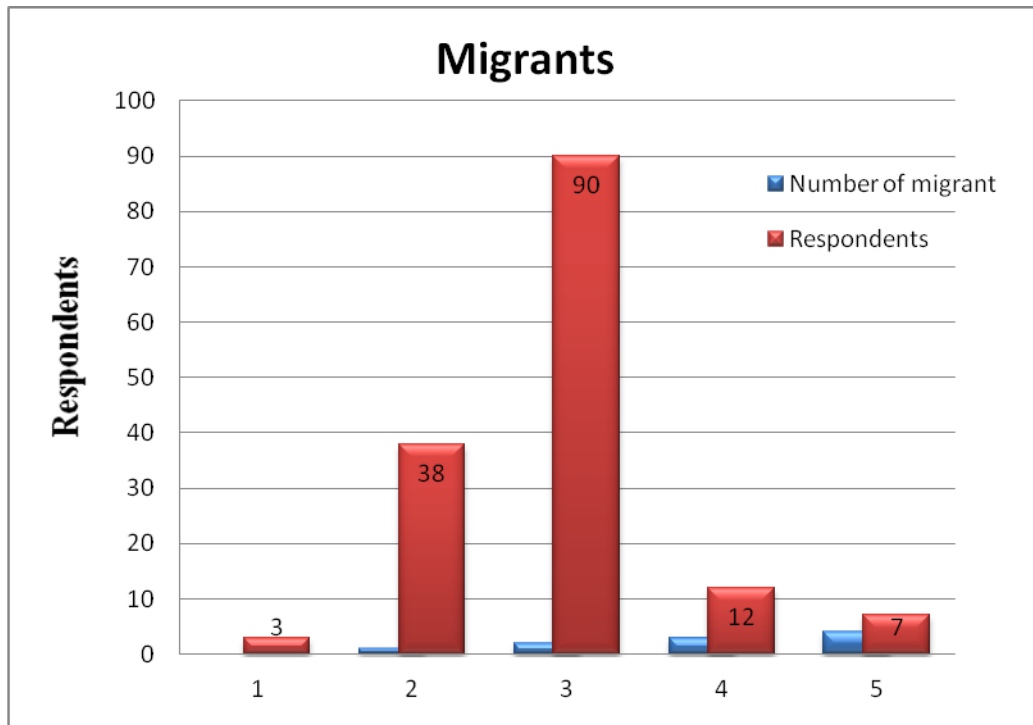


Fig 3.9. Migrants status of respondents in Salt Block, Almora

Table 3.9. Nature of Migrant in Salt Block

Inter-region Migrant	Temporary	Permanent	Total
63	107	112	282
22%	38%	40%	100%

Source: Primary Survey

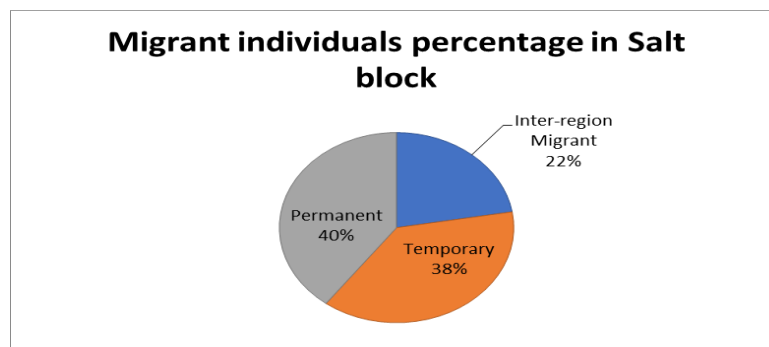


Fig 3.10. Migrant Individual percentage in Salt Block

Table 3.9 revealed that the permanent migrated people from households is highest in block which is 40 % and followed by temporary migrated and inter-region migrated which is 38% and 22 % respectively.

Conclusion

The phenomenon of out-migration in hill areas is a multifaceted issue driven by a combination of socioeconomic, environmental, and infrastructural factors. The consequences of this migration pattern are profound, affecting not only the individuals who leave but also the communities they abandon and the region they move to. Out-migration is a complex issue that necessitates a holistic approach to address its underlying causes and its impact. By focusing on economic diversification, educational and healthcare improvements, environmental conservation, and infrastructural development, policymakers can create sustainable and resilient hill communities. Such effort will not only curb the out-migration trend but also ensure that hill region contribute to and benefit from broader national development.

Ultimately, the goal should be to create conditions where staying in the hills is not only viable but also desirable, enabling these unique regions to thrive and prosper.

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