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AN ASSESSMENT OF DEMOGRAPHY DISPARITY IN NANDURBAR DISTRICT OF MAHARASHTRA STATE, INDIA

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Abstract

Demographic disparity is the unequal distribution of demographic characteristics such as age, gender, literacy, economic level, and access to resources among different regions or social groupings. These discrepancies are influenced by factors such as urbanization, migration, education levels, healthcare accessibility, and socio-economic status. In many places, fast population increase, uneven literacy rates, diminishing gender ratios, and diverse population densities create challenges to sustainable development.This study examines demographic Disparity in Nandurbar district, Maharashtra, over a two-decade period from 1991-2011. The statistics show considerable demographic transitions, with Shahada having the biggest population growth (1,18,819) and Taloda having the sharpest increase in population density (201.01 per Sqkm.). Literacy rates rose significantly, with Nandurbar tehsil seeing the greatest increase, from 43.95% to 71.36%. Gender differences were noticeable, especially in Akkalkuwa, where the sex ratio fell from 1001 to 926 females per 1000 males. These disparities reflect the impact of socio-economic conditions, migration trends, and government policies. These disparities reflect the influence of socio-economic factors, migration patterns, and policy interventions.

Keywords: Demography disparity, socio-economic conditions, Sustainable development

Introduction

The social disparity can have various reasons. Throughout history, several elements have joined to influence an individual's fate. Income disparity now accounts for the majority of social differences, with other factors such as social class and aristocratic titles having little impact. Economic differences lead to social inequities, whether between cities and rural areas, between genders, or between coastal and interior regions (Ding, Y., 2010).A good number of studies have been done by individuals and different agencies on inter-regional variations at different levels (state, district, and block) using different methods andindicators.Almost invariably all the works have found that disparity between states, no matter which inequality conceptsare used, has increased since independence and has intensified since the launching of reforms (Shaban, 2006; Bhattacharya&Sakthivel, 2004; Singh et al., 2003;Rao et al.,1999;Dholakia, 1994).Dreze and Sen (1995) also pointed out that the diversities in economic and social development of the Indian states are remarkable

Nandurbar, a district in Maharashtra, India, is known for its significant tribal population, including communities like the Bhils, Pawras, and Kokanas. Despite rich cultural

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heritage and natural resources, the region faces severe social disparities. These disparities manifest in areas such as education, healthcare, employment, and infrastructure, limiting the development of tribal communities.One of the primary challenges is education. Low literacy rates, lack of proper schooling facilities, and language barriers contribute to poor educational outcomes. Many tribal children drop out early due to economic pressures and limited access to quality education.

Healthcare is another pressing issue. Malnutrition, high maternal and infant mortality rates, and inadequate healthcare infrastructure make access to medical services difficult. Traditional beliefs and lack of awareness also contribute to the problem.In terms of employment and economy, the tribal population largely depends on agriculture and daily wage labor, often suffering from land alienation and exploitation. Seasonal migration for work is common, leading to unstable livelihoods and disruptions in children's education.Infrastructure disparities are evident in poor road connectivity, lack of electricity, and inadequate drinking water facilities. This further isolates tribal communities from mainstream development opportunities.Addressing social disparity in Nandurbar requires targeted government policies, active involvement of NGOs, and community-driven initiatives to improve education, healthcare, and economic opportunities, thereby ensuring inclusive development for the tribal population.

Database and Method

Analyzing social disparities in Nandurbar district, Maharashtra, involves utilizing specific local data sources and applying targeted methodologies to understand the unique socio-economic challenges faced by its predominantly tribal population.

Secondary data has been collected from the District Census Handbook to provide comprehensive demographic data, including literacy rates, gender ratios, and population distribution across tehsils. Also, secondary data collected from District Statistical ReportsOffer detailed statistics on various socio-economic parameters such as education, health, and employment. These reports are accessible through the official Nandurbar district website.

Study Area

Nandurbar is a tribal-dominated district located in the northwestern part of Maharashtra, India. It was carved out of Dhule district on July 1, 1998, and is known for its socio-economic challenges, including low literacy rates, high poverty, and inadequate healthcare infrastructure. The area for the present study is the western part of the Deccan Plateau and coordinates of the 21o 00` 00`` N to 22o 00` 30`` N latitude and 73o 31` 00`` E and 74o 45` 30`` E longitude. The study is (Nandurbar District) is situated in Maharashtra state, India. The district has an area of 5999 sq. km., which constitutes about 1.64 % of the total area of Maharashtra. The district is divided into 6 taluka namely Nandurbar, Nawapur, Shahada, Taloda, Akkalkuwa, and Akrani (CGWB). Akrani is the largest Tahsil of the District with

Tehsil Name	Total Population 1991	Total Population 2011	Changes (1991-2011)	Population Density 1991	Population Density 2011	Changes (1991-2011)	Literacy Rate 1991	Literacy Rate 2011	Changes (1991-2011)	Sex Ratio 1991	Sex Ratio 1991	Changes (1991-2011)

1282.31 sq. km. area while Talode is the smallest Tahsil with 455.10 sq.km., are (census 2011).
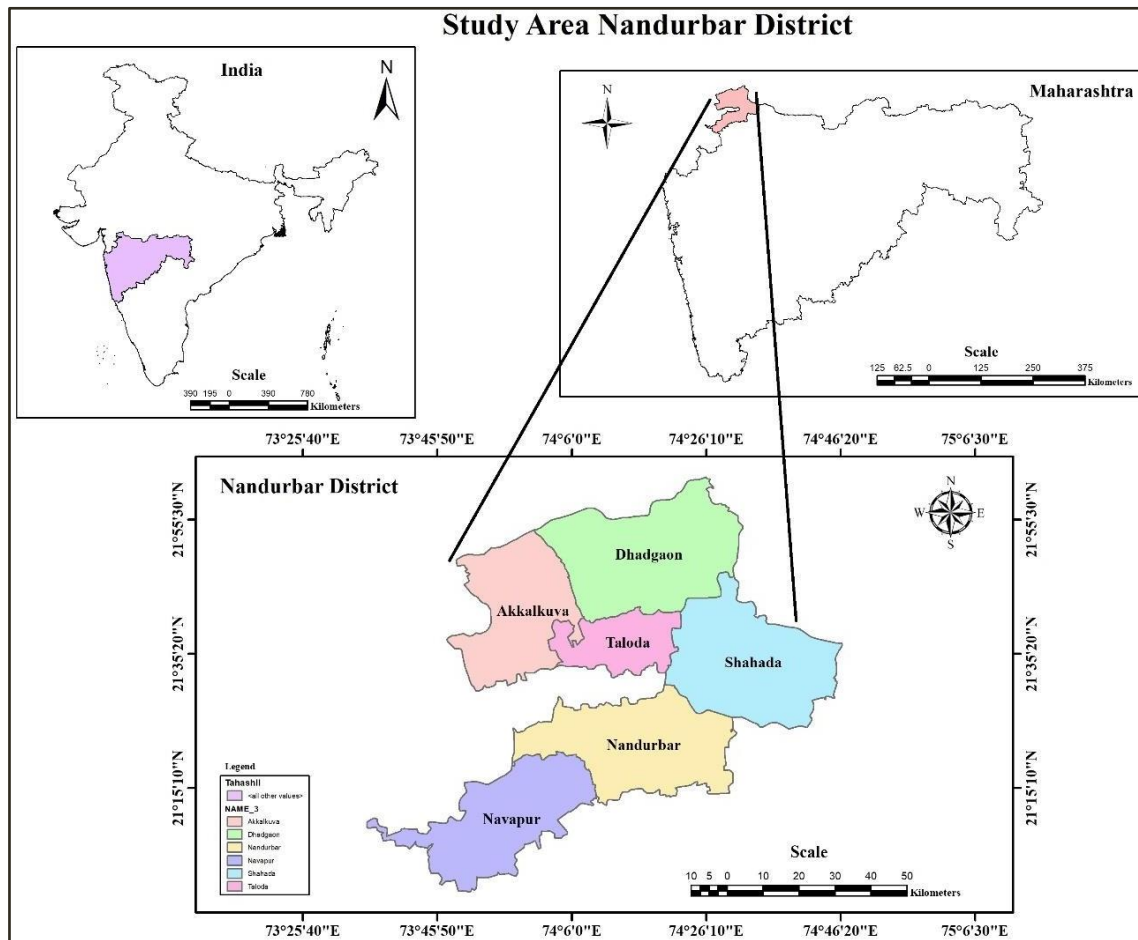

Fig.1: Study Area Map of Nandurbar District

Result and Discussion

The region's spatial disparities are determined by a few socio-economic factors. Several indices must be highlighted in this context. Demographics, health, education, entertainment, and infrastructure amenities are all essential components of these social indicators that demonstrate regional growth. These causes determined the social inequalities in Nandurbar district. Among these reasons, unplanned geographical disparities are among the most important ones.

The table provides detailed demographic data for the six tehsils of Nandurbar district, Maharashtra, based on the 1991 and 2011 Census reports. It includes information on total population, population changes over 20 years, population density, literacy rates, and sex ratio

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Akkalkuwa	133,880	245861	1,11,981	149.48	285.40	135.93	22.45	62.83	40.38	1001	926	-74
Akrani	96912	195754	98,842	305.70	388.01	82.31	13.95	53.31	39.35	992	999	7
Talonda	97931	159654	61,723	216.22	417.23	201.01	34.94	65.47	30.53	999	1000	1
Shahada	288909	407728	1,18,819	245.36	384.22	138.86	44.40	66.05	21.65	958	980	22
Nandurbar	248363	367446	1,19,083	163.60	338.76	175.16	43.95	71.36	27.41	987	968	19
Navapur	196550	271852	75,302	181.79	286.89	105.10	29.76	60.49	30.73	999	1009	10

Table 1: Demography Changes of Nandurbar District from 1991 to 2011

        Source: District Census Handbook, Nandurbar (1991 and 2011)

Total Population (1991 to 2011)

- All tehsils have experienced population growth from 1991 to 2011.
- Shahada had the highest population in 2011 (407,728), followed by Nandurbar (367,446).
- Akrani has the lowest population (195,754) among the six tehsils.
- Highest growth: Shahada (an increase of 118,819 people).
- Lowest growth: Taloda (an increase of 61,723 people).

Population Density (1991 to 2011)

- Population density (people per sq. km) has increased in all tehsils, indicating urbanization and a rise in settlement concentration.
- Taloda has the highest increase in population density (from 216.22 to 417.23).
- Akrani has the lowest density increase (from 305.70 to 388.01).
- The growth in density suggests significant migration and natural growth in some areas.

Literacy Rate (1991 to 2011)

- Substantial improvements in literacy across all tehsils.
- Nandurbar has the highest literacy rate in 2011 (71.36%).
- Akrani had the lowest literacy rate in 1991 (13.95%) but improved to 53.31% in 2011.
- Highest improvement: Akkalkuwa (40.38% increase).
- Lowest improvement: Shahada (21.65% increase).
- The increase in literacy reflects better educational facilities and awareness over two decades.
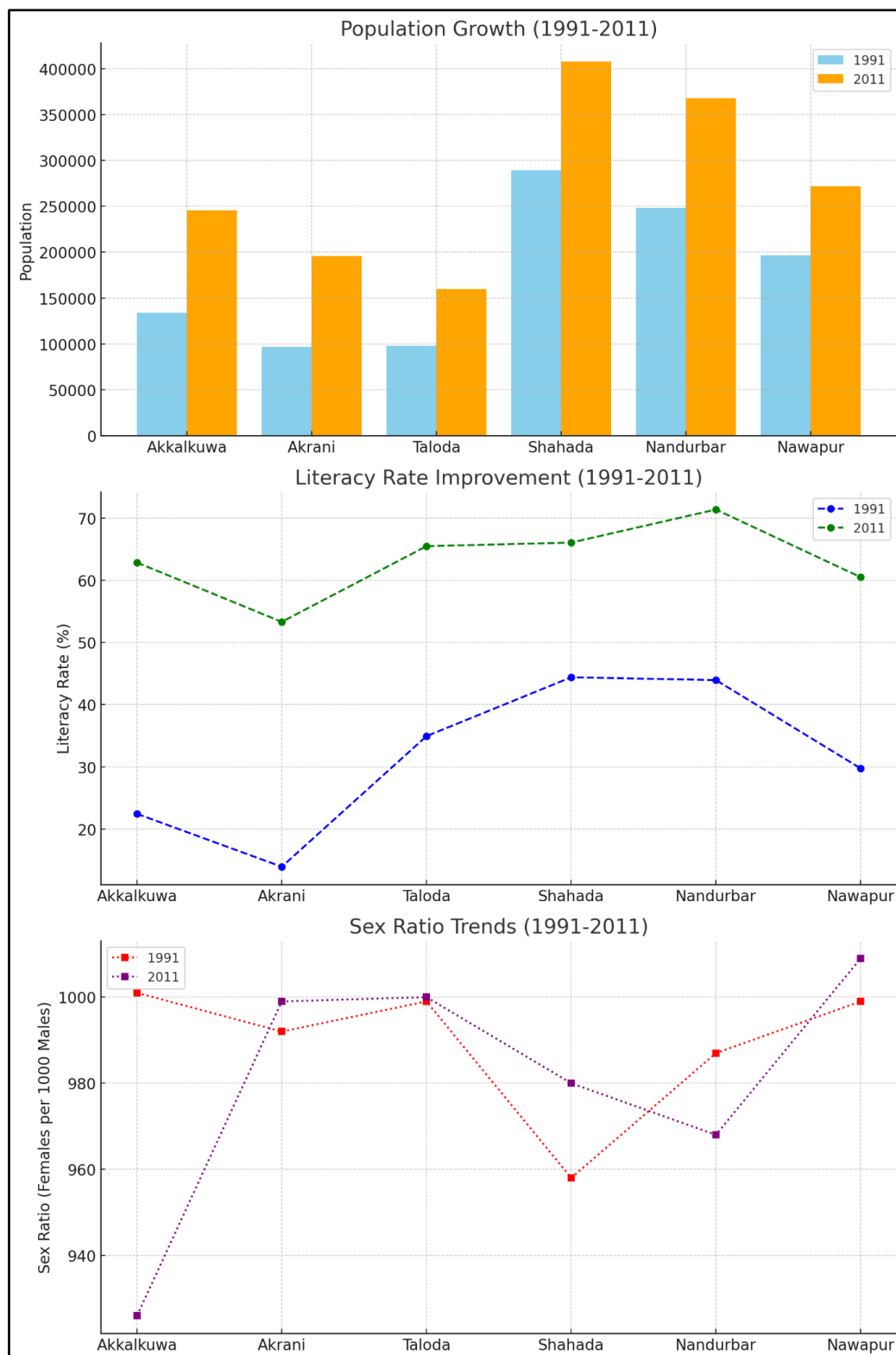
Fig 1: The comparison of population growth, Literacy, and Sex ratio from 1991 to 2011

The overall population in Nandurbar district has grown significantly between 1991 and 2011. Population density has increased, indicating higher settlement

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concentration.Literacy rates have improved in all tehsils, but there is still a gap between regions.The sex ratio remains uneven in some tehsils, with Akkalkuwa declining.

Conclusion

The tehsil-wise population analysis of Nandurbar district from 1991 to 2011 reveals significant growth across all regions. Akkalkuwa, Akarani, Talonda, Shahada, Nandurbar, and Navapur tehsils exhibited substantial increases in total population, with Shahada experiencing the highest numerical growth of 1,18,819 people over two decades. Population density also rose markedly, with Talonda witnessing the steepest rise (201.01%). The literacy rate improved significantly across all tehsils, with Nandurbar tehsil recording the highest increase (27.41%) from 43.95% in 1991 to 71.36% in 2011. However, Akkalkuwa's sex ratio showed a decline from 1001 females per 1000 males in 1991 to 926 in 2011, indicating demographic shifts in gender distribution.Overall, the data suggests rapid urbanization and developmental progress in education, though variations in gender balance and population concentration call for targeted socio-economic policies. Further analysis of migration trends and employment patterns could provide deeper insights into these demographic changes

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