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Occupational structure of Kishanganj district

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Abstract

The study of demographic characteristics in any region has assumed enormous significance in the context of growing population and limited resources over the greater part of India. This is particularly true of the relatively under-developed region like Kishanganj District, which is situated in the flood effected area on indo-Nepal border any close to the Indo-Bangladesh border. Several demographic studies have been done on the more accessible and economically developed parts of the country, but little attention has been paid so far towards appreciation of population characteristics in such under-developed district Kishangaj. The study are is said to have experienced changes in its demographic character the liberation of Bangladesh in 1971. The present study is an attempt to analyze these changes and the factors responsible for them.

Keywords: Demography, under-developed, factor responsible economically developed, flood effected, growing population, indo-Bangladesh

Introduction

Population geography is an important branch of social geography. In recent years the study of population has emerged as an important discipline in social sciences. Population forms the core of study not only in demography and population geography but even subjects like sociology, economics, statistics, psychology, anthropology, and many others are also taking keen interest in studying various aspect of population.

There are a large number of problems facing the world, but one long range problem stands out above all others. It is rapidly increasing pressure of population and resources. As the knowledge and practice of death control and the consequent extension of human life have overtaken the knowledge and practice of birth control, the human family is increasing more rapidly then ever before in the history of the earth. The capacity of land to support population differs from region to region. Some land carry a population for below their potentials, while others in this sense are definitely over-populated and can not keep alive. Their population on home food production alone. Similarly the caring capacity of different land depends upon the functions performed by a particular piece of land.

As regards different aspect of population. As a relatively recent and largely under-developed branch of geography, population has not had its boundaries vigorously circumscribed. Therefore, divergence of opinion on its content is quite natural. Human being is widely considered as the core of population geography. Thus this branch must be related to different aspect of mean.

Occupational structure of population are dependent on physical and economic factors. The favorable factors are responsible for a rapid growth and high density of population, which in turn are responsible for intensive use of land.

Methodology

The methodology adopted in the present work includes procurement of published in unpublished data and maps, field work, data analysis and map analysis. Most of the data used in the present study are secondary data, which have been gathered from census reports and office of the director of census operations, Bihar, Patna. These data have helped in the analysis of growth of population, distribution and density of the population and demographic structure and changes. Other data related to the geographical background of the study are have been gathered from several government and semi-government offices and institution.

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The study area is the home district of the scholar, who has a first hand knowledge of the geographical background and demographic character of the region. In spite of that, intensive fieldwork has been done to have detailed idea of the problem.

Occupational structure has been shown by proportionate circles divided to show different occupations.

Hypothesis

The present study some hypothesis relating to the occupational structure of study are have been formed and tested. Important hypothesis are the following:-

1. What are the demographic problems of Kishanganj district?
2. What has been the pattern of change in the demographic character during 1971-91?
3. What are the present demographic features of the district?
4. What measures may be taken to develop human and other resources of the region?

Study Area

The present study is an attempt to analyze the change in demographic character of Bihar's boarder district of Kishanganj. The study area forms part of what is now known as the Seemanchal region of Bihar. It is the gateway to the north-east and is located in the north-eastern corner of Bihar along National Highway No. 31 and Katihar-Guwahati section of the North-east Frontier Railway. It is bounded by Nepal and West Bengal in the north, Purnia district and Araria district in the west. With an area of 188400 sq. km. and population 16,90,400 according to the final figures of census 2011, the density of its population 900 persons per sq. km.. The average sex ratio 946 Females per thousand males. There are three urban centers namely Kishanganj, Bahadurganj, Thakurganj.

Occupational Structure

Occupational structure refers to the population engaged in different economic activities. It is also known as economic composition, economic structure or economic characteristics of population. It includes the demographic characteristics of the population or a part of it engaged in economically productive work together with the unproductive population or dependants and their characteristics. In fact, the economic characteristics of population influences the nature, behavior and other demographic features and is itself influenced by these features. This is why, the study of the economic pattern of any region helps in analyzing its economic, demographic and cultural characteristics. It also helps in planning for the socio-economic development of any region. Active and inactive population, Distribution of active population in different occupations and age and sex ration, level of literacy of different occupational groups, etc. may be considered as measures for the pattern of economy, social status and resource base of any region. This is why, the geographical study of the occupational structure of active population of a region and its temporal change help in understanding the changes in physical, social and economic structure.

The study of occupational structure in population geography is necessary to understand the type of economy and trend and level of economic development of a country or a region. Due to spatial variation in physical, economic and social

conditions of a country, there is spatial variation in occupational structure of population. As a result, the comparative study of the occupational structure of different regions provides the base for regional planning. This is why, the study of occupational structure is an important aspect of population geography.

There are several natural resources, which influence the occupational differentiation of a region. These are agricultural facilities, economically useful forest, mineral resources, etc. the commercialization of the use of these basic resources determines occupational differentiation. Industrial and technological developments also give rise to several occupations. Sometimes, political systems also control the structure of occupation. Different countries plan the resource base according to their requirement.

Main workers are again sub-divided into cultivators, agricultural labourers, industrial workers and those engaged in transport and communication, trade and commerce, mining and quarrying, construction and other services. The 1971 Census of India has made nine categories of workers. These are (i) cultivators, (ii) agricultural labourers, (iii) livestock, forestry, fishing, hunting and plantation orchards and allied activities, (iv) mining and quarrying, (v a) household industry, (v b) other than household industry, (vi) construction, (vii) trade and commerce, (viii) transport, storage and communication and (ix) other services.

It is significant to note that till 1971 there were only two categories of persons-workers and non-workers. Marginal workers have been differentiated from main workers in 1981. The 1981 census has made only four categories of main workers, viz., cultivators, agricultural labourers, household industrial workers and other workers. The 1991 and 2001 censuses have also divided the working force into main workers and marginal workers. But the 1991 census has divided the main workers into the nine categories as adopted in 1971 census or prior to that. However, in 2001 census main workers have again been divided into four categories as in 1981. The present study follows the pattern as adopted in 1981 and 2001.

Participation Rates and Changes Therein

In 1971 there were 1,93,171 workers in kishanganj district. It constituted 31.22 per cent of the total population of the district. This participation rate was higher than the State's average of 31.03 per cent. In 1981 the participation rate of the main workers of the district increase to 31.42 per cent, but that of the State of Bihar decreased to 29.68 per cent. In 1991 the participation rate of the main workers of the district again increased to 31.82 per cent, but that of the State further decreased to 29.66 per cent. The study area experienced further increase in the participation rate of the workers to 32.21 per cent in 2001, which was again higher than the State's average.

This analysis shows that participation rate of workers in the district under study has always been higher than that in the State of Bihar. Secondly, the percentage of workers in the total population has increased continuously since 1971. The main reason behind higher participation rate in the district is more participation of women and children in work in this region. In rural areas more women and children are engaged in agricultural work. The increase in the increase in the participation rate of women and children. On the whole, the participation rate of Bihar (29.66 per cent) was lower than that in India (37.46 per cent) according to 1991 census.

Male Participation

Work participation rate among males is almost everywhere higher than that among females. It is due to traditional Indian society, where most of the women are illiterate and they are expected to do the household duty only. In 1971 the percentage of male workers to total male population in Kishanganj district was 57.43. It was higher than the State's average male participation rate of 52.16 per cent. In 1981 there was a decrease in the male participation rate both in the district and the State. It decreased marginally to 57.39 per cent in the district and to 49.2 per cent in the State. In 1991 there was further decrease in the male participation rate. It decreased to 57.23 per cent in the district and 47.59 per cent in the State. In this census the average male participation in the country was 51.55 per cent. In 2001 there was sharp decline in male work participation rate of the study area, where only 53.12 per cent of the male were enumerated as workers. This analysis shows that participation rate among males is much higher than that in total population. Secondly, work participation rate of males in the study area has always been higher than that in the State. Thirdly, male participation rate is showing a decreasing trend both in the district and the State of Bihar.

Female Participation

In India females are mostly engaged in household activity. As such their participation in economic activity is lower than that of male workers. In a Indian society Purdah system and male domination in every sphere of life have also been responsible for poor participation rate of females in economic activity. In 1971 only 2.32 per cent of the females of Kishanganj district were workers as against 8.88 per cent in the State. In 1981 participation rate among females of the district increased to 3.25 per cent. In the State also there was a marginal increase and female workers constituted 9.06 per cent of the total female population. In 1991 female participation in the district further increased to 4.59 per cent, and that in the State also increased to 9.97 per cent. In 2001 there was sharp increase in the female participation rate of Kishanganj district, where 9.97 per cent of the total females were enumerated as workers.

A comparative analysis of female participation rate in the study area and the State of Bihar shows that the study area has had very low female workers as compared to the average proportion of female workers in the State. However, the recent trend shows that the proportion of female workers in the study area has been increasing continuously since 1971. This is due to the fact that female education, social awareness, economic needs and modernization have encouraged some of them to take on services in educational institutions, medical institutions and Government offices.

Conclusion

Kishanganj district has the lowest level of literacy among all the districts of the state. Both male and female literacy of the study area are very low as compared to the state and the country. The rural interior areas of district are a vast ocean of illiterate population. The average size of workers is very large and the occupational structure is very unbalanced in favour of primary workers engaged mainly in cultivation of agricultural land. The size of agricultural labors is larger than of cultivators, showing the poor economy of the district. The level of urbanization is very low and some of the urban centers are one worthy of being called towns, as

an overwhelming majority of the workers are still engaged in primary occupation in these towns.

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