

A Study on the Growth of Population in Bankura District, West Bengal

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Abstract : Population growth is one of the important determinants of the overall development of any region. Population is in itself considered as a resource. Low growth of population as well as excessive population growth, both is constraint to development. For all-round development there should be a balance between population growth and available resources. Impact of population growth on human development is plentiful, and it cannot be effectively opined that a greater number of people leads to higher economic development, as this needs pioneering idea, technology and policy execution. Countries with small population growth and higher resource potential also undergo development hurdles, due to difference in the allocation of man and resource. Demographically the district of Bankura, over the years, has presented a picture of stability with low population growth rate, which is only 12.65% as compared to the average growth rate (13.93%) of West Bengal, and India (17.64%). This study aims to analyse the changing pattern of population growth and changes in growth rate of population over a period of 1901-2011 in the district of Bankura. Lastly, the study suggests some remedial measures to reduce the variation in population growth and the developmental measures for the backward areas.

Key words: Population and resource, Changing pattern of population growth, Development of backward region

Introduction

Population provides a focus for comprehensive geographical study of a region. The term population refers to the whole number of people or inhabitants within an administrative or geographic area. We see interest in population study had been shown by many geographers from the middle of the seventeenth century. Most of the early developments took place in England, France, Germany and a few other European countries. In India, the establishment of Indian Association for the Study of Population (IASP), 1972 may be considered a landmark in the history of population studies in India. Population growth is the increase in the number of people that reside within a country, state, district, block or city over time and can

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be quantified as the change in the number of persons of any type in a population using “per unit time” for measurement. Population study is mainly concerned with population size or numbers, structures, characteristics, distribution and demographic changes over the course of time. Being multidisciplinary in nature, the scope of population study is quite wide. A group of factors responsible for changing the sizes of population at any place are fertility, mortality and migration. Fertility always plays a positive role whereas mortality always plays a negative role and migration has both positive and negative roles. Poverty is the greatest problem in India, particularly in the district of Bankura which is a remote and also a backward district of West Bengal. It is observed that problems like hunger, malnutrition, unemployment etc are directly linked to the size and growth of population in an area. It is central to the environment and development, which derives their significance from man or population, the inhibitor and developer.

The Study Area

Bankura is a remote and backward district of West Bengal which is located in the western part of the state and is the third largest district of the state. Bankura is also popularly known as ‘Rarh Bhum’. It is bounded by Puruliya district in the west, Bardhaman in the north and east, Paschim Mednipur in south and Hugli in east. The district attained its separate identity as Bankura in 1881. Bankura is the head quarter of the district. The spherical coordinates of the district are 22°38′ N and 23°38′ N latitude and 86°36′ E and 87°46′ E longitude. The administrative set up of the district comprises of 3 Subdivisions and 22 Blocks and 3 Municipalities. It covers an area of 6882 sq. km (2,657 sq. mile) with a population 3596674 (male-1838095 and female- 1758579) persons having a population density of 523 persons/sq. km (1,350 persons /sq mile) as per 2011 Census. The district shares 3.94% population and 7.75% area of the state of West Bengal in 2011. The rural and urban population in the district is 91.64% and 8.36% respectively (Census 2011). Sex Ratio (number of females per 1000 males) in the district is 954 and Scheduled Caste population to total population is 31.2% and Scheduled Tribe population to total population is 10.4%, 84.34% of the district’s populations were Hindus and 8.08% were Muslims.

Objectives

The major objectives of the study are as follows:

- To examine the changing pattern of population growth as influenced by population dynamics.
- To study the reasons behind the variations in differential population growth rate in each C.D. Blocks of the district.
- To examine rural-urban differential rates of population growth.

Methodology

To attain the objectives mentioned above, the methodologies followed in the present study are the collection of secondary database and information from Census of India 1951, 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001 (Book and in CD format) and 2011 PCA data (in CD format), Bankura District Human Development Report, District Statistical Handbook, different journals etc. Various year wise data of the district and C.D. Blocks have been analysed with the help of cartographic representation. The results of such analyses have been tabulated, mapped and interpreted.

Analyses and Interpretation

Growth Rate 1901-2011

At the very beginning of the last century (1901) the population of Bankura was 11.16 lakhs and it increased to 35.96 lakhs in 2011 which is an increase of 3.22 times as against 5.39 times in the case of State's population. Decadal growth rate is the growth of population in a particular region with a gap of every 10 years. As far as the growth rate of population is concerned, Bankura exhibits a low decadal growth rate (13.79%) in 1991-2001 and 12.65% in 2001-2011 compared to 13.93% of the State and 17.64% of the Country's decadal growth rate in 2001-2011.

Table-1. Decadal Growth Rate of Population in Bankura District (1901-2011)

Year	1901-1911	1911-1921	1921-1931	1931-1941	1941-1951	1951-1961	1961-1971	1971-1981	1981-1991	1991-2001	2001-2011
Total	2	-10.4	9	16	2.3	26.17	22.02	16.93	18.12	13.79	12.65
Rural	1.7	-11.3	8.9	14.7	2.3	25.94	21.85	16.72	17.28	14.96	11.43
Urban	7.4	6.4	10.4	36.8	2.9	29.11	24.21	19.45	28.27	1.19	27.81

Source: Census of India

It can be observed from the above diagram that growth rate of Bankura in the year 1911-1921 encountered a heavy loss which is known as great epidemic decade. As a result of Influenza epidemic during this decade a negative growth rate was registered. Over the last five decades growth rate of Bankura is generally having a downward trend with exception of 1981-91 when it slightly went up. The same trend is observed in the case of rural areas of the district. But in the case of the urban areas striking increase is observed in 1981- 91 and apparently inexplicable decline is seen in 1991- 2001. The growth rate has notably declined in 2001 by 4.33% in the district. Rural growth rate has declined by 2.32% as against the urban decline (27.08%). It makes Bankura a district with the lowest urban growth rate (Census 2001), the second being Kolkata 4.11%. This decline in urban growth rate may be attributed to declassification of 2 census towns, i.e. Khatra and Patrasayer.

The comparative decadal growth rate of the district Bankura, West Bengal and India shows that, decadal growth rate of the district is always lower than the state and national average decadal growth rate during the last 50 years.

Table-2. Change in Decadal Growth Rate in Bankura, West Bengal and India (1901-2011)

Year	1901-1911	1911-1921	1921-1931	1931-1941	1941-1951	1951-1961	1961-1971	1971-1981	1981-1991	1991-2001	2001-2011
Bankura	2	-10.4	9	16	2.3	26.17	22.02	16.93	18.12	13.79	12.6
India	5.75	-0.31	11	14.22	13.31	21.64	24.80	24.66	23.86	21.54	17.64
West Bengal	6.25	-2.91	8.14	22.93	13.22	32.80	26.87	23.17	24.73	17.77	13.93

Source: Census of India

C.D. Block – Wise Growth Rate

The C.D. Block wise growth rate data of 2001 shows highest decadal growth rate in Raipur block which is 40.1%. It is very unusual increase for rural area, but this has happened because two neighbouring C.D. Blocks namely Raipur-I and Raipur-II in 1991 have been renamed as Raipur and Sarenga respectively with transfer of areas from Raipur-II (now Sarenga) to Raipur-I (now Raipur) in 2001. Conversely there has also been negative growth rate of -11.9% in case of Sarenga Block. Among the five urban units in Bankura the highest decadal growth rate has been recorded in Barjora Census Town with 20.5% followed by Beliatore Census Town (19.1%). Among the towns, the lowest growth rate has been recorded in Bishnupur Municipality with 10.4% followed by Sonamukhi and Bankura Municipalities with

Table-3: Block wise Decadal Growth Rate (1991-2001), Bankura

Type	% of decadal growth rate (2001)	Blocks	No. of Blocks	Percentage
High	>20%	Raipur, Bishnupur	2	9.09
Medium	10-19.99%	Bankura-II, Indpur, Ranibandh, Barjora, Gangalghati, Bankura-I, Simlapal, Khatra, Onda, Sonamukhi, Taldangra, Indus, Joypur, Kotalpur, Hirbandh, Patrasayer	16	72.72
Low	0-9.99%	Chhatna, Saltora, Mejhia	3	13.64
Negative	-	Sarenga	1	4.54

Source: Computed by the researcher

11% and 12.1% respectively. Thus, it is seen that all the three Municipal towns in Bankura have recorded a decadal growth rate of below 15% which indicates that the urban growth rate in Bankura has achieved stability and there is no significant migration of rural population to the urban areas unlike many other districts in the State.

Block wise Decadal (1991-2001) Growth rate of population is highest in Raipur (40.13%) C.D. Block and lowest in Sarenga (-11.88%) C.D. Block. In rest of the blocks decadal growth rate is in between (8.16 to 20.36%). The reasons behind the negative growth rate in Sarenga are as follows: (i) Poor transport and communication system, (ii) low job opportunity, (iii) Maoists threats- as a result of Maoists threats we see out migration from Sarenga, beside these, many people died due to Maoists attacks during this period, (iv) Lack of doctors and hospitals and Health care centres, and (v) Out migration-as the block is not so developed economically, there is a tendency on the part of the inhabitants to out-migrate from this block to Kolkata and different parts of West Bengal and India.

Table-4. Block wise Decadal Growth Rate (2001-2011), Bankura

Type	% of decadal growth rate (2001-2011)	Blocks	No. of Blocks	Percentage
Very High	14.81-16	Hirbandh, Chhatna	2	9.09
High	13.61-14.80	Onda, Bankura-II, Khatra, Ranibandh	4	18.18
Medium	12.41-13.60	Mejhia, Raipur, Indpur, Bishnupur, Barjora, Kotalpur,	6	27.27
Low	11.21-12.40	Sarenga, Simlapal, Taldangra, Patrasayer, Bankura-I, Gangalghati, Saltora, Sonamukhi	8	36.36
Very Low	10.01-11.20	Jaypur, Indus	2	9.09

Source: Computed by the researcher

As per Census 2011 among the C.D. Blocks highest decadal growth rate is seen in Hirbandh C.D. Block which is 15.63% followed by Chhatna C.D. Block which is 15.26%. Lowest decadal growth Rate during 2001-2011 is seen in Joypur C.D. Block which is only 10.9%.

Growth Rate According to Age- Sex

Trewartha (1953) rightly observed that the proportion of two sexes is fundamental to the geographic analysis of an area because it is not only an important feature of the landscape, but it also influences the other demographic elements significantly and as such provides an additional clue to understanding

and analysing the population dynamics. The study of age composition within a community is affected considerably by the age structure. Age is an important variable in measuring potential number of school children; potential voting population, potential man power, further age and sex structure determine the biological potentialities of a given population in respect of reproduction and population growth. There are three major age groups of population i.e. young dependent (0-14 ages), working population (15-59 ages) and old dependent (60 and above age groups). The of population in various age groups in 1991 was as follows- 36.12% in 0-14 years age group, 57.22% in 15-59 years age group and 6.26% in above 60 years age group. In 2001 the share was 32.83% for 0-14 years age group, 59.83% of 15-59 years age group and 7.26% of above 60 years age group. In the Census year 2011 the of population in various age groups is as follows- 26.93% in 0-14 years age group, 63.75% in 15-59 years age group and 9.27% in above 60 years age group.

Table-5. Age Sex Wise Growth of Population 1991-2011, Bankura

Age Group	% of Total Population (1991)			% of Total Population (2001)			% of Total Population (2011)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
0-14	35.97	36.27	36.12	32.96	32.7	32.83	26.97	26.89	26.93
15-59	57.92	56.50	57.22	60.59	59.02	59.83	64.59	62.86	63.75
60+	5.68	6.87	6.26	6.36	8.2	7.26	8.39	10.21	9.27

Source: Census of India 1991, 2001 and 2011

Dependency ratio is another measure by which we can understand about what of people is dependent (0-14 years and above 60 years age group) on the working population (15-59 years age group).

$$DR = \frac{P_{<15} + P_{>60}}{P_{15-59}} \times 100$$

Where DR is the dependency ratio,

P < 15 is the young population in the age group of 0-14

P15 – 59 is the population in the age group of 15-59,

P > 60 is the population above 60 year age.

Overall Dependency ratio of the district has been decreased from 74.06% in 1991 to 67.65% in 2001 and 56.78% in 2011. The male dependency ratio reduced from 69.51% in 1991 to 64.90% in 2001 and 54.75% in 2011. Female dependency ratio reduced from 76.35% in 1991 to 68.23% in 2001 and 59.02% in 2011. This trend clearly shows that life expectancy gradually increases in the district as a result of

improvements in social and economic life of people and improvement in overall standard of living, so it may be stated that the district gradually moves towards development.

Growth rate of Scheduled Caste Population

In the year 1901, Risley, the then Census Commissioner of India, attempted for the first time to categorize the Hindu castes according to their social position. This according to Mitra (preface to the Tribes and Castes of West Bengal, 1951), resulted in “incidentally sowing the dragon’s tooth of ‘depressed’ and scheduled tribes and Scheduled castes”.

Table-6. Comparative Growth Rate of Scheduled Caste Population in Bankura and West Bengal (1991-2001) and (2001-2011)

Place	Growth Rate of Scheduled Caste Population in % (1991-2001)					Growth Rate of Scheduled Caste Population in % (2001-2011)				
	Total	Male	Female	Rural	Urban	Total	Male	Female	Rural	Urban
Bankura	13.35	12.87	13.85	14.76	-6.75	17.75	17.08	18.44	17.16	28.20
West Bengal	14.75	13.72	15.85	14.11	18.28	16.32	16.20	16.44	10.11	49.20

Source: District Census Handbook, Bankura 1991, 2001 and 2011

Comparative Growth Rate of Scheduled Caste Population in Bankura and West Bengal shows that Growth Rate (total, male, female, rural and urban) of Scheduled Castes population increased in the district during 2001-2011 decade compared to the previous decade 1991-2001. Beside this, we see that the growth rate in case of total population, male population, female population, rural population in comparison

Table-7. Block wise Scheduled Caste decadal growth rate (2001-2011), Bankura

Type	% of decadal growth rate of Scheduled Caste Population	Blocks	No. of Blocks	%
Very High	25.51-28.50	Taldangra, Hirbandh, Chhatna,	3	13.64
High	22.51-25.50	Bishnupur	1	4.54
Medium	19.51-22.50	Khatra, Indpur, Mejhia	3	13.64
Low	16.51-19.50	Patrasayer, Simlapal, Onda, Ranibandh, Barjora, Sarenga, Raipur, Bankura-II, Indus, Sonamukhi, Gangajalghati	11	50
Very Low	13.51-16.50	Jaypur, Saltora, Bankura-I, Kotalpur	4	18.18

Source: Computed by the researcher

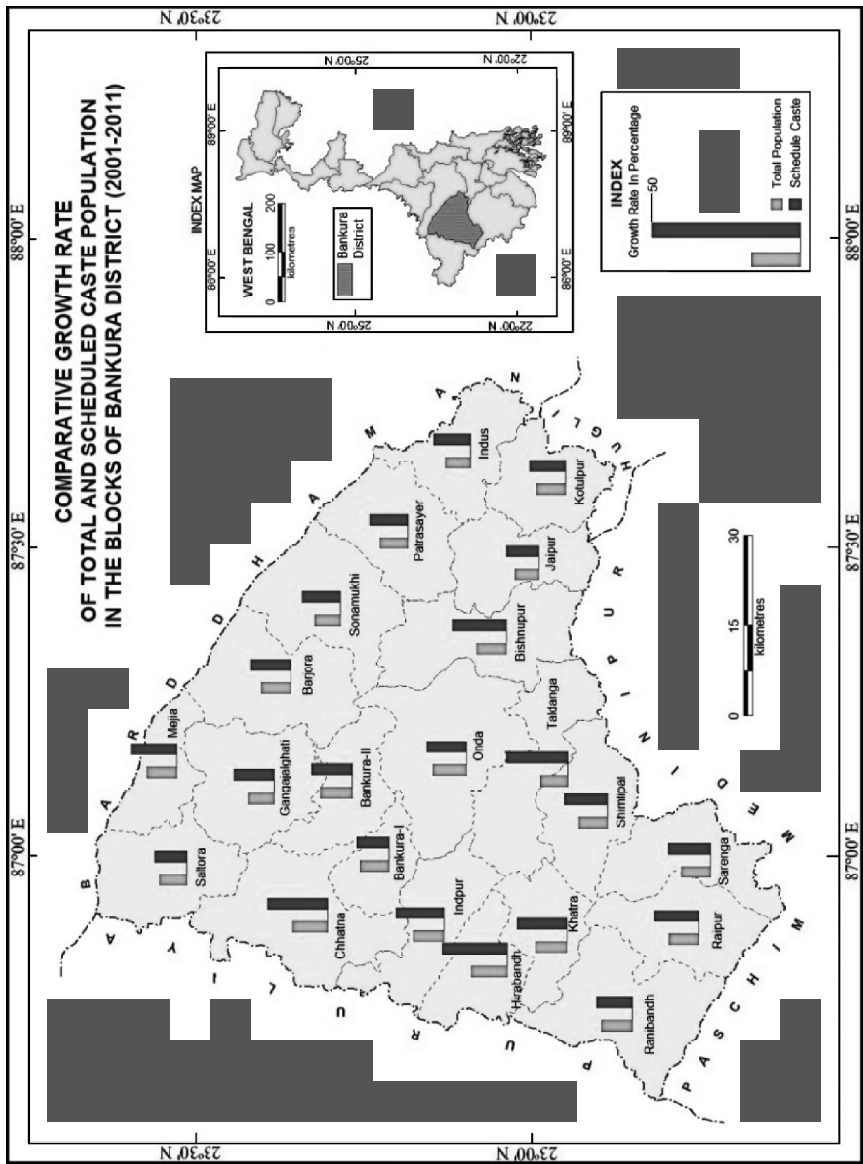


Fig. 4

to state's average decadal growth rate (2001-2011) of Scheduled Caste Population, the district is more than state's average decadal growth rate. Only the urban decadal growth rate (2001-2011) of Scheduled Caste Population is less in the district compared to the state.

Scheduled Caste population growth rate during 2001-2011 is highest in Hirbandh C.D. Block which is 28.19 % followed by Taldangra and Chhatna C.D. Block and lowest in Saltora which is 13.81%.

Growth rate of Scheduled Tribes Population

The tribes as a whole are technologically and educationally backward section of the society. The majority of the tribal people have been following patrilineal system of social organization. A tribe is defined as "a community occupying a common geographic area and having a similar language and culture or beliefs and practices" (Theodorson-1969; 443). Some scholars like G. S. Ghurye, T.B Naik, F. G. Bailey and Verrier Elwin have used different criteria i.e. religion, geographical position, language, economic backwardness and political association for distinguishing caste from tribe. The district is having almost double concentration of scheduled tribe population in compared to state.

Table-8. Comparative Growth Rate of Scheduled Tribe Population in Bankura and West Bengal (1991-2001) and (2001-2011)

Place	Growth Rate of Scheduled Caste Tribe Population in % (1991-2001)					Growth Rate of Scheduled Caste Tribe Population in % (2001-2011)				
	Total	Male	Female	Rural	Urban	Total	Male	Female	Rural	Urban
Bankura	14.10	13.40	14.83	14.26	-10.51	11.46	10.04	12.91	11.03	94.36
West Bengal	15.70	14.70	16.74	14.50	37.75	20.20	19.16	21.26	17.38	63.38

Source: District Census Handbook, Bankura 1991, 2001 and 2011

Comparative Growth Rate of Scheduled Tribe Population in Bankura and West Bengal shows that Growth Rate (total, male, female, and rural) of Scheduled Tribe population decreased in the district during 2001-2011 census decade compared to previous census decade 1991-2001. Beside this we see that the growth rate in case of total population, male population, female population, rural population compared to state's average decadal growth rate (2001-2011) of Scheduled Tribe Population, the district scores less than the state's average decadal growth rate. Only the urban decadal growth rate (2001-2011) of Scheduled Tribe population is very high in the district compared to the state's average decadal increase.

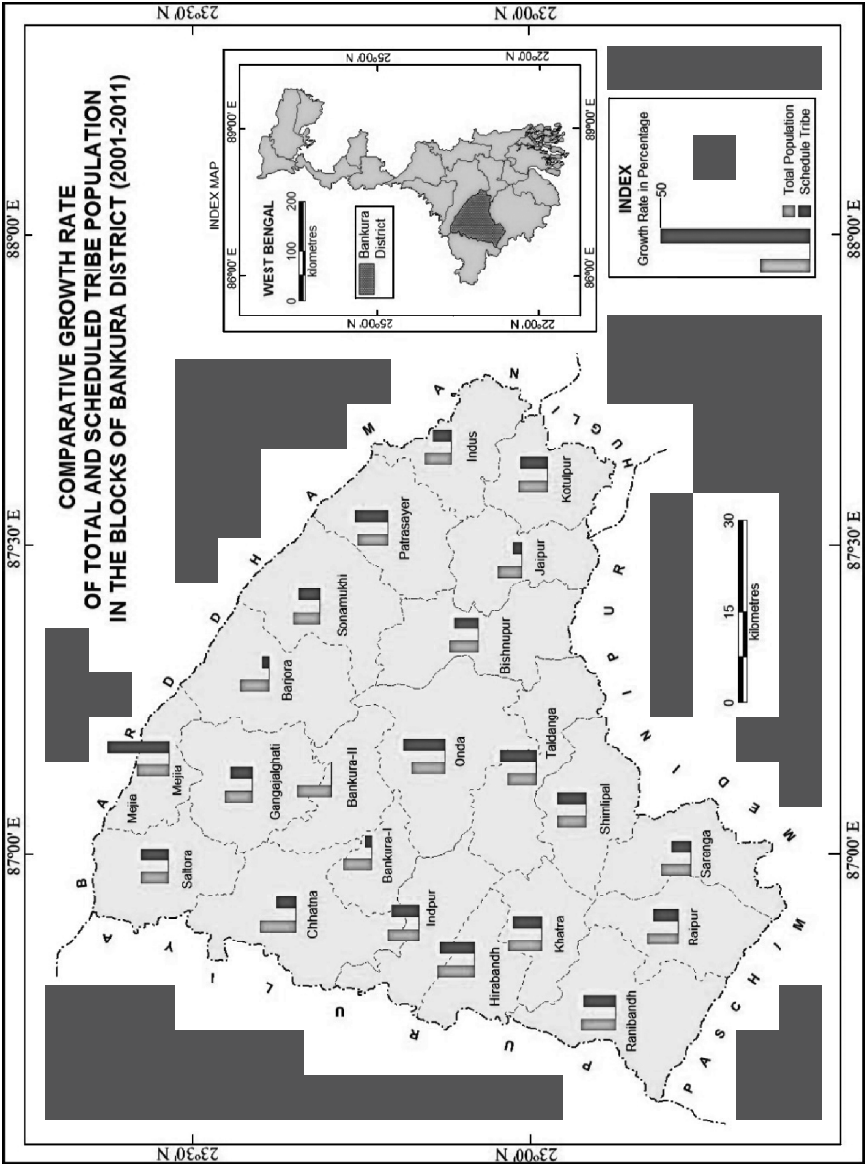


Fig. 5

Blockwise Scheduled Tribe population growth rate of population during 2001-2011 is highest in Mejhia CD Block which is 25.53% followed by Onda and Taldangra C.D. Block and lowest in Bankura-II which is 0.49%.

Table-9. Block wise Scheduled Tribes Decadal Growth rate (2001-2011), Bankura

Type	% of decadal growth rate of ST Population (2001-2011)	Blocks	No. of Blocks	%
Very High	> 20	Mejhia	1	4.54
High	15.01-20	Onda, Taldangra, Hirbandh,	3	13.64
Medium	10.01-15	Khatra, Indpur, Bishnupur, Saltora, Kotalpur, Patrasayer, Simlapal, Ranibandh	8	36.36
Low	5.01-10	Chhatna, Sarenga, Raipur, Indus, Sonamukhi, Gangal Ghati	6	27.27
Very Low	0.01-5	Jaypur, Bankura-I, Bankura-II, Barjora	4	18.18

Source: Computed by the researcher

Growth Rate According to Religion

Religion wise growth rate also varies from religion to religion. In the district Bankura, among all religions, Hindus (84.34%) comprise the majority in the district followed by Muslims (8.08 %).

Table-10. Religion wise Growth Rate of Population in Bankura (1991-2001) and (2001-2011)

Religion	Growth Rate in % (1991-2001)	Growth Rate in % (20001-2011)
Hindu	10.16%	12.65%
Muslim	28.87%	21.16%
Christians	6.87%	28.06%

Source: Census of India, 2001 and 2011

The growth rate during 1991-2001 census decades shows average growth rate of Muslim population in the district is three times and four times greater than that of Hindu and Christian population. The relative backwardness of the Muslim community and particularly of Muslim women has been noted as a factor for comparatively high fertility rates observed among the Muslim population. The

growth rate during 2001-2011 census decades shows average growth rate of Hindu population has increased from 10.16% in 2001 to 12.65% in 2011 and surprisingly Christian population has increased four times in comparison to previous decades, the Christian population growth rate has increased from 6.87% in 2001 to 28.06% in 2011. It was revealed that the main reason behind this excessive Christian population Growth Rate is conversion of Hindus into Christian. Christian missionaries are sent to villages, where Hindus are converted to Christianity. These missionaries offer money to the people in return for conversion. Beside this, at the time of insecurity, they try to convert people to Christianity. In respect to Muslim growth rate during 2001-2011 census decade it was seen that there is almost 7% reduction in the growth rate of Muslims of Bankura which was 28.87% in 2001 has decreased to 21.16% in 2011. But still Muslim growth rate in the district is almost double compared to Hindu population growth rate. As a result of that with the passage of time the proportional share of Muslim population in the district's population has also increased gradually.

Major Findings

- Decadal growth rate and density of population is very low in the district Bankura. So, there is no pressure of excessive population in the district like other parts of the state and country.
- There is a drastic reduction in the birth rate and growth rate in the district over the period of time.
- The decadal growth rate Scheduled Caste population is much higher than the total decadal growth rate but the decadal growth rate of Scheduled Tribes population is lower than that of total population. This indicates that Scheduled Tribes are well aware about the negative impact of population growth rate. They are also participating eagerly in various birth control practices and measurements.
- The pressure of population on the urban areas of Bankura District is not high as is observed in any average urban area of West Bengal taken as a whole.
- In the district in more than 80% villages, the annual growth rate of population is less than 2%, it clearly suggests that the overall growth rate of population in the villages as well as in the district is very slow.
- The age sex structure of population shows that the proportion of children below 14 years is comparatively low. This trend is also reflected in the prevalence of nuclear families consisting of 3 to 5 members.
- Majority of the households show a low standard of living and the proportion of households with moderate or high standard of living is

relatively low. However, increasing pressure of population, availability of other means of livelihood, improving communications are gradually changing their lifestyles as well as preferences.

Suggestions

- Vital events i.e. births and deaths must be registered properly and should be published regularly so that necessary measures can be undertaken for vulnerable areas.
- Due to the poor economic setup and low job opportunities people are forced to migrate to urban areas; therefore, special attention should be given towards rural employment generation.
- Due to multi-dimensional complexities from one Block to another, a number of policies should be recommended at the micro level for an overall improvement of the district.
- The district is still economically underdeveloped. Strategic planning of resources and mass consciousness at the national and international level are required for a happy socio-economic life and a cultural globalization of Bankura.

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