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Original Article

Population of Nanded District: A Geographical and Social Study

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Abstract

Population is a fundamental element in understanding the socio-economic and geographical development of any region. The study of population helps planners, administrators, and researchers identify developmental needs and formulate appropriate policies. Nanded District, located in the Marathwada region of Maharashtra, is one of the most populous districts in the state. This paper examines the demographic characteristics of Nanded District with special reference to population growth, distribution, density, literacy, sex ratio, rural-urban composition, occupational structure, and social development. The study is based on secondary data collected from Census reports, government publications, and scholarly sources.

Keywords: *Population, Nanded District, Demography, Literacy, Population Density, Sex Ratio, Rural Population, Urbanization, Social Development.*

Introduction

Population is one of the most significant indicators of regional development. The size, composition, and distribution of population influence economic growth, social progress, environmental sustainability, and resource utilization. Population geography studies the spatial distribution of people and their interaction with the environment.Nanded District occupies a prominent position in the Marathwada region of Maharashtra. The district is known for its historical, cultural, educational, and religious importance. The famous Sikh pilgrimage center, Hazur Sahib, attracts thousands of devotees from across India and abroad. Population growth and changing demographic patterns have significantly influenced the district's socio-economic development.The present study attempts to analyze the demographic profile of Nanded District and assess its implications for regional development.

Study Area

Nanded District is situated in the southeastern part of Maharashtra between approximately 18°15' and 19°55' North Latitude and 77°07' and 78°15' East Longitude.Geographical Boundaries- North: Hingoli District- South: Telangana State- East: Telangana State- West: Parbhani and Latur Districts Area and Administrative Structure- Total Area: Approximately 10,500 sq. km. - Number of Talukas: 16- Major Talukas: Nanded, Mukhed, Bhokar, Degloor, Kandhar, Biloli, Naigaon, Loha, Himayatnagar, Kinwat, Mahur, Hadgaon, Dharmabad, Mudkhed, Ardhapur, and Umri. The Godavari River and its tributaries play a vital role in the agricultural economy of the district.

Objectives of the Study

1. To analyze the demographic characteristics of Nanded District.
2. To study population growth trends.
3. To examine literacy and educational development.
4. To analyze population density and distribution.
5. To evaluate rural and urban population composition.
6. To study social structure and occupational characteristics.
7. To suggest measures for balanced demographic development.

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Research Methodology

The study is based on secondary sources of data.Sources of Data- Census of India 2011- District Statistical Handbook- Government Reports- Maharashtra Economic Survey- Books on Population Geography- Research Journals and Articles. The collected data have been analyzed using descriptive, comparative, and interpretative approaches.

Demographic Profile of Nanded District

According to Census 2011, Nanded District had a total population of approximately 3.36 million.

Demographic Indicator

Total Population	3,361,292
Male Population	1,725,098
Female Population	1,636,194
Sex Ratio	947
Literacy Rate	75.45%
Population Density	287 Persons/Sq. Km
Urban Population	27%
Rural Population	73%

The district accounts for a significant share of the population of the Marathwada region.

Population Growth Trends

Population growth is an important demographic indicator reflecting changes in fertility, mortality, and migration.The population of Nanded District has increased steadily since independence. Better healthcare facilities, declining death rates, and improvements in living standards have contributed to this growth.Factors Responsible for Population Growth-Improved healthcare facilities, Reduction in infant mortality, Better nutrition, Increased life expectancy, Social and cultural factors,Population growth creates both opportunities and challenges. While it increases the labor force, it also puts pressure on resources and infrastructure.

8. Population Density and Distribution

1. Population density refers to the number of persons living per square kilometer.
2. The population density of Nanded District is approximately 287 persons per square kilometer.
3. Areas of High Density Nanded City, Mukhed,Degloor, Kandhar
4. Areas of Low Density-Kinwat,Mahur,Forest-dominated tribal regions
5. Population distribution is influenced by:Availability of water resources, Agricultural productivity
6. Transportation facilities,Industrial and commercial activities

Rural-Urban Population Structure

Nanded District has a predominantly rural population. Rural Population-About 73 percent of the population lives in rural areas.Major characteristics include: Dependence on agriculture, Traditional social structure, Lower access to advanced facilities,Strong community relations. Urban Population-About 27 percent of the population lives in urban areas.Major urban centers include:Nanded, Degloor, Mukhed, Bhokar, Kandhar Urban areas provide:Educational institutions,Healthcare services,Employment opportunities, Transportation facilities Urbanization in the district has been increasing gradually due to migration from rural areas.

Literacy and Educational Development

Literacy is one of the most important indicators of social development.

Literacy Statistics

Category	Literacy Rate
Total Literacy	75.45%
Male Literacy	Approximately 84%
Female Literacy	Approximately 67%

Importance of Literacy-Improves quality of life, Increases employment opportunities, Promotes social awareness, Encourages gender equality

Although literacy has improved considerably, rural and female literacy still require greater attention.

Sex Ratio and Gender Composition

1. Sex ratio is defined as the number of females per thousand males.
2. Nanded District records a sex ratio of 947 females per 1000 males.
3. Factors Affecting Sex Ratio - Social attitudes toward gender, Healthcare access, Female literacy, Economic conditions.
4. Improving women's education and health services can positively influence gender balance.

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Occupational Structure
1. The occupational structure of the population reflects the economic characteristics of a region.
2. Primary Occupations-Agricultur, Animal Husbandry, Agricultural Labor
3. Secondary Occupations-Small-scale Industries, Manufacturing Activities
4. Tertiary Occupations-Trade and Commerce, Education, Banking, Healthcare, Government Services
5. Agriculture remains the backbone of the district economy.

Social Composition
1. Nanded District is characterized by social diversity.
2. Major Social Groups-Scheduled Castes (SC),Scheduled Tribes (ST),Other Backward Classes (OBC),General Category
3. Religious Composition
4. The district includes followers of: Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism, Christianity
5. The presence of Takht Hazur Sahib has made Nanded an important center of Sikh culture.

Migration and Urbanization
Migration plays an important role in demographic change.
Types of Migration
1. Rural to Urban Migration
2. Seasonal Migration
3. Educational Migration
4. Employment Migration

Causes of Migration-Search for employment, Higher education, Better healthcare, Improved living conditions
Migration contributes to urban growth and economic development.

Population and Economic Development
Population serves as both a resource and a challenge.
Positive Impacts-Availability of labor force, Market expansion, Human resource development
Negative Impacts-Unemployment, Pressure on natural resources, Housing shortages, Environmental degradation
Balanced development is essential for managing population growth effectively.

Major Demographic Challenges
1. Population pressure on resources.
2. Rural unemployment.
3. Educational disparities.
4. Urban infrastructure challenges.
5. Healthcare inequalities.
6. Migration-related issues.
7. Environmental stress due to population growth.

Suggestions and Recommendations-
Strengthen educational infrastructure, Promote female education, Expand healthcare services, Encourage skill development programs, Support rural industrialization, Improve employment opportunities, Promote sustainable urban planning. Enhance awareness regarding family welfare and population management.

Conclusion
The demographic profile of Nanded District reflects a combination of traditional rural characteristics and emerging urban trends. The district has experienced steady population growth, increasing literacy, and gradual urbanization. However, challenges such as unemployment, educational disparities, and infrastructure demands continue to exist.Effective planning and policy implementation can transform the district's population into a productive human resource. Investments in education, healthcare, skill development, and balanced regional growth will play a crucial role in achieving sustainable development in Nanded District.

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