SPATIO-TEMPORAL DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION IN BANKURA DISTRICT, WEST BENGAL: A STUDY ON THE PATTERN OF CENTRALITY AND REGIONAL DISPARITY

ASHIS PANDIT AND SUBRATA PAN

This study focuses on the demographic evolution of Bankura district from 1901 to 2021, exploring the shifts in population trends, urbanization, and rural-urban dynamics. The district has experienced notable socio-economic and infrastructural changes over the past century, influencing population growth, distribution, and concentration. Understanding these trends is critical for analysing regional development and disparities in population distribution. The study uses census data from 1901 to 2021 to track changes in population, decadal growth rates, and shifts in the population's mean center. The Population Concentration Index (CI) and Regional Disparity Index (DI) were employed to assess population distribution and disparities across different blocks, particularly in terms of SC and ST populations, and the ratio of workers to non-workers. Statistical analysis and spatial mapping techniques were used to visualize and interpret these trends. The study reveals significant population growth, particularly in urban areas post-1951, while rural growth slowed. The decadal growth rates fluctuated, with notable declines during the 1918 influenza pandemic and subsequent recovery in the following decades. The mean center of population shifted gradually towards the north-eastern region, indicating an increasing concentration of population there. The Population CI showed growing concentrations in certain blocks, while the Regional (DI) highlighted imbalances in SC and ST populations, especially in the Lowland and Midland regions. Disparities between worker and non-worker populations were also observed, with higher non-worker populations in some blocks.

Keywords: Decadal Growth Rate, Mean Center of Population, Population Concentration Index, Regional Disparity Index