

CHAPTER [VII]

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION



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The study of population, as a specific aspect of population geography is basically concerned with the spatio-temporal variations in different aspects of population. This type of study is helpful to suggest comprehensive planning for a region. Keeping the above view in mind, the author has selected the Maharashtra which is a virgin area for such type of study.

The Maharashtra State comprising six administrative divisions and 30 districts extending from 15°44' N to 22°06' N latitude and 72°36' E to 80°54' E longitude covering an area of 307713 km². Physiographically the State may be divided into four units: (i) Maharashtra Sahyadri and Coastal lowlands, (ii) Tapi-Purna Valley Region, (iii) Maharashtra plateau, and (iv) Vidarbha Region. Godavari, Krishna, Tapi-Purna are the important rivers of the State. Climatically the State enjoys monsoonal characteristics. With regards to the soils six types prevalent : (i) Coastal Saline and Alluvium, (ii) Lateritic, (iii) Reddish brown, (iv) Coastal shallow, (v) Black soils, (vi) Yellowish brown. The natural vegetation is mainly found in western, northern and eastern part of the State.

About 58.5 percent of the geographical area of the State is under cultivation. Area under forest in the State is just 17.6 percent. Uncultivable land accounted for 8.9

percent of the total area and 6.2 percent land remains as fallow. Area sown more than once accounts for 17.4 percent of the total net sown area. Canals, tanks and wells are the most important sources of irrigation. Gr.Bombay, Thane, Pune, Solapur and Nagpur districts are industrially developed while remaining districts are industrially moderate to least developed. North Konkan, western and north eastern parts of the State are well linked with roads and railways transport. There are varieties of mineral (bauxite, coal, iron-ore, manganese, limestone, chromite, silica etc.) resources of economic importance but they are in limited areas.

It is highly desirable to mention here that the present study based on data from secondary sources and their analysis lead a good deal of support to author's empirical investigation. On the basis of the analysis of the available data following conclusions are drawn :

The regional variation in the distribution and density of population has been largely affected by the physical environment and economic conditions. Distribution of population in the State is uneven. Western Maharashtra, northern Konkan, north-western and north eastern parts of the State are densely populated. Density of population in the Western Maharashtra is high due to fertile soils, development of irrigation and agriculture, development of agricultural markets, transport network and agro-based industries. Northern Konkan has high density of population because of phenomenal increase in urbanisation and industrialization.

North-western part of the State is also densely populated due to development of transport and irrigation facilities which have further helped both for industrial and agricultural development. North-eastern part is densely populated because of exploitation of minerals, development of agriculture, agro-based industries and transport network. Remaining parts (i.e. central, northern, south Konkan and eastern) of the State are thinly populated due to poor soils, hilly areas, scarcity of irrigation facilities and lack of industrial and transport development.

As per 1991 Census, 61.3 percent of the total population of the State lives in rural areas. The density of rural population in the State is 160 persons per km², but it varies from 50 persons per km² to 291 persons per km². The density of rural population is high in those districts which have fertile soils, high to moderate rainfall, healthy climate and improved irrigation facilities, while the density of rural population is low in those districts which have low rainfall, lack of sufficient irrigation facilities, poor soils, undulating terrain and thick forest cover.

Distribution of rural population in the State for 1981 and 1991 showed significant change. Central part and some districts of eastern part, which were thinly populated in 1981, are moderately populated in 1991. While Pune, Satara, Sangli districts of Western Maharashtra, Latur and Nanded districts of south-central part and Bhandara district of north eastern part of the State, which were moderately

populated in 1981, are thickly populated in 1991.

The present study reveals that districts which are industrially and agriculturally developed, have high concentration of population, while concentration of population is low in those districts which are stagnant in agriculture and those which are recorded no significant change in the economy of the rural landscape.

Average sex-ratio of the State (935) is just above the national average (929). It ranges from 819 in Gr.Bombay district to 1211 in Ratnagiri district. As per 1991 Census rural sex-ratio (975) in the State is higher than the urban sex-ratio (876). High sex-ratio is associated with industrially and economically backward districts while low sex-ratio is associated with industrially developed districts.

In Raigarh, Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg and Satara districts rural sex-ratio is high due to traditional trend of out migration of male population. Sex-ratio in urban areas is low in industrially developed districts.

The study of sex-ratio for 1981 and 1991 shows that in Raigarh, Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg, Satara, Aurangabad, Jalna, Parbhani, Beed, Nanded, Osmanabad Latur and Chandrapur districts sex-ratio has declined due to declining of the out migration of male population from these districts owing to establishments of agro-based and food processing industries and due to development of small-scale industries through M.I.D.C.

Districts which have large share of tribal population and which are economically backward have low sex-ratio in literates due to the poverty of the people and the traditional prejudice among the rural folks against sending girls to schools. While agriculturally prosperous districts with adequate educational facilities and modern outlook of society lead to have high sex-ratio amongst the literates. Shadow effect of Gr. Bombay and Christian society from Goa and a great deal of awareness among the people about their children, both male and female, literacy plays an important role in rural as well as urban areas of Raigarh, Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg districts for high sex-ratio in literates. Sex ratio in illiterates is found high in south and central Konkan, Western Maharashtra and north central part of the State. While sex-ratio in illiterate is found low in north western and north eastern parts of the State. Low sex-ratio in illiterates is found in more urbanised districts while economically backward and agricultural districts have high sex-ratio in illiterates.

It is found that in the State districts which are industrially developed have low sex-ratio in working population while industrially backward districts have high sex-ratio in working population owing to immigration of male population in industrially developed districts and out migration from backward districts.

The population of the State has been constantly increasing since 1921. The population of the State has gone

up from 1.94 crore in 1901 to 7.87 crores in 1991. The rural population has been increased rapidly since 1961 while rate of growth of population in urban areas was higher than that of in the rural areas in all the decades except 1901-11 and 1951-61. District level growth of population during the period of 1981-91 reveals that high growth rate of population (above 40 percent) has been observed in industrially developing districts like Thane, Pune, Aurangabad, Jalna, Nanded due to in-migration of population. While eastern and western parts of the State have low growth of population due to out-migration and declining birth rates.

Economically backward districts like Solapur, Jalna, Beed, Nanded have very high (above 25 percent) growth of rural population while Thane, Chandrapur, Sindhudurg districts have low growth of rural population. Agriculturally prosperous districts are recorded low growth of urban population. Raigarh, Nashik, Ahmednagar, Parbhani, Nanded and Osmanabad districts are recorded high growth of urban population owing to industrial expansion. Growth of urban population in Gr.Bombay district is low due to comparatively high death rate and restrictions on further industrial expansion which have checked the in-migration. Growth of urban population is low in industrially backward districts.

Out of total population of Maharashtra 54.5 percent is literates. While the share of male and female literacy is 64.59 percent and 43.77 percent respectively. In all the Census years in the State male literacy was higher than the

female literacy. However the growth rate of male literacy during 1951-91 was increased from 34.4 percent to 64.6 percent while growth rate of female literacy during the same period was increased from 9.8 percent to 43.8 percent. Free and compulsory primary education and more attention on literacy improvement after independence have helped the faster growth of literacy in the State. As per 1991 Census the male literacy in the State is ranging from 78.12 percent in Gr.Bombay district to 46.81 percent in Gadchiroli district. Low male literacy is found in those districts which have more tribal population and backward economy. Female literacy is found less than male literacy in all the districts of Maharashtra. Due to the poverty of the people and traditional prejudice among the rural folks against sending girls to schools, female literacy is very low in Gadchiroli, Yawatmal, Latur, Nanded, Beed, Parbhani, Jalna, Aurangabad, Solapur, Ahmednagar and Osmanabad districts. It is found that there is close relationship between economic development and level of female literacy.

Rural literacy in the State ranges from 66.3 percent in Sindhudurg district to 32.95 percent in Gadchiroli district. While rural male literacy ranges from 75.04 percent in Sindhudurg district to 44.42 percent in Gadchiroli district. And rural female literacy ranges from 58.73 percent in Sindhudurg district to 17.57 percent in Parbhani district. The differential in rural male - female literacy is very high in Amravati, Nanded, Parbhani, Jalna and Aurangabad districts.



while in Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg districts it is comparatively low. But taking into consideration, the differential in male - female literacy as a whole there is wide gap in it. The study reveals that the prejudice against the education of women is still continuing in many districts of the State.

The literacy in urban areas ranges from 78.77 percent in Sindhudurg district to 53.72 percent in Parbhani district. While urban male literacy ranges from 83.72 percent in Sindhudurg district to 63.4 percent in Jalna district and urban female literacy ranges from 73.8 percent in Sindhudurg district to 42.35 percent in Parbhani district. Wide range between urban male - female literacy is found in Solapur, Parbhani, Nanded, Osmanabad, Latur and Gadchiroli districts. Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg, Pune, Nagpur and Wardha districts have low differential in urban male - female literacy. Literacy is fairly high among both males and females in urban areas as compared to their rural counterparts.

However, in recent years, people have started realizing the necessity of giving education to their children especially in rural areas, so that they may be able to find employment in other fields of activity. The land holdings are now too small to provide work to all available hands in the villages. Under these circumstances, the farmers' attitude is changing. Thus, in recent years, the progress in literacy has been greater in rural areas than in urban places, reducing the rural - urban disparity in literacy to a notable extent.

But fact remains that the gap between the two is yet very wide.

As there is difference in socio-economic and other characteristics in the State, uneven picture is seen regarding the level of literacy also. High rate of literacy is found in those districts which are highly urbanised, industrially developed and agriculturally prosperous. Also high rate of literacy is found where male-female and urban - rural differential in literacy is less. Districts which are characterised by high ratio of workers in primary activities and lack of economic development have low rate of literacy. There is a strong inverse correlation between general literacy and male-female differential in literacy. The rural urban disparity in literacy is very wide showing that efforts towards modernization have as yet met only marginal success.

With 38.7 percent of the urban population (1991) the State of Maharashtra is most urbanised States in India. The urban population of the State has gone up from 32.17 lakh in 1901 to 304.96 lakhs in 1991. During this period urban population was increased by 847.96 percent. It was increased gradually upto 1931, then it was increased rapidly except in the decade 1951-61.

The growth of urban population ranges from 14.68 percent in Ratnagiri district to 341.31 percent in Gadchiroli district (1991). In Gr.Bombay district, high land prices, rising rents and Government's restrictions on establishment of new industries are affected to its low growth of urban

population (below 30 percent) while low growth of urban population in Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg, Dhule, Satara, Sangli, Solapur, Kolhapur, Wardha and Bhandara districts is due to comparatively low birth rate, high literacy and out migration. In Thane, Aurangabad, Chandrapur and Gadchiroli districts decadal growth of urban population is very high (above 70 percent) due to creation of new infra-structures, location of new industries, administrative and other economic activities, high birth rate, decrease in out migration of urban population.

The concentration of urban population is decreased by 5 percent in Gr.Bombay district. Other districts which show considerable declining trend of concentration of urban population (0.25 to 0.50 percent) are Nashik, Solapur, Kolhapur and Aurangabad. Thane district has recorded high rising concentration (4.34 percent) of urban population, due to overspill of industries from Gr.Bombay to adjoining Thane district. Raigarh, Nashik, Ahmednagar, Pune, Parbhani, Beed, Nanded, Latur, Osmanabad, Akola, Chandrapur and Gadchiroli districts are also recorded a rising concentration of urban population.

The Regional structure identified by composite index method reveals considerable differences in the level of urbanisation in Maharashtra from highly urbanised to least urbanised. Gr.Bombay, Thane, Pune and Nagpur districts are highly urbanised. Availability of socio-economic services, civic facilities and modern outlook of society in above

districts pull the people from the surrounding areas. Low to very low urbanisation is found in those districts where the economy is neither developed nor did any chances of an early change for the better progress in near future. It is found that in Western Maharashtra and in north Konkan urbanisation is more as compared to other parts of the State. Semi-arid districts with low transportation facilities and industrially backward are recorded least urbanisation. Agriculturally prosperous districts with some agro-based industries are moderately urbanised. The urbanisation is gradually decreasing from highly industrialised to least industrialised districts. Thus efforts must be given to decentralization of industrialisation for minimizing the regional disparity in industrial and economic development and that of urbanisation. Recent trend towards decentralization of industrialisation in Maharashtra is a good sign for minimizing the disparity in urbanisation.

The present study clearly reveals that there is a close relationship between physiography, quality of land, development of transport network, industries, irrigation facilities and nature of economic activities on the one hand and spatial distribution and growth of population and level of urbanisation on the other hand.

