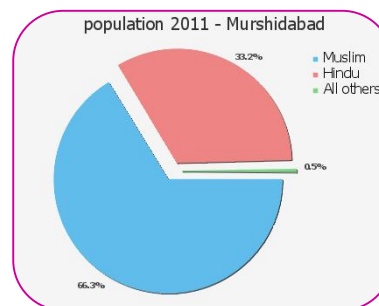




PATTERN OF POPULATION GROWTH IN MURSHIDABAD DISTRICT, WEST BENGAL IN THE LAST FIVE DECADES AND ITS IMPACT ON THE SOCIETY OF THE DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT:

This study encompasses the growth pattern of population and its impact on the social structure of Murshidabad district of West Bengal. A meticulous study through time-series analysis has been done to explore both positive and negative impact of population growth on the society and the pattern of change of the social system. Both secondary and primary data base have been employed to conduct the study. Secondary data has been collected from the Government and Non-government offices and institutions, while the primary data has been generated through questionnaire survey in the villages. Personal contact with the local people was made and perceptions of the local people have been recorded. Some selected villages were taken into account to generate field related data.

KEYWORDS : population growth, meticulous study, social structure, primary and secondary data, questionnaire survey.

INTRODUCTION

Rapid Population growth plays a ill role in the development process of the third world countries like India. In Murshidabad district there is a big problem of rapid population growth. The socio-economic growth of a nation is dependent on the growth of its population. The impact can be either negative or positive on the society and the pattern of change of the social system. Its effects on society very harmful. This study attempts to find out the pattern of population growth in Murshidabad District during last five decades. Rapid population growth adversely affects the social structure and natural resources. For social development it needs policy implementation in sustainable manner.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims and objectives of this study are the following:

- To examine the pattern of population growth in Murshidabad district during the last five decades.
- To find out the impact of population growth on the societal system of the district.
- To evaluate the impact of population growth on the socio-economy of the district, and
- to suggest remedial measures for the social development of the district.

DATABASE:

Both secondary and primary data have been used in this paper. Secondary data have been taken from the Census reports, Government and Non-government offices etc. and primary data has been generated using questionnaire survey in the village.

METHODOLOGY:

At the outset relevant literature were studied and a pilot survey was done through the areas of Murshidabad district. Selected areas of the villages were surveyed for achieve data. For Primary data generation door-to-door survey was conducted and recorded in the questionnaire and the secondary data was collected from Census Book of India (2001 & 2011), Report of the Ministry of Environment and Forest (West Bengal) Department, Irrigation Department, District Statistical Hand Book and Annual Reports. Photographs were taken where it was found important. Data collected and generated in the field have been processed using appropriate statistical method. The report in the form of a scientific paper is then prepared by analyzing and interpret the data.

The Study Area: The geographical extension of the district of Murshidabad is from 24°50'20" to 23°43'30"N Latitudes and from 88°46'00" to 87°49'17"E Longitudes with a total area of 5,324 km². It is a very densely populated district in the state. The district of Murshidabad is separated from Malda on the River of Ganga.

DISCUSSION:**The Pattern of Population Growth:**

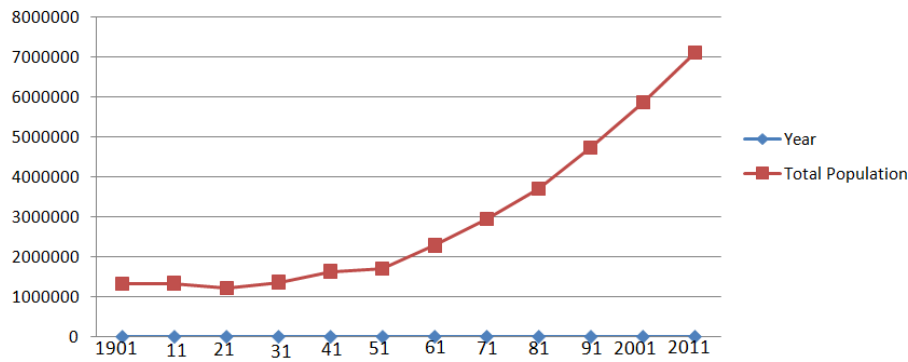
The rate of population growth in Murshidabad district, particularly in the recent decades, has been very high. The following table (Table – 1) shows the pattern of population growth in this district from 1901 onwards.

Table:1 Growth of Population in Murshidabad district on Different Census years from 1901 onwards in the District of Murshidabad.

Year	Total Population
1901	13,22,486
1911	13,45,073
1921	12,24,181
1931	13,70,677
1941	16,40,530
1951	17,15,759
1961	22,90,010
1971	29,40,204
1981	36,97,552
1991	47,40,149
2001	58,66,569
2011	71,03,807

Source: Census of India

The above data as has been shown diagrammatically below clearly demonstrates the trend of population grown during the last five decades.



Source : Census of India

Fig. – 1: Growth of Population in Murshidabad district on Different Census years from 1901 onwards in the District of Murshidabad.

In the above graph it can be seen that the growth of population in this district was normal from 1901 to 1961 and thereafter the growth rate has been very high which continues till date.

Population growth pattern has been studied in the selected village namely Rambagh using the method of Primary survey. The table as generated is given below.

**Table 2: Length of time the people living in the area under Lalgola block.(Murshidabad)
Sample size – 200 persons**

Length of time	Nos. of Respondents	% of the total
Since independence	8	4
Since 1971	32	16
Since 1981	36	18
Since 1991	28	14
Since 2001	44	22
Since 2011	52	26

Source: Data generated in the field

It is the normal picture of almost all the villages of Murshidabad those located closed to the Bangladesh border.



Plate 1: An infield door-to-door questionnaire survey by the author.

Impact of population growth on Society:

The social impact as observed are of two types: negative and positive. These impacts include:

NEGATIVE IMPACT OF POPULATION GROWTH ON SOCIETY:**(1) Declines trend of Agricultural Development:**

In Murshidabad district mostly people live in rural areas and their main occupation is agriculture and the rapid population increases the land-man ratio are disturbed. Per capita availability of land for cultivation declined from 1.1 acre in 1911 to 0.6 acre in 1971 in India. It leads to the occurrence of disguised unemployment and underemployment in the agricultural sectors.

The declines trend of agricultural production of Murshidabad district data is represented below:

Table 3: Production of Principal Crops of Murshidabad district (In Thousand Tonnes)

Crops	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Rice	1030.6	1142.4	1123.7	1040.4	861.7
Aus	62.2	65.1	73.6	35.2	23.4
Aman	492.8	576.4	633.1	593.9	439.3
Boro	475.6	500.9	417.0	411.3	399.0
Wheat	270.3	313.4	258.3	284.6	286.4
Barley	0.4	0.5	1.0	0.5	0.4
Maize	34.4	19.5	17.9	18.1	16.9
Other Cereals	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.6	--
Gram	5.5	5.1	3.6	4.9	4.4
Tur	0.1	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.2
Other Pulses	30.5	36.2	25.2	31.8	41.1
Total Food Grains	1372.5	1518.2	1430.4	1381.1	1211.1

Crops	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Rapeseed & Mustard	71.3	76.6	65.3	111.0	97.7
Linseed	\$	0.1	\$	\$	\$
Other oil seeds	14.9	13.6	16.7	17.1	14.8
Total oil seeds	86.2	90.3	82.0	128.1	112.5

Crops	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Jute	1972.0	1981.9	1785.9	2589.6	2343.3
Mesta	4.1	1.5	0.8	2.3	1.0
Total Fibers	1976.1	1983.4	1786.7	2591.9	2344.3

Source: District Statistical Hand Book, Murshidabad, 2010-11.

Due to rapid growth of population agricultural land area decreased over time for settlement and industrial needs.

(2) Adverse Effect on per Capital Income :

Rapid growth of population directly effects per capita income in Murshidabad district. Population growth exceeds the rate of economic growth, usually found in the case of the study area, per capita income must fall. Population density indicates how much pressure on land . Population density of the study area are given below.

Table 4 : Density of Population in Murshidabad District (1961-2011) (Persons / sq.Km.)

Year	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Population Density	427	550	695	890	1102	1334

Source: Census of India.

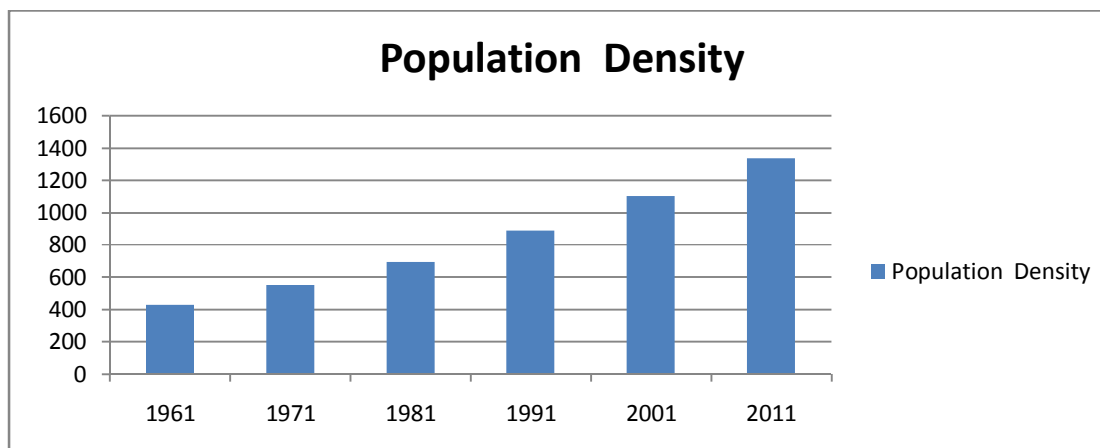


Fig. 2: Population Density of the Murshidabad District (1961-2011)(Persons per sq.km)

Large number of population with high density of population causes shortage of food, shelter and clothes. It affects social structure. High density of population also indirectly causes of low per Capital Income.

3) Increase of Poverty:

Poverty is multifaceted concept, which may include social, economic , political elements etc. In the study area the contributory factors for poverty are.

- Economic backwardness
- Lower level of education
- Lack of control in local food.

Most of the peoples of the study area are dependent on Beedi work and they live below poverty level (BPL). Undoubtedly rapid population growth is the important cause for poverty. It affects the society as well.

4) Increase of Unemployment

Unemployment is another issue which affects society to a great extent and it has a direct relationship with rapid population growth. It is also interrelated with the level of education. Literacy is the reflection of status of the society, economy etc. Total literacy rate of the district of Murshidabad is 68%, according to 2011 census (male literacy 71%, female literacy 64%) and 41,34,584 peoples are literate. Determinants of literacy in the study area are:

- (1) Low standard of living,
- (2) Very Low status of women in the society,
- (3) Very Slow rate of technological advancement, and
- (4) Unplanned growth of urbanization.

Depending on the above conditions literacy rate could not have been improved. Also the level of education affects the standard of living. Unemployment is a main problem of the area. In the study area

most of the people are engaged in agricultural work , household work, labour in industry and work in the brick fields. As a result the family dependency ratio is also very high.

5) Increases of social problems:

In the study social problems are recorded in the Murshidabad Crime Report through the year 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 respectively. The following table displays the data about social problems in the district.

Table 5: Persons Convicted and acquitted for different classes of offence in Murshidabad district

<i>Class of offence</i>	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Murder	160	119	136	117	105
Dacoity	48	36	67	6	2
Robbery	52	71	57	22	19
Burglary	41	77	601	6	3
Rioting	534	378	262	309	84
Theft	1118	1298	1542	936	947
Offences against women	4320	4237	5167	4964	5286
Minor offence	1295	1419	2322	9857	10188
Others	6324	6774	3340	-	-
Total	13892	14409	13494	16217	16634

Source: District Statistical Handbook, 2014

Among all the crimes, offences against women and minor offence are very high amount than all other types of offence. It also cause negative impact on society and hamper the social stability and social development of the study area.

(6) Adverse effect on Environment:

Rapid population growth affects to the environmental change. High population growth leads to the cutting of trees for cultivation and new buildings construction leading to several environmental changes. Amount of rainfall every years are decrease and temperature are increase. So the result in polluted air, water, soil etc . *Rapid* Growth of population creates environmental degradation and pollution. Solid and liquid wastes are generated in growing amounts and other problems in the societal environment in Murshidabad district.

(7) Declines Standard of living:

The standard of living is determined by their per capita income. The factors affecting per capita income in relation to population growth equally apply to the standard of living. In the study area the increase in population leads to an increased demand for food product , but their supply cannot be increase due to the lack of some factors like raw materials, capital etc. So the standard of living is very low in Murshidabad District.

(8) Declines of Social Infrastructure: Social Infrastructure means the status of Educational facilities, medical aid , roads , electricity, drinking water etc basic facilities .Data are given below:

Table 6 : District wise Human Development Index in West Bengal, 2004

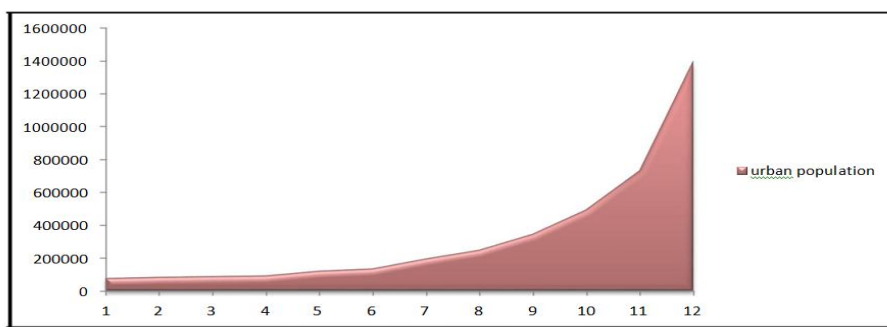
District	Health index	Income index	Education index	HDI	HDI rank	GDI	GDI rank
Darjeeling	0.73	0.49	0.72	0.65	4	0.600	2
Jalpaiguri	0.61	0.38	0.60	0.53	10	0.492	11
Koch Behar	0.50	0.41	0.65	0.52	11	0.471	13
Dinajpur	0.62	0.39	0.53	0.51	13	0.478	12
Malda	0.49	0.36	0.48	0.44	17	0.416	17
Murshidabad	0.57	0.29	0.52	0.46	15	0.423	16
Birbhum	0.53	0.27	0.61	0.47	14	0.435	14
Bardhaman	0.74	0.47	0.71	0.64	5	0.560	7
Nadia	0.65	0.41	0.66	0.57	9	0.506	9
N.24 pgs	0.72	0.49	0.76	0.66	3	0.564	6
Hugli	0.77	0.46	0.67	0.63	6	0.581	3
Bankura	0.67	0.26	0.62	0.52	11	0.494	10
Purulia	0.61	0.18	0.55	0.45	16	0.424	15
Medinipur	0.68	0.45	0.74	0.62	7	0.578	4
Haora	0.77	0.53	0.75	0.68	2	0.570	5
Kalkata	0.82	0.73	0.80	0.78	1	0.642	1
S.24 Pgs.	0.71	0.40	0.68	0.60	8	0.521	8
West Bengal	0.70	0.43	0.69	0.61		0.549	

Source: District Human Development Report, 2008.

Positive impact of population growth on society:

1) Increase of Urbanization:

Urbanization means the gradual increase in the proportion of people living in urban areas . Urbanization also effects the society to a certain extent. It is associated with rapid population growth, pressure on land etc. The rate of urbanization in the study area over the various census years is shown below:



Source: Census of India (various years)

Fig. 3: Distribution of Urban Population in Murshidabad District (1901-2011)
(Population in number)

The graph above shows the pattern of urban population growth in Murshidabad district. It can mentioned that with the growth of population the district has become industrially developed as well in recent years.

(2) Helpful for Defence : Rapid growth of population makes it possible to mobilize enough people to defend the integrity of the District of Murshidabad in times of war and controls border sides emergencies such as Bangladesh and Jammu-Kashmir borders .

(3) Increase in labor Market : Growth of population ensures increase in the labor force in Murshidabad district. Data are given below :

Table 7 : Percentage of Total Workers (Main+ Marginal) to Total Population in Murshidabad

Year	Total Workers	Rural Workers	Urban Workers
1951	29.4	29.1	32.2
1961	29.0	29.2	27.0
1971	25.9	26.0	25.0
1981	28.8	28.9	27.7
1991	31.5	31.4	32.4
2001	34.2	33.5	39.1
2011	36.5	35.2	41.6

Sources : Census of India.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above findings and assessment made thereby the following policy recommendations can be made.

- Educated sections of the society as well as the local leaders may take initiative to campaign programme to convince people at large about harmful effects of rapid population growth on the society.
- Spread education and needs societal activities.
- Needs sustainable development to reduce natural resource depletion and sustain them for future generation.
- Preserve existing forest, needs afforestation as well as social and agro-forestry.
- In the study area reduce wastage of material and apply system for recycling of left out materials.
- Make compulsory the environmental education at the H.S school level.
- In the study area Arrange for awareness camps on a regular basis .
- Needs more new construction of roads, hospital, colleges & University, and drinking water in the study area.

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