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THE STUDY OF LITERACY RATE IN PUNE DISTRICT OF MAHARASHTRA (2001-2011)

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Abstract: -

The study of literacy in Pune district between 2001 and 2011 highlights the dynamics of socio-economic transformation in one of Maharashtra's most rapidly developing regions. Literacy, a vital indicator of human resource development, directly influences economic growth, social mobility, and political participation. This research, based on secondary data from the Census of India and district-level statistical sources, examines the spatial and temporal changes in literacy across 14 tahsils of Pune district. Findings reveal a significant rise in overall literacy from 69.67% in 2001 to 76.05% in 2011, although regional disparities persist. High literacy growth was particularly evident in tahsils such as Velhe, Indapur, Ambegoan, and Junnar, where improvements in irrigation, industrial activity, and educational infrastructure played crucial roles. In contrast, Pune City and Haveli, already highly literate, recorded modest gains. The study demonstrates that uneven socio-economic development, infrastructural facilities, and income levels significantly shaped literacy trends. Overall, the findings emphasize the importance of targeted policy measures to bridge regional educational gaps and ensure inclusive growth.

Keywords:- Literacy Rate, Human Resource Development, Pune District, Spatio-Temporal Analysis, Socio-Economic Development, Census of India, Regional Disparities, Educational Infrastructure

Introduction:

Literacy and education are plausibly key indicators of development in society. Spread and diffusion of literacy is generally associated with essential traits of today's civilisation such as modernisation, urbanisation, industrialisation, communication and commerce (Census of India, 1991).

Ghosh (1985) mentioned that, education is one of the important needs of life. The low degree of literacy is an obstacle to economic growth. Investment in education is a measure of the future development of the country. Formal schooling is a good index of a population's educational attainment. The most

basic minimum measurement of educational status is the degree of literacy. But it is very difficult to measure the degree of literacy in accurate term.

In international usage, literacy is defined as the ability to read and write at least a simple message in any language. Literacy plays a very crucial role in the social and economic development in a country. A low level of literacy in a population retreads the progress along the path of social and economic development and political power. Illiteracy, particularly among adults in society, results in stagnation of technology, social cultural lags, weakens national security, and overall stagnation of the economic progress (Hassan M. I., 2005). Chandana and Sindhu (1980) stated that literacy is that qualitative attribute of population which is a fairly reliable index of the socio-economic development of an area and the lack of this keeps the population economically poor and mentally isolated. Literacy and education are also the indices of human resource development (Chandana R.C. and Sindhu M.S., 1980).

The quality of population in the given country is a pre-requisite for country's economic development. No period in the history of economic thought has gained more importance to improve the quality of population than the present period. The quality of population in a country largely depends on education attained by the population of that country. Education, more particularly, influences the demographic pattern and health practices besides resulting in political and economic development of a country. The rate of literacy, in short, is considered to be a good indicator of development in any given society. (K. Madhu Babu Et. all, 2004)

As said above, literacy is an important indicator of quality of population of any region. Therefore, attempt is made here to "The study of literacy in Pune district of Maharashtra -2001-2011"

Study Region:

For the present investigation Pune district is selected as a study region. The Pune district is one of the agricultural district in the Maharashtra state. Geographically Pune district is located between 17º 54' N to 19º 24' N latitude and 73º 19' E to 75º 10' E longitude. The total geographical area of the Pune district is 15,642 sq.km. The proportion of area of Pune district as compare to Maharashtra is about five (5.08 %) per cent. The district is surrounded by Ahamadnagar district to the north and east, Pune district in the southeast, Satara district in the south, Raigarh district in the west and Thane district in the northwest.

It is administratively sub-divided into 14 tahsils namely, Ambegaon, Baramati, Bhor, Daund, Haveli, Indapur, Junnar, Khed, Mawal, Mulshi, Pune City, Purandar, Shirur, Velhe etc. According to the 2011 census, Pune district has 14 tehsils having 35 towns and 1877 villages. The Pune district is a part of Bhima basin.The average annual rainfall in the district is 722 mm. Due to uneven physiography, rainfall is unequally distributed in study region.

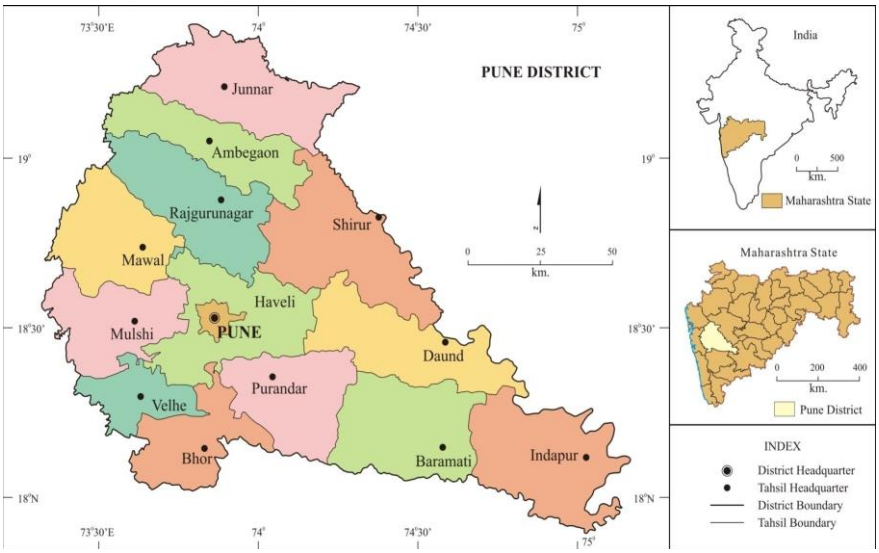

Fig. No. 01.

Objective:

The main objective of this paper is, to study the literacy rate in Pune district and spatio-temporal changes there in.

Database and Methodology:

The study was conducted in the Pune district of Maharashtra state. For the purpose of the study, only secondary information was collected from different sources. Data regarded to tahsil wise literacy rate and geographical information collected through Agriculture Department, District statistical Department of Pune, Census of India, 2001 & 2011 and Socio-economic abstract of Pune district for the year 2001 and 2011

Spatio-Temporal Changes in Literacy rate in Pune District

Literacy is one of the important factors which encourage adoption of new and modern technology. Literacy is a very important factor in socio-economic, cultural and political development in any region. Pune district is known as the home of education. Here, the main objective of this research is to study literacy rate in Pune district and spatio-temporal changes there in. The table no. 1 shows that literacy rate in Pune district during the period of 2001 and 2011

Table No. 01

Tahsil Wise Literacy rate in in Pune District (2001 and 2011)

Sr. No	Tahsil	Literacy (%) 2001	Literacy (%) 2011	Changes
1	Junnar	64.63%	74.79%	10.16%
2	Ambegaon	63.91%	74.37%	10.46%
3	Khed	61.82%	70.70%	8.88%
4	Shirur	62.51%	72.13%	9.62%
5	Maval	64.94%	72.20%	7.26%
6	Mulshi	57.54%	67.78%	10.24%

7	Haveli	71.79%	76.73%	4.94%
8	Pune City	76.29%	80.05%	3.76%
9	Daund	62.62%	69.38%	6.76%
10	Purandhar	67.23%	73.78%	6.55%
11	Velhe	52.24%	67.30%	15.06%
12	Bhor	64.67%	72.40%	7.73%
13	Baramati	65.01%	73.14%	8.13%
14	Indapur	60.58%	71.79%	11.21%
	Pune District	69.67%	76.05%	6.38%

Source: 1) Complied by Researcher. 2) Socio economic Abstract of Solapur district 2001and 2011.

Table 01 reveals that the spatial distribution of literacy was not uniform in the study region. The region as a whole has 69.67 percent literacy in 2001 that of state was 64.91. The figure No. 2 indicates that the low literacy was found in Mulshi and Velhe tahsil i.e. below 60 percent. The moderate literacy was found in Junnar, Ambegoan, Khed, Shirur, Maval, Purandar, Bhor, Daund, Baramati and Indapur tahsil 60hsil i.e. 70 to 70 percent, while it is high in Haveli and Pune city tahsil i.e. above 70 percent

The figure No.2 exhibits that during 2011, the region as whole has 76.05 percent literacy that of state is 82.30, but spatial distribution varies from tahsil to tahsil, the low literacy was found in Mulshi, Daund and Velhe tahsil i.e. below 70 percent due to lower development of educational facilities and low parental income. The moderate literacy was noticed in Junnar, Ambegoan, Khed, Shirur, Maval, Purandar, Bhor, Baramati and Indapur tahsil i.e. 70 to 75 percent. The high literacy was experienced in Haveli and Pune city tahsil i.e. above 75 percent due to development of education facility and industrial development.

During the period of investigation literacy is increased by +06.38 percent in study region because under the five-year plan Government of India and Maharashtra provided various educational facilities to every tahsil therefore, rate of literacy increased to a greater extent in the study region. The figure 1 indicates that low positive change was found only in Pune city tahsil i.e. below 5 percent. The moderate positive change in literacy was recorded in Khed, Shirur, Maval, Daund, Purandar, Bhor and Baramati tahsil i.e.5 to 10 percent during the period of investigation, while high positive change in literacy i.e. above 22.11 percent was recorded in Junnar, Ambegoan, Indapur, Mulshi, Velhe tahsil from 2001 to 2011 because of industrial development and development surface irrigation leads to agriculture development in turn increase in parental income.

This uneven development underscores the dual character of Pune district: a hub of education and industry in urban centres contrasted with socio-economically disadvantaged rural tahsils. Thus, the study highlights the necessity of geographically balanced educational planning and policy execution.

Conclusion:

The literacy landscape of Pune district between 2001 and 2011 reveals steady progress but persistent disparities. While the district's overall literacy rose by 6.38%, the growth was uneven across tahsils. Regions with infrastructural and industrial development showed higher improvements, whereas economically weaker tahsils faced challenges in bridging the gap. The findings establish that literacy is strongly linked to socio-economic factors such as income, employment, urbanization, and government intervention. Ensuring equitable access to education, strengthening rural infrastructure, and enhancing livelihood opportunities remain crucial for sustainable human development. Bridging the rural-urban divide in literacy will be pivotal for the district's long-term progress.

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