

VARIATION IN POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS IN SIRAHA DISTRICT

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Abstract

Nepal's population has experienced a steady growth for the past several decades. The growing population, at alarming state in Siraha (Nepal), is an indicator of the change in population status. The population of Siraha district is slow growing than the country. To sketch the picture of Siraha population status, indicators obtained from census like size, growth rate, density, distribution, composition, dependency ratio, age at marriage, Absentees, literacy status, religion, caste/ethnicity as well as the major mother tongue.

Key words

Population size; growth rate; density; sex ratio; absentees

Introduction

Population size and the growth rate of population is a one of the most important population characteristics indicators. Population size of Siraha district in 2011 stands at 637,328 male populations and female populations were 310,101 and 327,227 respectively. Female population is slightly outnumbered males with sex ratio 94.8 males per 100 females which is lower than past. The growth rate of population is still high to census 2001 in Siraha district. It was always over 2 percent per annum ever since the census count is conducted in actual scientific way in 1961. But in census 2011 it has decreased from 2.17 percent to 1.07 percent per annum which is drastic very low growth rate in Siraha.

The Population distribution by rural and urban areas is also an important population characteristic. Majority of Siraha people are living in rural areas. Though the proportion of population living in rural area is declining in Siraha over time, it is still more than 90.2 percent in 2011. The pressure of population is increasing in Siraha, the high increasing pattern is observed that is 536.5 persons per sq. km (CBS, 2012).

Age distribution, age dependency ratio and age at marriage are also significant indicators of population characteristics. The proportion of child population is declining, but it is still very high. The young age dependency ratio is declined, but old age dependency ratio is observed increased. A significant increase

in age at marriage particularly for females though age at marriage is observed increasing for both males and females over the period, while age at marriage is still low for females in Siraha. It is an indicator of early marriage practice in Siraha. Total number of absent population was found to be 45,790 in the census 2011 against 8,981 in the census 2001 (CBS, 2014).

Literacy status, occupation and marital status are very crucial population characteristics. Literacy rate is increasing over time. The major occupation of Siraha people is still agriculture; however its share is declining over period. Besides these, religion, caste/ ethnicity and mother tongue are also basic characteristics of population. The proportion of Hindu is found declining over the period and other religious followers are increasing but it is still predominant religion. The proportion of Yadav is highest in Siraha with 24.38 percent in 2011. The other major groups are as follows: Muslim, Mushahar, Koiri, Teli, Tharu, Chamar and Dhanuk. Migrated hill origin caste/ ethnic groups in Siraha are Brahmin, Chhetri, Newar, Magar and Tamang. The Maithili speakers as mother tongue are highest at Siraha. Variation in population characteristics indicates the changing picture of Siraha. The study aims to analyse some population characteristics of Siraha district of Nepal. It is also an objective to sketch the picture of Siraha population status.

Methods

Siraha district is lying in between the geographical co-ordinates extending within latitude 26°33' N to 26°55' N and longitude 86°06' E to 86°26' E (CBS, 2013). The district has an area of 1188 Sq. Km. The District is bordered with Saptari district in the east, Udayapur district in the north, Bihar province of India in the south and Dhanusa district in the west. The head quarter of the district is Siraha. The district has 106 VDCs and two Municipalities named Siraha and Lahan.

The study is based on the secondary data collected from different censuses in Nepal. The data regarding the population characteristics of Siraha district has been taken from the district profile published by CBS and NPHC 2011. The study is descriptive in nature. The relevant information have been organized and classified.

Results and discussion

Population size, its growth rate and density

The population of Siraha district in 2011 stands at 637,328 and male populations and female populations were 310,101 and 327,227 respectively. Female population is accounts for 51.34 percent while the male population is 48.66 percent. It indicates that most of people from Siraha district have migrated to either foreign countries and within nation elsewhere (Fig. 1).

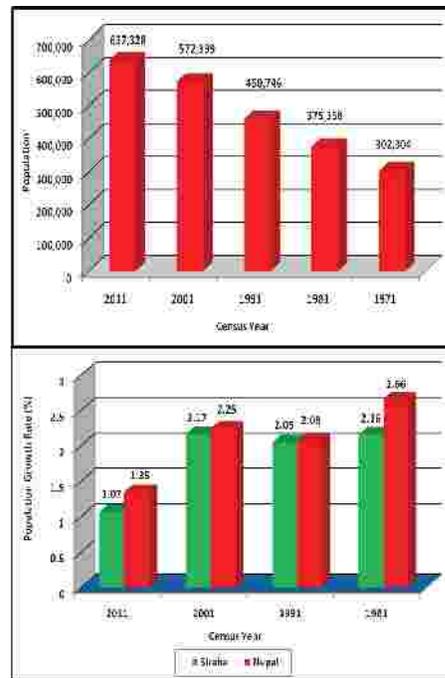


Fig. 1: population size (2011-2011) & population growth rate (1981-2011).

Source: CBS, 2003, Vol. I and CBS, 2012, Vol. 01, NPHC, 2011

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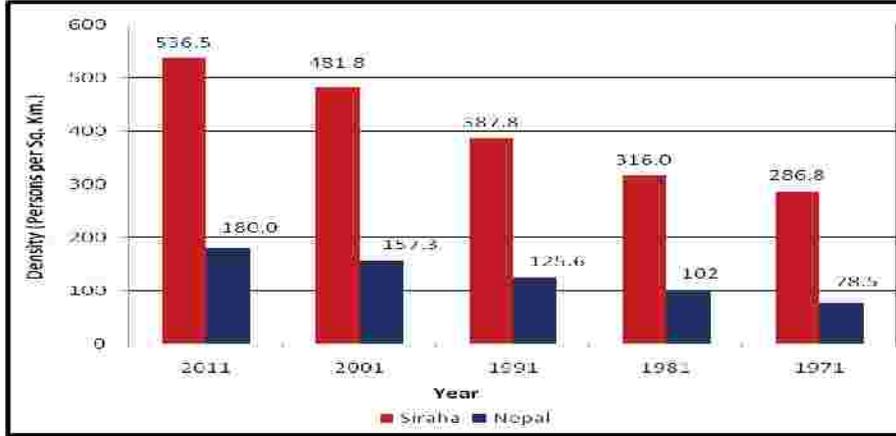
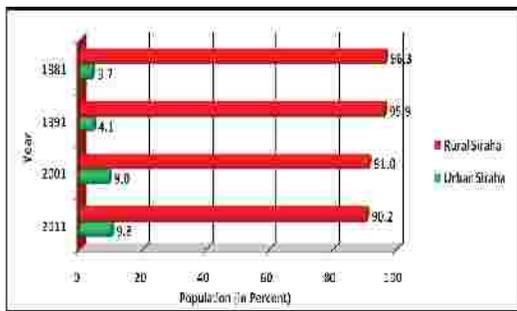


Fig 2: Density of Siraha & Nepal, 1971-2011

The annual growth rate during 1991–2001 of Siraha was 2.17 percent while during 1971–1981 it was 2.05 percent (Fig 1.). It shows the population of Siraha growing quite rapidly than during past 30 years. The population of Siraha is growing very rapidly till to the Tenth Census of Nepal conducted in 2001. It was always over 2 percent per annum ever to the census 2001. But in the census 2011 it was growing slowly at the rate of 1.07 percent per annum. The pressure of population is increasing in Siraha, the high increasing pattern is observed in Siraha density from 1971 to 2011(Fig. 2). It is mainly due to flow of people from mountain and Hill to Siraha.

Population distribution by urban and rural

The proportion of urban population in



Source: CBS, 2003, Vol. I and CBS, 2012, NPHC, 2011, Vol. 01

Fig 3: Population Distribution by Urban & Rural, 1981-2011

Siraha was reported 9.8 percent in 2011. The proportion of urban population is increasing since the census 1981 but highly increased in the census 2001 due to adding urban centre. The proportion of urban population of Siraha is increasing over time at each census. The proportion of urban population may be the result of migration of rural to urban area (Fig. 3).

Table 1 shows that sex ratio of Siraha is 94.8 males per 100 females in the census 2011 indicating that overall females outnumbered males, which is lower than 105 in the census1991. It is lowest than past. It may be due to the high number of male migration from Siraha districts of the country to foreign countries as well as neighbors' country India or within the country.

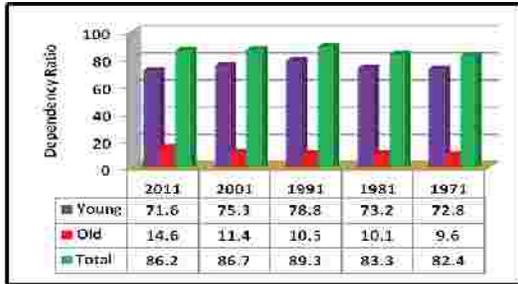
Table 1: Sex ratio of Siraha, 1971- 2011

| Census Year | Sex Ratio |
|-------------|-----------|
| 2011 | 94.8 |
| 2001 | 105.6 |
| 1991 | 105.2 |
| 1981 | 108.1 |
| 1971 | 102.9 |

Source: CBS, 2003, Vol. I and CBS, 2012, NPHC, 2011, Vol. 01

Age dependency ratio

The young age dependency ratio of Siraha is declined at 71.6 in 2011 from 75.3 in 2001 and from 78.8 in the census 1991, but old age dependency ratio is observed increased since 1971 from 9.6 to 14.6 in the census 2011(Fig.4).



Source: CBS, 2003, Vol. I and CBS, 2012, NPHC, 2011, Vol. 01

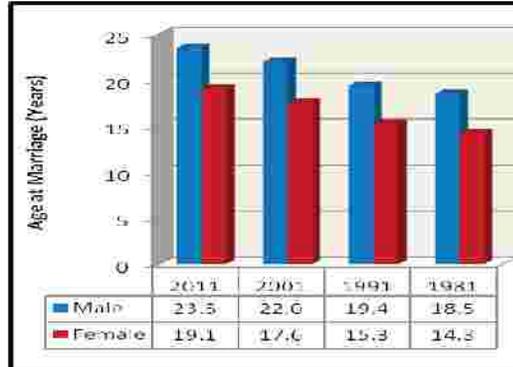
The total dependency ratio is still 86.2 in the census 2011 which can be considered as high. It means that every 100 people of working age have to look after 86.2 young and old age population in terms of food, clothes, health, education, housing etc.

Age at marriage

A significant increase in age at marriage particularly for females though age at marriage is observed increasing for both males and females over the period. It is 23.5 years for males and 19.1 years for females in 2011. Age at marriage for females is increased more years than males, that is, from 14.3 and 18.5 years in 1981 to 19.1 and 23.5 years in 2011 for females and males respectively (Fig.5). The increase in age at marriage may contribute to lower the fertility but it is still low age at marriage of females at Siraha.

Absentee population

Total number of absent population was found to be 1,921,494 in 2011 against 762,181 in 2001 in Nepal. In the Siraha district, 31.19 percent of households (36,787) reported that at least one



Source: CBS, 2003, Vol. I and CBS, 2012, NPHC, 2011, Vol. 01

Fig.5 :Age at marriage, 1971-2011

member of their household is absent or living out of the country in the census 2011 which is more than national figure (25.42 percent; 1,378,678 households i.e. One and every four households). Total number of absent population was found to be 45,790 in the census 2011 against 8,981 in the census 2001.

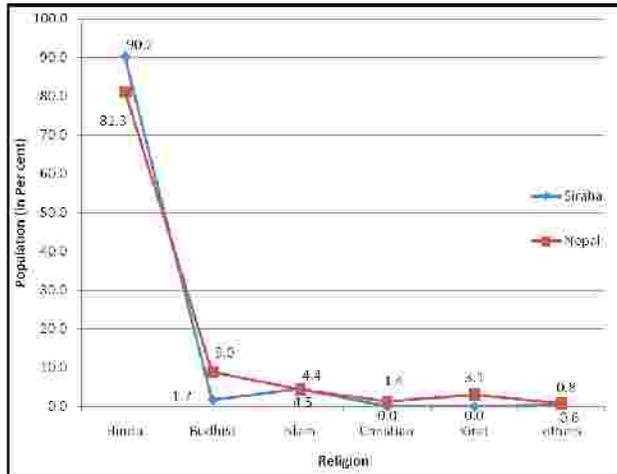
Literacy status

Literacy rate of Siraha is increasing from 12.0 percent in 1971 to 50.1 percent in 2011. The literacy rate for female (from 2.6% to 39.2%) is increased by more than thirteen times in the period 1971 – 2011 during 40 years but literacy rate of male (from 21.0% to 61.8%) is increased to only more than three times during the same period. The data on literacy rate show that it is improving gradually in Siraha; it is still lower than the national level (Total; 65.9, Male; 75.1 and Female; 57.4).

Religion

Fig. 6 presents that followers of Hindu constitute 90.2 percent in Siraha in 2011 and while proportion Buddhism people is 1.7 percent and followers of Islam 4.5 percent. Christianity and Kirat constitute very low percent in Siraha district. The proportion of Hindu is found declining over the period and other religious followers are increasing but it

VARIATION IN POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS IN SIRAHA DISTRICT



Source: CBS, 1995, 2003, Vol. I & CBS, 2012, NPHC, 2011, Vol. 01

Fig 6: Population Distribution by Religion, Siraha, Nepal, 2011

is still predominant Hindu religious in Siraha.

Major caste / ethnicity

There are 84 caste/ethnic groups reported in the Siraha district in the census 2011. The proportion of Yadav is highest in Siraha with 24.38 percent in the census 2011 followed by Musalman (7.49%), Musahar (6.27%), Koiri (6.01%), Chamar (5.67%), Teli (4.80%), Tharu (4.14%), Dhanuk (3.28%), Sudhi (2.75%), Mallah (2.52%), Kewat, Khatwe and Tatma (2.18%), Haluwai (2.07%), Danuwar (1.71%), Hajam (1.38%), Baraee (1.34%), Kathbaniyan (1.01%) and other Madhesi (Terai originated) caste groups are below one percent in Siraha. Hill originated caste/ethnicity are Tamang (1.10%), Magar (1.09%), and Chhetri (1.03%).

Table. 2 Populations by mother tongue/languages in Siraha, 2011

| Mother Tongue/ Languages | Population 2011 | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | Total | | Male | | Female | |
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Maithili | 546,925 | 85.82 | 266,502 | 85.94 | 280,423 | 85.70 |
| Nepali | 27,358 | 4.29 | 13,614 | 4.39 | 13,744 | 4.20 |
| Urdu | 22,934 | 3.60 | 10,617 | 3.42 | 12,317 | 3.76 |
| Tharu | 17,265 | 2.71 | 8,277 | 2.67 | 8,988 | 2.75 |
| Tamang | 6,093 | 0.96 | 2,910 | 0.96 | 3,123 | 0.95 |
| Magar | 5,209 | 0.82 | 2,529 | 0.82 | 2,680 | 0.82 |
| Danuwar | 1,538 | 0.24 | 756 | 0.24 | 782 | 0.24 |
| Sunuwar | 1,281 | 0.20 | 624 | 0.20 | 657 | 0.20 |
| Newari | 1,212 | 0.20 | 639 | 0.21 | 633 | 0.19 |
| Uranw/Urau | 839 | 0.13 | 395 | 0.13 | 444 | 0.14 |
| Rai | 644 | 0.10 | 298 | 0.10 | 346 | 0.11 |
| Hindi | 608 | 0.10 | 264 | 0.09 | 344 | 0.11 |
| Rajasthani | 404 | 0.06 | 212 | 0.07 | 192 | 0.06 |
| Bhojpuri | 315 | 0.05 | 156 | 0.05 | 159 | 0.05 |
| Doteli | 313 | 0.05 | 155 | 0.05 | 158 | 0.05 |
| Limbu | 260 | 0.04 | 118 | 0.04 | 142 | 0.04 |
| Magahi | 245 | 0.04 | 109 | 0.04 | 136 | 0.04 |
| Bangla | 235 | 0.04 | 121 | 0.04 | 108 | 0.03 |
| Others | 3,590 | 0.56 | 1,739 | 0.56 | 1,851 | 0.57 |
| Total | 637,328 | 100.00 | 310,101 | 100.00 | 327,227 | 100.00 |

And other Hill originated caste/ethnicity is below one percent.

Major mother tongue

Table 2 shows that there are 31 languages spoken as mother tongue reported in Census 2011 in the Siraha district. The Maithili speakers as mother tongue are highest at Siraha which is followed by Nepali, Urdu, Tharu, Tamang, Magar, Danuwar, Sunuwar, Newari, Urau, Rai, Hindi etc. Nepali speakers are slightly declined whereas other speakers increased slightly.

Conclusion

Population of Sirahadistrict was 637,328 (male: 310,101 and female: 327,227) with sex ratio 94.8 males per 100 females. Population growth rate is high to the census 2001 in Siraha district. It was always over 2 percent per annum ever since the census count is conducted in actual scientific way in 1961. But in census 2011 it has decreased from 2.17 percent to 1.07 percent per annum which is drastic very low growth rate in Siraha. Population density is 536.5 per sq. km. and population is decreasing in rural area over time but it is still rural in character with 90.2 percent.

The total dependency ratio is still 86.2 in the census 2011 which can be considered as high. It means that every 100 people of working age have to look after 86.2 young and old age population in terms of food, clothes, health, education, housing etc.

The increase in age at marriage may contribute to lower the fertility but it is still low age at marriage of females at Siraha. Age at marriage for girls in Siraha (19.1 years) is lower than the nation (20.6 years).

In Siraha district, 31.19 percent of households (36,787) reported that at least one member of their household is living out of the country in the census 2011 which is more than national figure (25.42 percent; 1,378,678 households i.e. One and every four households).

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