Research Article

DISPARITIES IN SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: A BLOCK LEVEL STUDY OF PURBA MEDINIPUR DISTRICT, WEST BENGAL, INDIA

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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

A social scientist has their own perception of development processes. Economic development seems to be of little relevance in the absence of social development. Social development essentially is one of dimensions focusing on overall development. Social development has its focus on development of people in terms of their mutual relations and the institutional and structural change in the society. The two most significant parameters of measuring social development include quality of life and social justice. The quality of life in this context is measured in terms of social harmony and social cohesion and social justices that have it focus on equal right and opportunities to all segments of a society. Social development generally includes the basic social needs which are very essential to lead a healthy lifestyle within society. This paper emphasis on block level disparity of social development of Purba Medinipur district. Composite index is taken into consideration for analysis of development scenario at block level. Ranks are assigning according to composite development value. Haldia block holds the first (58.23) position where as Khejuri-II block rank 25th (49.38) in social development.

INTRODUCTION

The social indicators play significant role in the development process of a region. The present study aimed at identifying the inter-block regional disparity and imbalances in the levels of social development in Purba Medinipur district. In addition to the aggregate picture of regional disparity in the levels of social development, differential patterns of sectoral development in education, health and public-utility are taken into consideration to understand the spatial pattern. It further attempts to identify the contributory geographical and other important factors which in turn would account for such imbalances in spatial social pattern. Social Development Index (SDI) is important to know the aggregate picture of social development based on all the indicators already choosen for different sectors, to understand the nature and pattern of spatial inequality.

Study Area

Purba Medinipur District came into existence after bifurcation of erstwhile Midnapur on and from January 1, 2002. This district is situated on the southern side of the State of West Bengal. The total area of the district is 4151.64 square kilometres. It exists between 21°38' N to 22°31' N and 87°27'

E to 88°12' E. The District is surrounded by Ghatal Sub-division of Paschim Medinipur District in the north, Bay of Bengal in the south, Paschim Medinipur district in the west and Hoogly-Rupnarayan river in the East (Rupnarayan river separates this district from Howrah). Tamluk, Haldia, Contai and Egra are its 4 Subdivisions. The district comprises of 25 Blocks and 5 Municipalities, namely Panskura, Tamluk, Egra, Contai and Haldia.

Objectives

The major objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To identify the magnitude of block wise imbalances in social development in Purba Medinipur.
2. To study the various aspect of disparity in social development.
3. To find out the root causes of this disparity and its spatial variation and pattern in this district.
4. To understand the nature and pattern of spatial inequality in terms of social development.

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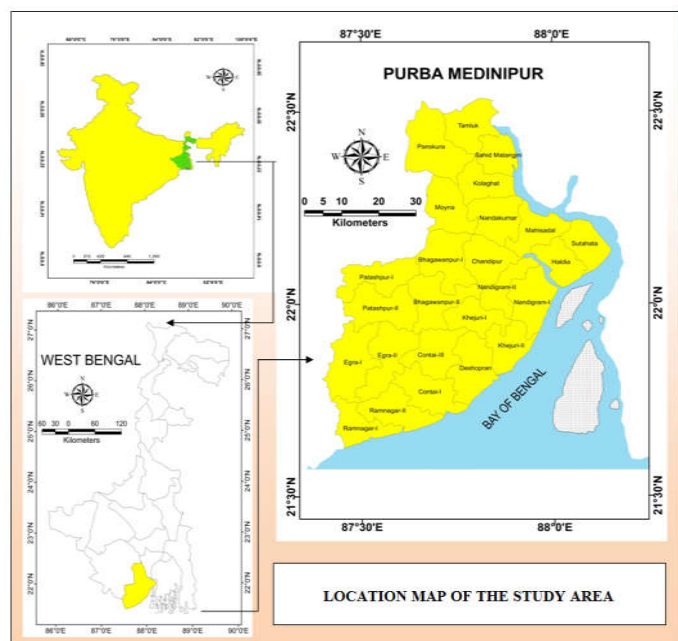
Figure No1 Location of study area

DATA BASE & METHODOLOGY

The study has been entirely based on secondary data and sources are Census of India, relevant issue, 2011 and District Statistical Handbook-2011 of Purba Medinipur. Social development Index has been calculated from following data (i) Index of urbanization=(urban population / total population)x100 (ii) Index of literacy=(literate population / total population)x100 (iii) Index of female literacy=(female literate population / total female population)x100 (iv) Index of worker=(total worker / total population)x100 (v) Index of school=(number of school / total population)x100 (vi) Index of safe drinking water=(mouza having drinking water facility / total mouza)x100 (vii) Index of electrification=(mouza having electricity facility / total mouza)x100 (viii)) Index of hospital bed=(total bed / total population)x100. Social development index is calculated by taking simple averages of all indicators in a group of study. The equation is:

$$I_j = (\Sigma I_{ij} / n)$$

Where, I_j is development Index of jth unit of study, n is the no. of indicators under consideration in a particular group.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Social Development Index (SDI) shows the levels of development in overall social development among twenty five blocks of Purba Medinipur. Social Development Index is highest in Haldia (58.23) followed by Deshapran (55.93) Tamluk (54.67) and lowest in Khejuri-II (49.38) and Ramnagar-I (49.57).

All the blocks of the district may be arranged into five categories (Fig. No-2) in descending order according to the development index.

1. *Very Highly development:* This category comprises only one block Haldia. These blocks have higher percentage safe drinking water, electricity facility, number of school and literacy level. Being an industrial belt urbanization rate is highest in Haldia in comparison to other blocks and act as a educational and medical hub. Haldia is an important industrial region of Purba Medinipur district as well as West Bengal. Due to this reason this block is quite high in SDI (58.23).
2. *Highly development:* Tamluk, Deshapran blocks are fall in this category. Tamluk & Deshapran blocks show almost cent percentage electrification and safe drinking water facility along with these education levels is also very high. Being district headquarter urbanization is high in Tamluk. But the poor performance in remaining sector and disproportional allocation of facilities causes lower development in comparison to the first category.
3. *Moderately development:* Kolaghat & Contai-III blocks are fall in this category. These blocks are performing very well in education, drinking water facilities, and rural electrification. Healthcare facilities shows very poor picture. There is not even one bed in hospitals per 1000 populations. These blocks are performed moderate to high in social development.
4. *Low development:* Eighteen blocks Sahid Matangini, Panskura-I, Moyna, Nandakumar, Chandipur, Mahisadal, Nandigram-I, Nandigram-II, Sutahata, Patashpur-I, Patashpur-II, Bhagawanpur-I, Egra-I, Egra-II, Khejuri-I, Bhagawanpur-II, Ramnagar-II, Contai-I are come to this category. This shows very poor picture regarding social development is concerned. Though these blocks do well in drinking water facilities, rural electrification, education but the poor performance in remaining sector and disproportional allocation of facilities causes lower development in comparison to the first three categories.
5. *Very low development:* Khejuri-II, Ramnagar-I blocks are belongs to this category. It is important to notice that these blocks consistently performed badly in all sectors of the social development. Unplanned allocation of facility in accordance with the size of population of settlement attributed to low level of development. Besides, due to political biasness the transfer of government funds and proper execution regarding local problems, people demands as well as requirements for development are not being made at grass root level in southern part of the district which is consequently lagged behind. In sharp contrast to the low level of literacy and weakness in the planning process in past has led to the growth of a large scale backward region.

Sl. No.	SDI	Degree of Development	Name of blocks	Total no. of blocks
1	>56	Very highly developed	Haldia	1
2	56-54	Highly developed	Deshapran, Tamluk	2
3	54-52	Moderately developed	Kolaghat, Contai-III	2
4	52-50	Low developed	Sahid Matangini, Panskura-I, Moyna, Nandakumar, Chandipur, Mahisadal, Nandigram-I, Nandigram-II, Sutahata, Patashpur-I, Patashpur-II, Bhagawanpur-I, Egra-I, Egra-II, Khejuri-I, Bhagawanpur-II, Ramnagar-II, Contai-I	18
5	<50	Very low developed	Khejuri-II, Ramnagar-I	2

Table 1 Social Development Index

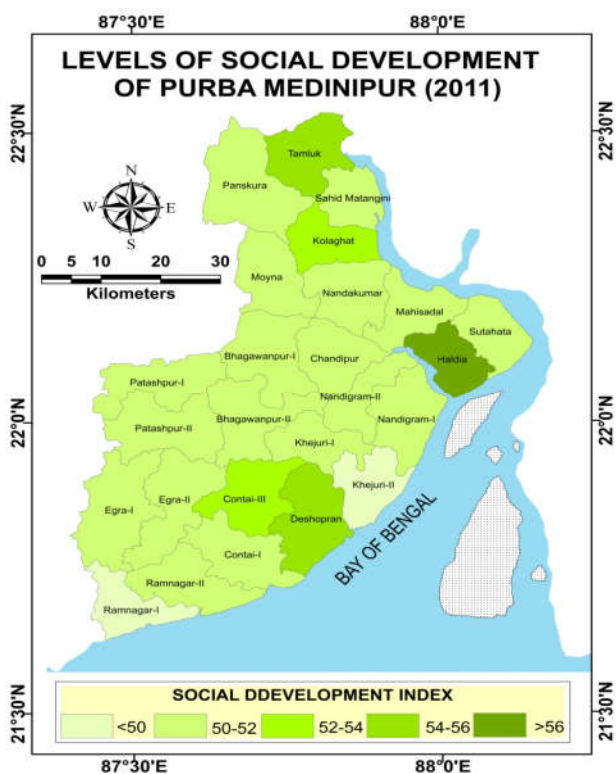| Name of the Blocks	Index of Urbani-zation	Index of Literacy	Index of Female Literacy	Index of Worker	Index of School	Index of Safe Drinking Water	Index of Electrified mouza	Index of Hospital Bed	Social Development Index (SDI)	Degree of Development	Rank
Tamluk	26.85	88.62	83.735	37.77	0.08	100.0	100.0	0.29	54.67	High	3
Sahid Matangini	7.64	86.98	80.89	36.52	0.07	100.0	94.3	0.06	50.80	Low	15
Panskura-I	20.45	84.31	78.07	40.075	0.09	91.5	98.8	0.07	51.67	Low	9
Kolaghat	17.40	84.93	78.37	37.5	0.07	100.0	100.0	0.02	52.29	Moderate	4
Moyna	2.91	86.33	80.24	38.26	0.08	100.0	100.0	0.02	50.98	Low	13
Nandakumar	0.00	85.56	80.07	39.39	0.08	100.0	100.0	0.06	50.65	Low	17
Chandipur	6.07	87.81	82.93	36.1	0.08	100.0	99.1	0.04	51.52	Low	10
Mahisadal	3.23	86.21	80.84	35.88	0.08	98.7	98.7	0.02	50.45	Low	19
Nandigram-I	2.79	84.89	80.71	31.87	0.07	100.0	100.0	0.01	50.04	Low	22
Nandigram-II	4.28	89.16	84.88	34.9	0.10	100.0	100.0	0.09	51.68	Low	8
Sutahata	4.16	85.42	80.09	32.43	0.09	98.8	98.8	0.43	50.02	Low	23
Haldia	67.20	87.25	81.965	33.495	0.06	100.0	95.8	0.01	58.23	Very High	1
Patashpur-I	3.69	86.02	79.7	42.22	0.09	100.0	97.1	0.02	51.11	Low	12
Patashpur-II	0.00	86.5	80.53	38.12	0.10	99.3	96.0	0.03	50.08	Low	21
Bhagawanpur-I	5.01	88.13	82.5	38.56	0.08	100.0	99.4	0.01	51.71	Low	7
Egra-I	15.28	84.985	78.715	38.835	0.08	94.0	93.2	0.15	50.66	Low	16
Egra-II	0.00	86.47	79.45	37.51	0.08	100.0	100.0	0.03	50.44	Low	20
Khejuri-I	0.00	88.9	84.36	38.3	0.10	100.0	100.0	0.03	51.46	Low	11
Khejuri-II	0.00	85.37	79.8	33.83	0.08	100.0	96.0	0.03	49.38	Very Low	25
Bhagawanpur-II	0.00	90.98	86.29	37.81	0.10	100.0	100.0	0.05	51.90	Low	6
Ramnagar-I	3.19	87.84	81.72	34.36	0.10	95.3	94.0	0.05	49.57	Very Low	24
Ramnagar-II	0.00	89.38	83.37	36.37	0.09	97.8	97.8	0.02	50.61	Low	18
Contai-I	0.00	89.32	83.73	36.1	0.10	100.0	98.2	0.01	50.94	Low	14
Deshapran	36.36	91.01	87.015	35.205	0.07	100.0	97.6	0.13	55.93	High	2
Contai-III	0.00	89.89	84.75	41.29	0.10	100.0	100.0	0.01	52.01	Moderate	5

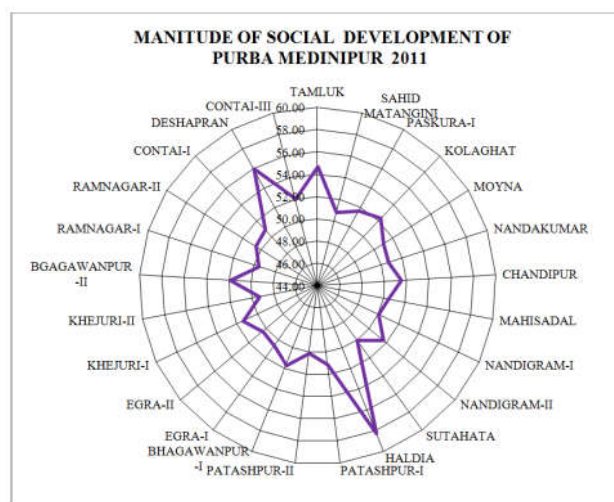**Figure No. 2** Levels of social development of Purba Medinipur

Figure No 3 Magnitude of social development of Purba Medinipur

The financial infrastructure is crucial for economic development in a region. Unfortunately, this is a field which requires urgent attention in Purba Medinipur. Good banking network in any form is available only in Haldia and Bhagwanpur-II block in terms of branches per 10000 populations. Thus, more densely populated regions need faster expansion on an urgent basis. Purba Medinipur has done relatively good work in providing drinking water, although this has not translated into pipe water to households. This district needs more pucca houses.

Coming to livelihood, majority of income is generated from services related activities. However, being a rural economy, Purba Medinipur depends on cultivation as well. Northern sub-division of Tamluk depends more on summer or boro crops while the western sub-division of Egra depends more on winter or Aman crop. The district has a large number of small organized industrial units in food processing, agricultural implements, handicrafts, cashew nuts processing etc. They are highly clustered in the Tamluk sub-division. The district certainly needs more dispersal of industries. However, the employment generating capacity of these units is small and is certainly much less compared to more industrially advanced districts of West Bengal. The district has a high concentration of fishery related activity, but this does not necessarily uplift the economic situation of the fishermen who face strong competition from the large trawler companies. Also, the district is a cashew nut cultivation centre but this is not highlighted the way they should be. The district has some success in self-help group formations but this activity needs more concerted efforts.

CONCLUSION

Any sorts of development requires some facilities like proper literacy system, availability of safe drinking water, proper electrification, availability of proper medical care facilities which ultimately influence the nature of urbanization. Purba Medinipur district with its great areal expense, coped with different physical and social character. It can be noted down that lack of well transportation network and job opportunity, some blocks are in vulnerable condition. It can also noted down that lack of proper initiatives, improper coordination between different authorities the planning and proposals are not properly implemented. So as a result some mouzas are really in miserable condition. A strong initiative from local to higher authorities with a positive approach can minimize this inter block disparity as well as develop the district in long run. The east west divide Purba Medinipur is the main backdrops of social development.

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