

Vol II Issue V Nov 2012

Impact Factor : 0.1870

ISSN No :2231-5063

Monthly Multidisciplinary  
Research Journal

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**RNI MAHMUL/2011/38595**

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## “DISTRIBUTION AND GROWTH OF RURAL SETTLEMENTS: A CASE STUDY OF DHULE DISTRICT (M.S.)”.

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### Abstract:

*The present paper focused on the growth and distribution of rural settlements in the study area from 1981 to 2001. There are 678 (2001) villages in the district. These villages are unevenly distributed over the area of 8063.11sq.kms. The district is a part of Northern Maharashtra. It contributes 2.62% total geographical area of the Maharashtra state. Dhule district includes four tehsil namely Dhule, Sakri, Shindkheda and Shirpur. Dhule distinct forms a district geographical unit, as it is occupied by 'Satpuda' ranges in the north. 'Satmala' in the south and central part is occupied by River Tapi basin with her major tributaries like Panzara, Burai and Arunamati.*

### KEY WORDS-

Growth, Settlements, Distribution.

### INTRODUCTION-

After food, shelter is the most important need of man. “Man constructed houses and develops settlement to protect themselves against the vagaries of weather and to enjoy social life. In fact, settlement is man's important step towards adopting himself to his physical environment.” (Majid Hussain,2006). The precise reasons for the formation of settlements are not known. The events are shrouded in mystery, as they occurred before recorded history. There only reasonable conjectures on where and why permanent settlements began. Before the domestication of plants and establishment of settlements; the human beings were nomads. Wandering in tribes across the landscape in search of food and water. The site, growth and development of human settlements are closely influenced by the available soil, water, forest and mineral resources.

Settlement geography is the recently developed branch of human geography. Its study is basic to human geography, because the form of settlement in any particular region represents man's relationship with the environment. “Settlement geography is the study of the form of the cultural landscape.” (Jordan, 1966). “It is a science of systematic inquiry of occupancy features distributed over space with differentiation in relation to man.” (Mandal,1978).

### STUDY AREA:-

Dhule district is Located in the north-eastern part of Maharashtra. The district has occupied the total area of 8062.11 sq. km. between latitudes 20° 38' N and 21° 39' N and longitudes 73° 50' E and 75° 13' E in survey of India degree sheet Nos. 46 G.H.K.L. and O. The district has occupied 2.6% of the total area and a population of 17, 07,947 as per the 2001 Census. The density of population is 212 persons per sq. km.

Dhule district comprises 681 Villages out of them 678 villages are inhabited and 3 Villages are uninhabited. These villages are distributed in four tehsils namely Dhule, Shirpur, Shindkheda and Sakri.

The district is triangular in shape. It is situated in the central basin of River 'Tapi'. Climate of the study area is Hot & Dry. The soils of the district are derived from trap rock on the basis of depth, texture and colour. Soils of the region can broadly be classified into three major types.

- 1) Deep black cotton soil.
- 2) Medium black soil.
- 3) Coarse shallow soil.

**OBJECTIVE :-**

The main object of the present paper is to study the growth and distribution of rural settlements from 1981 to 2001 in the study area.

**DATABASE AND METHODOLOGY :-**

Data is collected from secondary sources i.e. census of India, socio economic review of Dhule district. Following methodology is adopted for the present work.

- A) Literature Survey:- Data regarding the research is scanned from various libraries, research journals and books.
- B) Laboratory Work: - Laboratory works includes preparation of map regarding Settlement growth & settlement distribution.

**DISTRIBUTION OF RURAL SETTLEMENTS:-**

The origin and evolution of settlements is an process of land occupation performed by man. Actually, it is gradual process which covers over hundreds and thousands of years and displays the various forms of settlement growth. The study region is situated in central Tapi basin. According to Shinde(1998), “The region, being one of the most fertile units in the country, attracted man right from lower Paleolithic period.” It means man attracted towards this region is due to the fertility of soil and availability of water.

“The region can be called the cradle of early cultures, occupies a significant place in Indian archaeology not because it had attracted early farmers from the adjoining regions and gave birth to the first farmers of Maharashtra, but also witnessed all round development in human cultures”.(Shinde, 1998).

The study region is a peculiar unit. Study region drained by river Tapi and his tributaries, the presence of Galana and Dhanora hills and Satpudarangas gave birth to variation in physiography. All these physiographic units are the obstacles in the concentration of human being. The distribution of settlement is affected by several factors in which the relief, distribution of resources, population land under cultivation; types of agricultural lands are the important factors.

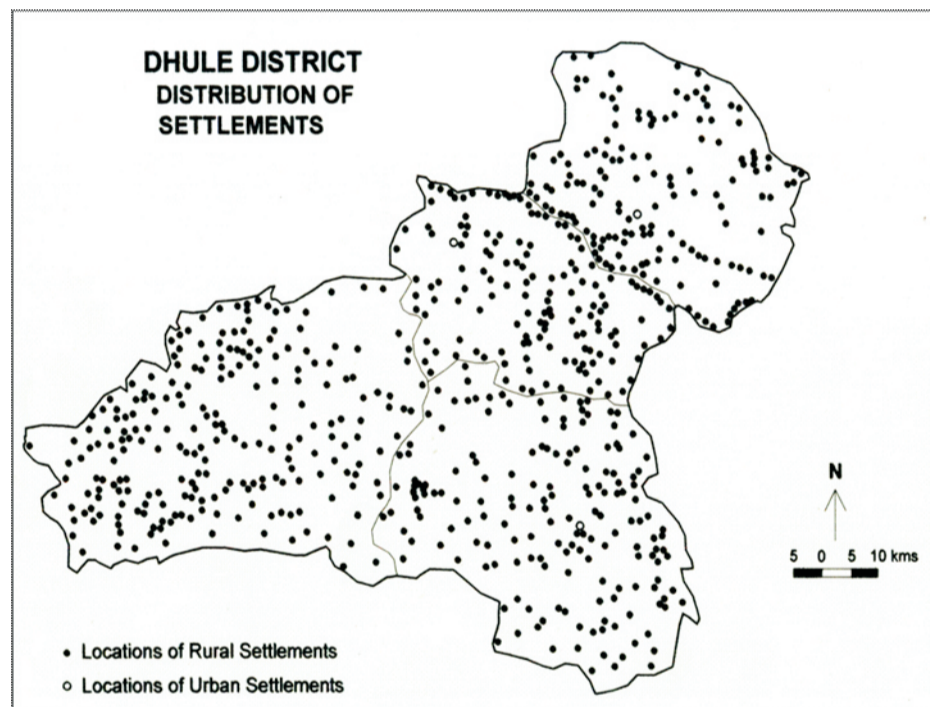
Dhule district occupied over an area of 8063.11 sq.km. Dhule district with its headquarters at Dhule includes four tehsils. As per the 2001 Census, Dhule district consist 681 villages, out of which 678 villages are inhabited and three villages are uninhabited. There are three urban centers in district (Table No. 1.1). The percentage of rural settlements to total settlements is 99.56% and urban settlements are 0.44%. It indicates the very less percentage of urban settlements. All these settlements are distributed over study region in various tehsils(Fig. No. 1.1).

In the present study the high percentage of rural settlements attracted the researcher for the study of rural settlements. Most of the work in the present study is related with the study of rural settlements.

**Table No.1.1  
Dhule District Settlements. Distribution**

Sr.No.	Name of the Tehsil	Settlements		Total	
		Rural	Urban		
1	Dhule	167	01	168	
2	Sakri	225	Nil	225	
3	Shirpur	145	01	146	
4	Shindkhede	141	01	142	
District		Total	678	03	681
District		%	99.56	0.44	100

Source : Census of India-2001.



**GROWTH OF RURAL SETTLEMENTS:-**

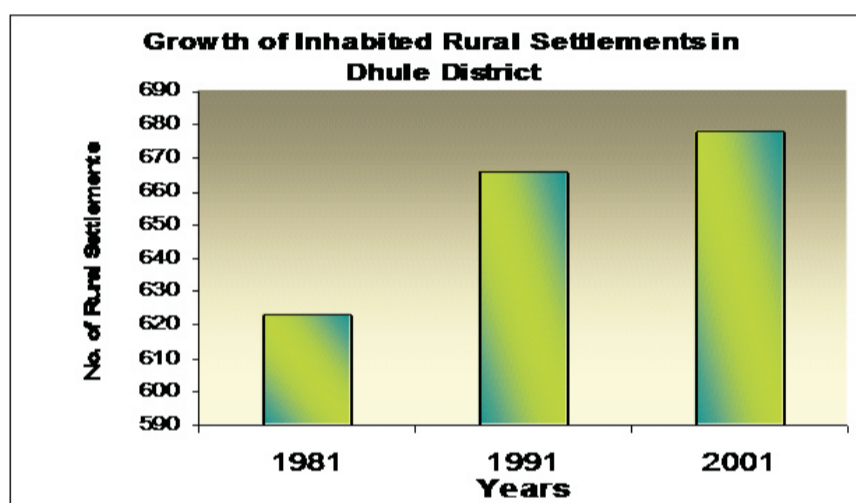
For the study of inhabited rural settlements in the study region, the growth of rural settlement from the year 1981 to 2001 is considered.

According to the census of 1981 in Dhule district there were 623 rural inhabited settlements, while they increased in the census of 1991 and the inhabited rural settlements were 666. As per the 2001 census, the number of rural inhabited settlements was 678. Table No.1.2 and Fig. No.1.2 shows the growth of rural settlements in Dhule district from 1981 to 2001. It is clear during the year 1981 to 1991- 43 settlements were increased while during 1991 to 2001 only 12 settlements were increased.

**Table No.1.2**  
**Growth of Inhabited Rural Settlements in Dhule District.**

Sr.No.	Tehesil	Year		
		1981	1991	2001
1	Dhule	159	164	167
2	Sakri	182	212	255
3	Shirpur	139	147	145
4	Shindkheda	143	143	144
District		623	666	678

Source:-Dhule District Census handbook, 1981 and 1991. Census of India, 2001.



**Fig. No.1.2**

**CONCLUSION:-**

Above study clearly concluded that ,the distribution of settlements in the study area is uneven. Maximum settlements are distributed in the fertile land of Tapi&her tributaries .In the areas of hilly & barren land the no of settlements are very less. The growth of rural settlements is 43 during the year 1981-1991 and it is 12 in the year 1991-2001.

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