



Occupational and economic status of people living in Contai Urban area of Purba Medinipur District, West Bengal: An analytical approach

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Abstract

Urbanization is considered as one of the major indicators of development. Three interlinked concepts are associated with urbanization - demographic phenomena, structural change in society, urbanization as a behavioral process. Urban economies are composed of diverse activities, embodied in labor occupations, which depend on one another to produce goods and services. Very little is known about how the nature and intensity of these interdependences change with the increase in population size and expansion of economic activities with complexity. Understanding the relationship between occupational interdependencies and the number of occupations defining an urban economy is relevant because interdependence within a networked system has implications for system resilience and for how easily can the structure of the economic functions can be modified.

In the present study it has been tried to search the interdependencies among occupations in Contai urban area where the strengths of interdependence between pairs of occupations determine the strengths of the links in the occupational network and thereby identify the influence these networks on economic status of the people living in that urban area. Using those quantified link strengths we can calculate the number of unique occupations present in an urban workforce. Data collected through primary survey and from secondary sources have been used to create occupational network and then measure link weight of each occupational network and how many people are actually engaged with or employed to this occupation and finally the study findings reveal a super linear relationship between occupational structure and economic status of the people.

Keywords: occupational network, economic status, workforce, superliner, behavioral process

Introduction

The Census of India-1991 has defined occupation as “participation in any economically productive activity”. This sort of participation in an economic activity can be physical activity such as the actual work requiring physical strength or it can also involve mental activity such as effective supervision and direction of work. Occupation can also involve both paid and unpaid work. Unpaid work corresponds to the work done on a farm or in any family activity. Occupations can generally be considered as a method of allocating labour which involves three fundamental occupational elements such as ‘a particular group of people, a particular type of work and an organized body or structure other than the workplace itself’ (Abbott, 1995). In terms of occupations, there exists the classification of occupations and the division of people on the basis of their migration, occupation and settlements. The occupational structure can be defined as the distribution or division of workers according to different occupations. All the major occupations can be divided into three broad structures such as primary, secondary and tertiary.

Occupations in urban spaces are available in abundance and it is a fact that most of the GDP is generated from urban areas. The sources of GDP in urban spaces are the various occupations that people undertake in order to make a living. Urban spaces, precisely, refer to those areas in which there is a high density of population. These people have different means of income. So they undertake different occupations in urban spaces. Income refers to the monetary gain of a person while pursuing his or her occupation. In a modern society, income of a family or of an individual is a crucial component to make that person or that family sustain in the urbanized locality.

Objective of the Study

The present study focuses mainly with the major objectives which are given bellow:-

1. To understand ward level work participation in Contai municipality area.
2. To measure the level of dissimilarity of male and female work participation.
3. To understand the occupational structure and level of income in selected wards of Contai municipality area.
4. To identify the basic problems regarding the occupational structure and to suggest a way forward.

Location of the Study Area

Contai is an urban area and a municipality in Purba Medinipur District, West Bengal, India. It is the head quarter of the Contai subdivision. Latitude and Longitude co-ordinates of Contai Municipality area are 21°46'45"N and 87° 44'40"E. This urban area covers the area 17.25 sq.km. The elevation of the study area is 6 m. Contai is about 31 km. from the beach town Digha and 160 km. from Kolkata.

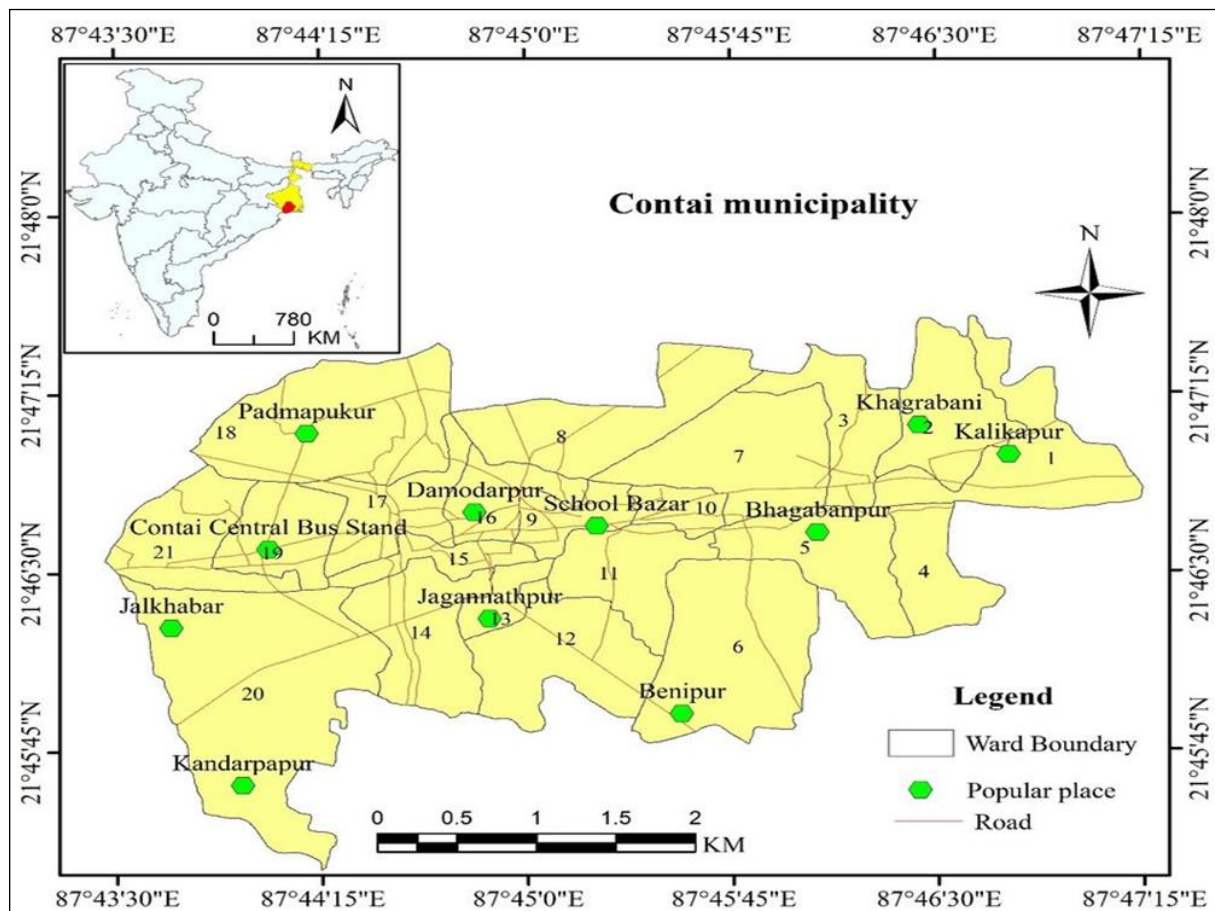


Fig 1: Location of the study area.

Database and Methodology

The whole work has been done mainly using primary and secondary data. On the basis of primary survey the occupational structure of the residents along with their income level have been analyzed and verified with the available secondary data.

Table 1: Data Sources

Types of Data	Sources of Data	Data Collection Method
Primary data	Household survey	Questionnaire administered
Secondary data	Census of India- 1991, 2001 & 2011 and Contai Municipality Hand Book, perspective plan of the municipality, Human Development Report of Purba Medinipur District.	Downloaded from websites and collected from the municipality office.

Methodology

- To understand the male and female work participation in the study area a **Lorenz curve** has been prepared. To identify the level of inequality in the distribution of one attribute in relation to other Gini co-efficient (formula = $1/100 \times 100 (\sum x_1 y_1 + 1) - (\sum y_1 x_1 + 1)$ = Area of concentration/Area of triangle) value has been determined.
- Simple statistical techniques have been applied and cartograms & thematic maps have been prepared to represents both primary and secondary data.

Level of Work Participation in Contai Municipality Area

It can be clearly understood that the Contai municipal area population growth has also decreasing and may be one of the reasons of less of work participation in the study area, because male workers are migrating out from

the city. A choropleth map is showing that highest level of work participation is around 40% and the lowest is 27%. Compare to other urban areas it is quite a low value. The percentage of population engage in economic activity is an indicator of the economic development and urbanization is an area. The total number of workers in Contai municipality area as per 2001 census is 23341; the total workers are further divided into main and marginal worker. In ward no 17, 12, 11 total workers are maximum in percentage. Ward no 16, 18, 13 there are low percentage of total workers (23.56, 6.21, 25.13) so total worker distribution of Contai municipality are not equal in each ward. A bird's eye view is given in the following diagram.

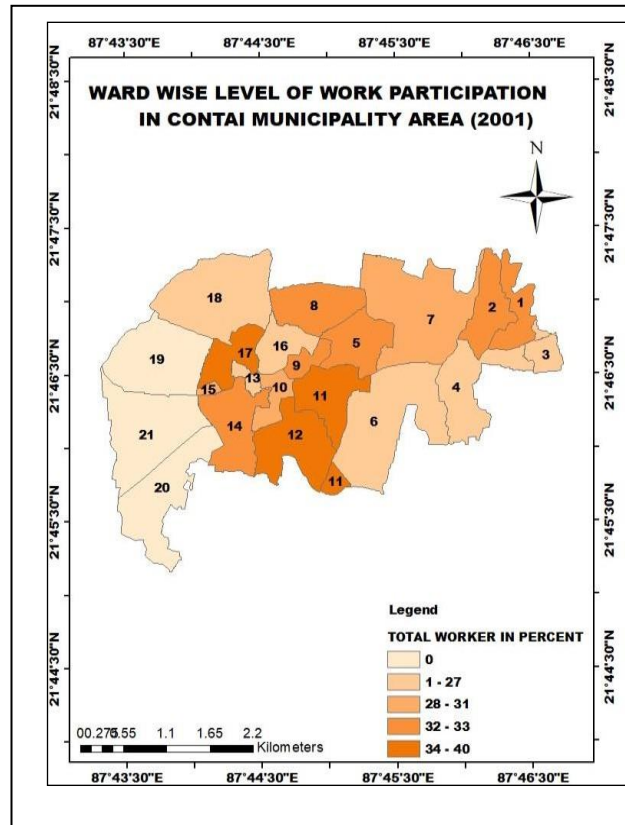


Fig 2: Level of work participation 2001

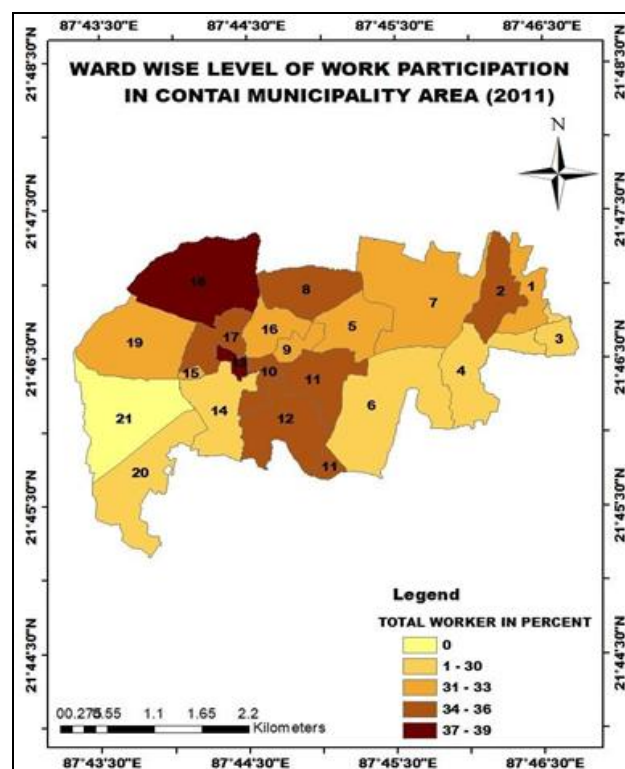


Fig 3: Level of work participation 2011

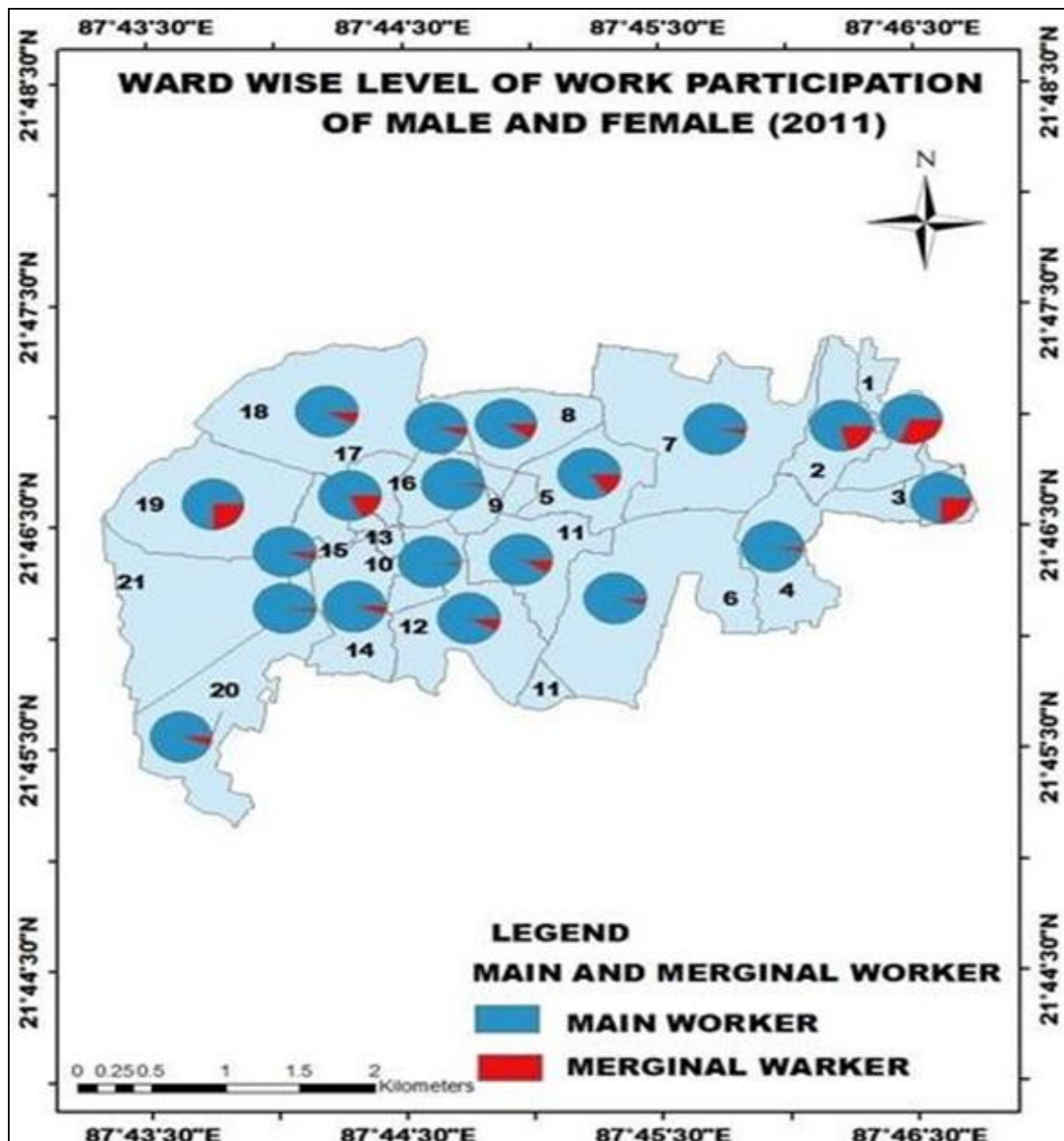


Fig 4: Level of work participation of male and female (2011)

From figure no.- 2 and figure no.- 3 it has been found that level of work participation rate has increased in 2011 in ward no 9 (38.37%), 18 (31.18%) and decreased in ward no.- 4 (27.38%) in comparison to 2001..

Level of Income in Contai Municipality

Income is the revenue of a business earns and selling its goods and service or the money an individual received in compensation for his or her labour service or investment. Income status can be analyzed in several ways. It refers to the position of a person in the earning group of that society. Economics or income is the study of the allocation of scarce resource and as all economic phenomena takes place within a geographical space urban income focuses on the allocation to urban area. Urban income or economic analysis realized on a particular model of urban special structure. Urban economy focuses on these spatial relationships to understand the economic motivation underlying the formation, functioning and development of any urban area.

Occupational Structure

Maximum number of service holder are active in ward no 14 and 21 so here income level is high and people have good quality of life and literacy rate is high in these two wards. Maximum number of daily labour is found in ward no- 20. Here middle class and poor people are large in number. They face lack of proper income and lack of education and others facilities. Primary activities such as cultivation, fishing are high in ward no 5, and 17.

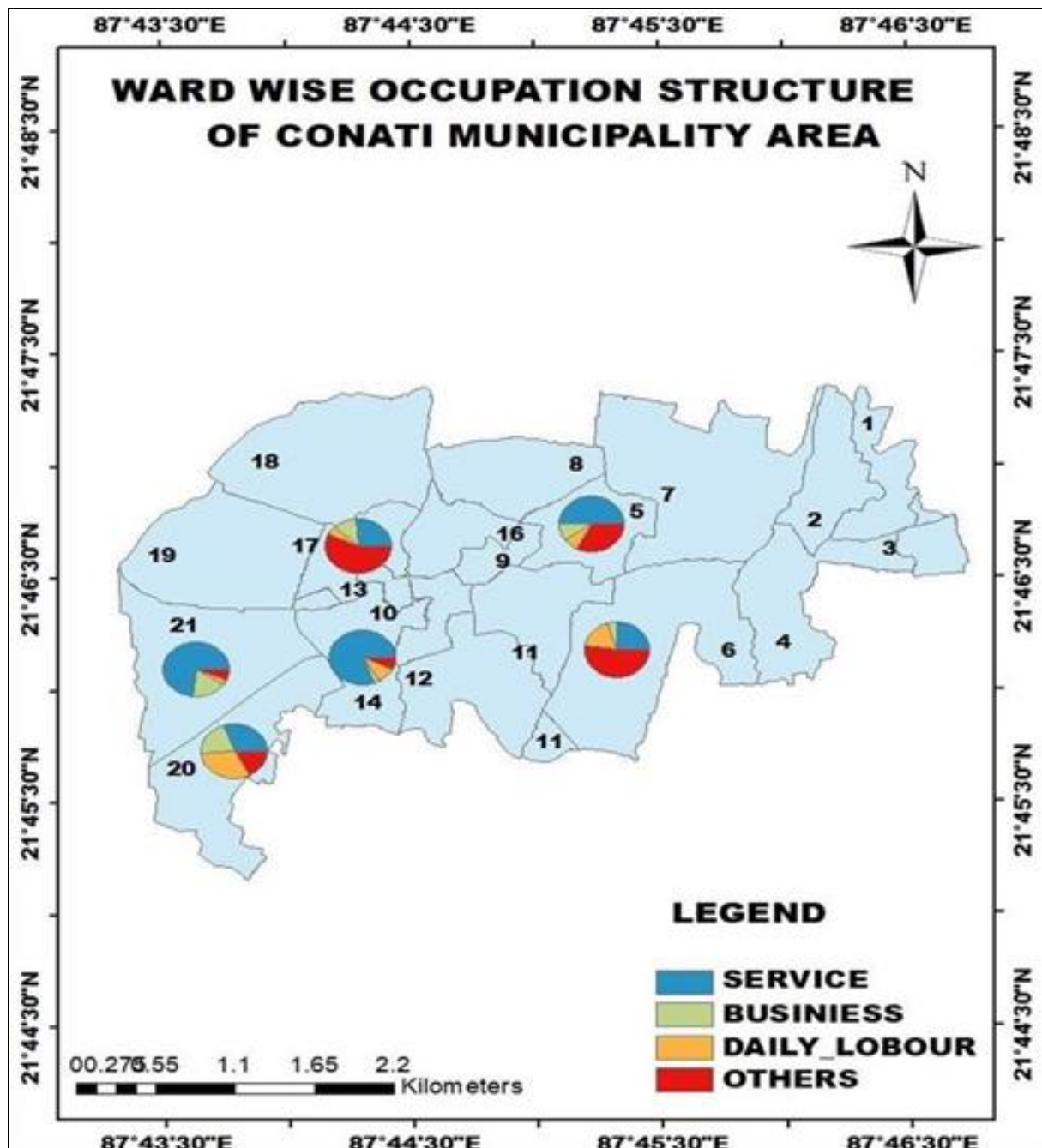


Fig 5: Occupational structure

Different services activities are taking entry in to occupational structure like teaching, administrations, medical services etc. Service centric occupations are increasing at Contai municipality area and primary occupations are decreasing. in Contai municipality area the level of satisfaction level is very high. People live are all satisfied except ward number 5 and 20. Surprisingly moderate level of job satisfaction is not found in any of the surveyed wards.

Major Problems

Continuous urban growth of Contai municipality comes up with some major development in one hand on the other hand the effects of growth also create some problems. During study we have come across with these problems and the problems are addressed here in this paper. The major problems are given here under.

- The rapid growth of population has led to an acute shortage of dwelling units which resulted occupation problem, traffic congestion, low infrastructure facility, poverty, unemployment, poor sanitation, which have become pervasive and indeed high crime rate. All of these have an effect on the high population growth of Contai urban area.
- One major serious aspect of the urban problem is the poor state of infrastructure. The study town is still facing with inefficient road network, inadequate water supply, lack of effective drainage system and some basic amenities.

- It could be in traffic and overcrowding. In traffic, there is an overcrowding of a route, leading to slow and inefficient flow which makes movement difficult. Large increase in motor vehicle usage has resulted congestion on the roads. Congestion in urban areas restricts accessibility.
- The problem of joblessness is also serious as the problem of housing. Urban unemployment in Contai municipality estimated at 15 to 25 percent of the labor force. This percentage is even higher among the educated people. Major causes of urban unemployment are the huge relocation of people from rural to urban areas.

Suggestions

The economic condition of the town Contai is partially satisfactory as the town is still growing and has opportunity to overcome the existing problems. It is strength of the town that majority of workers belong to the category of main workers so the authority should take some steps to stop the out migration of the main working force of the urban area. In doing so new job opportunities should be created and people should be motivated to take part in new work set ups. Male female work participation has dissimilarities which should be mitigated. Wards with slum population should be taken care of. Low level of literacy is responsible for increasing dependency ratio in the ward so education level should be improved among the slum population.

Conclusion

The backbone of the economy of any region is the production sector. The analysis of the occupation structure of the town depicts a not so bright picture of the economy base of the town. The production sector including agriculture and industrial sector shows decline trends of growth. The service sector which is to supplement the production sector shows growth. Majority of the urban population depends on the service sector for their livelihood. It is observed that of all wards of Contai municipality showing high concentration of service sectors. Land use is also slowly withdrawing from primary sector and leaning more towards service sector. The shift of occupational structure is remarkable.

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