

Demographic Structure and Indian Society

Demography is the systematic study of the population of a country, area, community, etc. The term is of Greek origin and is composed of the two words, demos (people) and graphein (describe).

Demography studies the trends and processes associated with population including – changes in population size; patterns of births, deaths, and migration; and the structure and composition of the population, such as the relative proportions of women, men and different age groups.

There are two types of demography:

Formal Demography: statistical analysis of population i.e., total population, number of males, number of females, number of youth, working population, rural urban (quantitative data)

Social Demography: birth rate, death rate and migration that happens in a particular society.

All demographic studies are based on processes of counting or enumeration – such as the census or the survey – which involve the systematic collection of data on the people residing within a specified territory

Demography is a field that is of special importance to sociology:

The emergence of sociology and its successful establishment as an academic discipline owed a lot to demography.

Two different processes happened to take place at roughly the same time in Europe during the latter half of the eighteenth century – the formation of nation-states as the principal form of political organization, and the beginnings of the modern science of statistics.

The modern state had begun to expand its role and functions. It had, for instance, begun to take an active interest in the development of early forms of public health management, policing and maintenance of law and order,

economic policies relating to agriculture and industry, taxation and revenue generation and the governance of cities Demographic data are important for the planning and implementation of state policies, especially those for economic development and general public welfare.

Social statistics, when they first emerged, also provided a strong justification for the new discipline of sociology. Aggregate statistics – or the numerical characteristics that refer to a large collectivity consisting of millions of people – offer a concrete and strong argument for the existence of social phenomena.

Distinction between formal demography and a broader field of population studies (social demography)

Formal demography is primarily concerned with the measurement and analysis of the components of population change. Its focus is on quantitative analysis for which it has a highly developed mathematical methodology suitable for forecasting population growth and changes in the composition of population.

Population studies or social demography, on the other hand, enquires into the wider causes and consequences of population structures and change. Social demographers believe that social processes and structures regulate demographic processes; like sociologists, they seek to trace the social reasons that account for population trends.

The Malthusian Theories of Population Growth

Malthusian Theory was propounded by Sir Thomas Robert Malthus. He argued that human populations tend to grow at a much faster rate than the rate at which the means of human subsistence (specially food, but also clothing and other agriculture-based products) can grow. Therefore humanity is condemned to live in poverty forever.

While population rises in geometric progression (i.e., like 2, 4, 8, 16, 32 etc.), agricultural production can only grow in arithmetic progression (i.e., like 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 etc.). The only way to increase prosperity is by controlling the growth of population. He identified two ways of controlling population

growth, positive check and preventive check. Positive check: Natural disasters cause many people die and the population is naturally controlled. If one doesn't take care of themselves nature will take care of them e.g. earthquakes, tsunami. Preventive check: Man made e.g. late marriage, celibacy, contraceptives etc.

Criticism of Malthusian Theory

Malthu's theory was challenged by theorists who claimed that economic growth could outstrip population growth. The most effective refutation of his theory was provided by the historical experience of European countries.

The pattern of population growth began to change in the latter half of nineteenth century, and by the end of the first quarter of the twentieth century these changes were quite dramatic. Birth rates had declined, and outbreaks of epidemic diseases were being controlled.

Malthus's predictions were proved false because both food production and standards of living continued to rise despite the rapid growth of population.

Malthus was also criticized by liberal and Marxist scholars for asserting that poverty was caused by population growth.

The critics argued that problems like poverty and starvation were caused by the unequal distribution of economic resources rather than by population growth. An unjust social system allowed a wealthy and privileged minority to live in luxury while the vast majority of the people were forced to live in poverty.

Theory of Demographic Transition

Population growth is linked to overall levels of economic development and that every society follows a typical pattern of development-related population growth.

There are **three basic phases of population growth-**

1. **Primitive Stage**-underdeveloped countries (Africa).
2. **Second Stage**-developing countries (India, Pakistan) stage of transition-»

countries are moving from underdeveloped to developed.

3. Third Stage-Developed countries (USA, UK). Underdeveloped Countries (stage 1)

• **Birth rate** is high since people are unaware of the advantages of having small families, they are not educated.

• **Death rate** is also high since health and medical facilities are not available. Therefore population is low.

Developing Countries (stage 2)

• Birth rate is high as we live in a patriarchal society where men decide how many children must be born and male child is preferred.

• Illiteracy and people are ignorant.

• Death rate is also low since health and medical facilities are available. Therefore population is high and results in population explosion.

• Demographic Dividend when the working population increases more than the non working population.

Developed Countries (stage 3)

• Birth rate is low, people are educated and aware and use contraceptives, birth control is popularised.

• Death rate is also low because of availability of health and medical facilities. Therefore population is low.

Population Explosion: When the birth rate of a country is high and the death rate is low because of availability of health and medical facilities. Therefore population is exploding, increasing.

Common Concepts of Population

Birth Rate: Number of live births per thousand population.

Death Rate: Number of deaths per thousand population. Also called mortality rate.

Rate of natural increase: Difference between birth rate and death rate in an area.

Replacement Level: Present generation replaces the previous/older generation.

Zero level: Replacement is same. Same number of people replace same number of older generation called stabilised level (parents replaced by 2 children).

Negative level: Number of people replacing older generation are less (parents replaced by child).

Population explosion: Number of people replacing the older generation is more. Working population is more than the dependent population.

Fertility Rate: Number of live births between the age of 15-49 yrs per thousand women.

Total Fertility Rate: Number of women who give birth to children in a particular area at a particular age (15-49 yrs)

Infant Mortality Rate: Number of infants who have died below the age of 1 per thousand live births.

Maternal Mortality Rate: Number of women who die during child birth per thousand population.

Life expectancy Rate: Number of years that one is expected to live as determined by statistics may be individually qualified by the person's condition, race, sex, age or other demographic factors.

Sex Ratio:.. number of females per 1000 males in a given area at a specified time period. h. Age structure of population - proportions of persons in different age groups relative to total population.

Age structure: The structure of the population in terms of age (in India 0-15 = youth, 15-65 = Working population, above 64 years = dependent population)

Dependency Ratio: The number of people who are not working and are dependent on the working population. Ratio of the dependent population to the working population is higher.

Demographic Dividend: When the working population in a country is more than the dependent/non working population. Positive: Economic growth for the country although it is a temporary phase.

Size and Growth of India's Population

• Today the population of India is very high but it has not always been high. Growth has been up and down.

Causes:

(a) Epidemics

(b) Natural Disasters/Famine

• **Epidemics:** Disease which is widespread and affects lakhs of people in a large area. For example, during the World War there spread the Spanish influenza. It affects the throat and cavity and you choke and die. It is believed to have killed more people than any war.

It spreads very fast and is contagious because:

- Sanitation conditions were very bad.
- Medical facilities were low.
- Soldiers moved from place to place and spread it, (iv) Chemical explosion/fumes in the air.

They are less common now because

(a) Better medical facilities.

(b) There are vaccinations.

(c) Sanitary conditions have been improved. (d) Awareness of people have increased.

- In India we still have some epidemics like swine flu, chickenguniya, plague, malaria etc. •

Famine: Famines are caused by high level of continuing poverty and malnutrition in an agro climatic environment that is effected by variations in rainfall, lack of adequate means of transportation and communication as well as inadequate efforts on the part of the state.

There is scarcity of food, shortage of food supply and production. It is of two types

1. **Natural:** excessive rainfall, no rainfall, drought.

2. **Manmade:** excessive use of pesticides and fertilizers, lack of transport and communication facilities, distribution of grain by government is not sufficient and proper preventive method should be taken.

- Dr. Amartya Sen, “It is not necessary that famine is due to lack of food grain but it could be due to lack of efficient distribution, failure of entitlements and inability of people to buy or otherwise obtain food.”

It can be controlled by

(i) Efficient distribution of food grains by improving transportation and community.

(ii) Green Revolution has increased the supply of food grains despite varying amounts of rainfall.

(iii) Medical facilities- If an area is experiencing famine, the government takes caution/ measures to see that the people are given help.

- **NREGA**-National Rural Employment Guarantee Act: Takes care to see that everyone is employed so that if there is a famine they can move somewhere else and buy food.

Total Fertility Rate

– When the birth rate is high and death rate is low it results in population

explosion.

– In a country birth rate is still high because of :

(i) Mindset of people (ii) Desire for male child (iii) Patrilineal society

Replacement Level

- Kerala and Tamil Nadu: Zero/stabilized level due to literacy.
- Uttar Pradesh: Very high replacement level (4:1); it can be good increase in youth population.

Low Fertility Rate : Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Himachal Pradesh, West Bengal, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh (Mostly northern states due to desire for male child).

Age Structure of Indian Population :

Age structure of India's population. India is one of the youngest countries in the world—majority of Indians tend to be young. The average age is also less than that for most other countries. The share of the 15-60 age group has increased slightly, while the share of the 60+ age group is very small. The present trend indicates that 0-14 age group will reduce, thus the changing age structure could offer a demographic dividend for India. These potential can be converted into actual growth with the increase level of education and employment. There are wide regional variations in the age structure. While a state like Kerala is beginning to acquire an age structure like that of the developed countries, some states like Uttar Pradesh have high proportions in the younger age groups and relatively low proportions among the aged.

- 0-15 years – Youth Population
- 15-64 years – Working Population
- Above 64 years – Old/Retired Population

• **Demographic Dividend**: Working population is higher than the non-working population.

- Kerala: Good age structure ~ increase in working population, the literacy rate is very high, so they are educated about economic growth.
- Uttar Pradesh: Increase in working population because of large working youth population, decreasing aged population.
- Demographic Dividend can be maintained by better education, awareness etc.

Advantage-current working population is large and it has a relatively small aged population to support.

The Declining Sex Ratio in India

- Number of females per thousand males of a population.
- **Child sex ratio**- Several factors may be held responsible for the decline in the child sex ratio including- Severe neglect, of girl babies in infancy, leading to higher death rates; sex specific abortions that prevent girl babies from being born; And female infanticide (or the killing of girl babies due to religious or cultural beliefs).
- Sex ratio has always been a concern in India.

Reasons for declining sex ratio:

- (i) Mindset of the people and Neglect of girl child
- (ii) Female foeticide/infanticide
- (iii) Maternal mortality rates-women die during child birth.
 - The child sex ratio is still very scary as there is a drastic fall.
 - Prosperous states such as Punjab and Haryana have maximum female infanticide and down with burning because
 - Dowry is very high and parents want to save money.
 - People want only 2 or 3 boys, therefore when they get a girl, they kill it and have a boy.

There are regional variations of low child sex ratio in India.

The regional pattern of low child sex ratios, in India, is that the lowest child sex ratios are found in the most prosperous regions of India. Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Gujarat and Maharashtra are among the richest states in India in terms of per capita incomes, and they are also the states with the lowest child sex ratio. So, the problem of selective abortions is not due to poverty or ignorance or lack of resources. Economically prosperous families decide to have fewer children and they may wish to choose the sex of their child.

Sonogram : an x-ray like diagnostic device based on ultra-sound technology; sometimes misused to determine the sex of the unborn child in mother's womb. *Sonography* to know the sex of the child.

- The Pre Natal Diagnostic Technique Act/Regulation and Prevention of Misuse Act which came up in 1996 and was later enforced in 2003.
- This does not allow the sex of the child to be known.

Literacy

- Literacy is the ability to read or write.
- Education is a combination of formal and informal education.
- Kerala has the maximum literacy rate whereas Rajasthan and Northern states have low literacy rate.

• *There are three categories:*

(i) Gender: more males are literate than females but it is becoming higher.

(ii) Social Group: higher income families have more literacy level than those with lower income families. Government is trying to bridge the gap through reservation for SC's and ST's.

(iii) Regions: Kerala has high literacy level as compared to Rajasthan, Bihar which have low literacy level.

Rural-Urban Differences

- There is migration from rural areas to urban areas as there are better job opportunities etc.
- 68.8% of our population still lives in rural areas.
- Though agriculture is the main activity in rural areas, there are many non agricultural activities, such as post office, teaching, small businesses, transport and communication.

Reasons for migration from rural to urban areas:

- Mass media is responsible for making the rural area aware of the urban area and one of the causes of migration from rural to urban.
- Many resources of the rural areas is being taken away. Such as rivers drying up, l
- land due to construction is making them move to urban areas. '
- In urban areas there is anonymity and no one cares about caste etc.
- People who are not educated can pick up any job they like in urban areas.

• Metropolis: City with infrastructure and the suburbs are different.

• Megapolis: City with infrastructure and the suburbs are included, for example, NCR.

Population Policy of India

- In 1952 the National Family Planning Programme (NFPP) was introduced.
- It tried to influence the rate and pattern of population in socially desirable direction.
- Its objectives were:
- Population should be controlled and awareness should be spread

- in a way which is socially desirable.
- Control the birth/reduce birth rate through birth control methods.
 - During emergency by Indira Gandhi (1975-76) All fundamental rights are taken away. Press was censored.
 - Anybody could be put in jail without a trial.

Mass sterilization programme was introduced by Sanjay Gandhi, the younger son of the then prime minister of India Mrs. Indira Gandhi to control population. In this tubectomy was performed for women and vasectomy for men was conducted in a very haphazard manner. All government teachers, doctors were under a lot of stress due to the mass sterilization camp. It was renewed as National Family Welfare Programme (NFWP). In this people could only be sterilized if the people agree to do it and their signature was needed.

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2 MARKS QUESTIONS (For practice)

1. What is "Demography"?

2. Differentiate between formal demography and social demography.
3. What is infant mortality rate?
4. Why is raising dependency ratio a cause for worry in countries that are facing an aging population?
5. Why is falling dependency ratio a source of economic growth and prosperity?
6. What is the cause of famines?
7. Name the states till have very high TFRS.
8. State the importance of demographic data.
9. How does India benefit from a 'demographic dividend'?
10. Name the technique used to determine the sex of a child.
11. What is 'Replacement Level'?
12. What is "Sex Ratio"?
13. State & critically analyze the Malthusian theory of population change.
14. Mention the features responsible for the decline in the child sex ration.
15. Explain the regional variation of low child sex ratio in India.