

Quadrant –II

Notes

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Module name: Qualitative aspects of India's Population.

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Related material:

Qualitative aspects of India's population:

By demographic features we mean the characteristics of population like, size, composition, diversity, growth and quality of population etc. To have basic understanding of the population problem of a specific country, one should have a complete knowledge regarding the basic features of population of that country.

► **Large Size and Fast Growth:**

The first main feature of Indian population is its large size and rapid growth. According to 2001 census, the population of India is 102.87 crore and 124 crores in 2011. In terms of size, it is the second largest population in the world, next only to China whose population was 127 crore in 2001 and 134 crores in 2011. India's population was 23.6 crore in 1901 and it increased to 124 crore in 2011. In addition to its size, the rate of growth of population has been alarming since 1951. Population is estimated to be 1.3 billion by 2020. This situation is called population explosion and this is the result of high birth rate and declining death rate

► **Second stage of transition.**

According to the theory of demographic transition, the population growth of a country passes through three different stages as development proceeds. The first stage is characterized by high birth rate and high death rate. So in this stage the net growth of population is zero. Till 1921, India was in the 1st stage of demographic transition. The second stage is featured by high birth rate and declining death rate leading to the rapid growth of population. India entered the second stage of demographic transition after 1921. In 1921-30 India entered the 2nd stage. This led to rapid growth of population. India is now passing through the second stage of demographic transition. While developed countries are in 3rd stage.

► **Rapidly increasing density**

Another feature of India's population is its rapidly rising density. Density of population means to the average number of people living per square kilometer. The density of population in India was 117 per square km. in 1951 which increased to 324 in 2001 to 382 in 2011, and is estimated by worldometer.info to be 464 in 2020. This makes India one of the most densely populated countries of the world.

This adversely affects the land-man ratio. India occupies 2.4 per-cent of the total land area of the world but supports 16.7 per-cent of the total world population. Moreover, there is no causal relationship between density of population and economic development of a country. For example, Japan & England having higher density can be rich and Afghanistan & Myanmar having lower density can be poor. However in an developing country like India with its low capital and technology, the rapidly rising density is too heavy a burden for the country to bear.

► **Gender ratio not favoring female**

Sex ratio refers to the number of females per thousand males. India's position is quite different than other countries. For example the number of female per thousand males was 1170 in Russia, 1060 in U.K., 1050 in U.S.A. whereas it is 927 in India according to 1991 census. The sex ratio in India as 972 per thousand in 1901 which declined to 953 in 1921 and to 950 in 1931. Again, in 1951, sex ratio further declined to 946. In 1981, sex ratio reduced to 934 against 930 per thousand in 1971. During 1991, sex ratio was recorded 927 per thousand. The sex ratio is 933 per thousand in 2001 and 943 in 2011. State wise Kerala has more females than males. Therefore, we can conclude that sex ratio composition is totally unfavorable to female

► **Bottom heavy Age Structure:**

The age composition of Indian population is bottom heavy. It implies that ratio of persons in age group 0-14 is relatively high. According to 2001 census, children below 14 years were 35.6%. This figure is lower than the figures of previous year. High birth rate is mainly responsible for large number of dependent children per adult. In developed countries the population of 0-14 age group is between 20 to 25%. To reduce the percentage of this age group, it is essential to slow down the birth rate.

► **Dominance of rural population**

Another feature of Indian population is the dominance of rural population. In 1951, rural population was 82.7% and urban population was 17.3%. In 1991 rural population was 74.3% and urban population was 25.7%. In 2001, the rural population was 72.2% and urban population was 27.8. However by 2011 rural population reduced and was 68.84%. The ratio of rural urban population of a country is an index of the level of industrialization of that country. So process of urbanization slow and India continues to be land of villages.

► **Low Quality Population:**

The quality of population can be judged from life expectancy, the level of literacy and level of training of people. Keeping these parameters in mind, quality of population in India is low.

► **Low Work Participation Rate:**

Low proportion of labour force in total population is a striking feature of India's population. In India, Labour force means that portion of population which belongs to the age group of 15-59. In other words, the ratio of working population to the total is referred to as work participation rate. Reaching an all-time high of 63.70 percent in 2005 and a record low of 49.80 percent in 2018. This rate is very low in India in comparison to the developed countries of the world. Total working population was 43% in 1961 which declined to 37.6% in 1991. This position improved slightly to 39.2% in 2011. That means total non-working population was 623 million (60.8 percent) and working population was 402 million (39.2%). Similarly low rate of female employment and bottom-heavy age structure are mainly responsible for low work participation in India.

► **Symptoms of Over-population:**

The concept of over-population is essentially a quantitative concept. When the population size of the country exceeds the ideal size, we call it over-population. According to T.R. Malthus, the father of demography, when the population of a country exceeds the means of substance available, the country faces the problem of over-population. No doubt, food production has increased substantially but problems like poverty, hunger, malnutrition are still acute. Agriculture is overcrowded in rural areas of the country which is characterized by diminishing returns. This fact leads to the conclusion that India has symptoms of over-population. Indian low per capita income, low standard of living, wide spread unemployment and under-employment etc. indicate that our population size has crossed the optimum limit.

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