



POPULATION GROWTH - A BOON OR BANE: AN ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

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GROWTH PERFORMANCE OF POPULATION IN INDIA

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Abstract

India is second in population size in the world with the population of more than one billion whereas its total land area is only 2.4 percent. Every sixth person in the world is an Indian. The rate of population growth during the eighties though marginally less, was still around 2.1 percent. Mortality is slightly higher in India than in China. Indian females have a life expectancy at birth of 64 years which is below the world average but a substantial improvement is there in the life expectancy during the past five decades. Population growth is the most important set of events ever to occur in human evolution as it alters the way of life in

every human civilization. It is indeed an inevitable force, since every social, political and economic problem that faces the world has demographic change as one of its root causes. Population growth as it affects the food security, energy reserves, environmental degradation, urbanization, international migration, housing; infrastructure is a problem of main concern. The challenge of population explosion should be attended by the policy makers and planners. In order to stabilize the population growth, participatory approach by the citizens of India should be encouraged.

Keywords: Human Civilization, Social, Political.

Introduction

India is second in population size in the world with the population of more than one billion whereas its total land area is only 2.4 percent. Every sixth person in the world is an Indian. The rate of population growth during the eighties though marginally less, was still around 2.1 percent. Mortality is slightly higher in India than in China. Indian females have a life expectancy at birth of 64 years which is below the world average but a substantial improvement is there in the life expectancy during the past five decades. The infant mortality rate declined to 63 per 1,000 live birth which is above the world average. Women are bearing children at a rate of 3.2 each.

World Bank predicted Indian population to reach 1.41 billion in 2030 and 1.50 billion 2040. Indian researchers K.C.Seal and P.Talwar argue that India will reach the stationary population level by 2080 with a population of 1.886 billion whereas China's population is expected to be 1.890 billion.

The Indian population is adding 18 million people to the world's total each year with an annual growth rate of 1.6 percent. As a result, India's population is expected to exceed that of China by the year 2025. In fact, the population of the Indian subcontinent is already more than mainland China and that does not take into account the 15 million people of Indian origin who are estimated to be living elsewhere in the world.

In the World scenario, six billionth inhabitants have arrived on October 12, 1999 in Sarajevo. The future of 2,40,000 others born every day is far from certain. World population in 2001 was estimated at 6,134.1 million population growing at 78 million a year, has doubled since 1960. Over 95 percentage of is in population developing countries. Meanwhile, population growth has slowed down in Europe, North America and Japan. World population is projected to grow to 8.9 billion by 2050.

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Demographic Transition in India

Population growth is the most important set of events ever to occur in human evolution as it alters the way of life in every human civilization. It is indeed an inevitable force, since every social, political and economic problem that faces the world has demographic change as one of its root causes. Population growth as it affects the food security, energy reserves, environmental degradation, urbanization, international migration, housing; infrastructure is a problem of main concern. As population increases, the same rate of growth will produce a larger absolute increase in size from year to year. Human populations like all the living things, have the capacity for exponential increase.

The population growth of the world began to grow more noticeable after the agricultural revolution. The industrial revolution occurred in past because of this growth and after this, the size and rate of world population growth have increased even more rapidly. Population growth is a main issue for developing countries as it plays an important role in delimiting the size of economic growth. The current world situation finds China and India as the most populous countries, followed by the United States, Indonesia and Brazil.

Population Growth in India

Population census was taken in India for the first time in 1871 and thereafter for every ten years. During 1871-81 the population increased at the rate of 0.9 percent, while during 1881-91 it increased by 9.4 percent and in the next decade (1891-1901) it declined to 1.0 percent. India's population is very large relative to its resources and has a high growth rate. Table 1.1 details the population growth in India since 1901.

Table 1.1 India's Population in Variation Census Years

Year	Population Growth	Decadal variation		Average annual exponential growth rate	Progressive Growth rate
		Absolute	Percent		
1901	238,396,327	-	-	-	-
1911	252,093,390	13,697,063	5.75	0.56	5.75
1921	251,321,213	-772,177	-0.31	-0.03	5.42
1931	278,977,238	27,656,025	11.0	1.04	17.02
1941	318,660,580	39,683,342	14.22	1.33	33.67
1951	361,088,090	42,420,485	13.31	1.25	51.47
1961	439,234,771	77,682,873	21.51	1.96	84.25
1971	548,159,652	108,924,881	24.80	2.20	129.94
1981	683,329,097	135,169,445	24.66	2.22	186.64
1991	843,387,888	163,058,791	23.86	2.14	255.03
2001	1,027,015,247	180,627,359s	21.34	1.93	330.80
2011	1,210,193,422	183,178,175	17.83	1.64	407.63

Source: Census of India, Provisional Population Totals, Series -1, Paper-1 of 2011

Phase I: 1901-21

During this first phase, the population of India recorded a negative growth. The rates of growth prior to this period was highly unsteady due to fluctuation in mortality because of catastrophies like famines and epidemics.

The decade 1901-11 can be considered as a normal decade since the crops were reasonably good and the absence of famines. Yet the population in the next decade viz., 1911-21 the country witnessed a negative growth of population due to heavy mortality. The plague and influenza which occurred in this decade said to have taken 15 to 16 million lives. The death rate during the decade was 48.6 per thousand against 42.8 in 1901-11. The birth rate was 49 per thousand which was more or less equal to death rate and as a consequence the growth of population during this phase was zero or negative.

During 1901-11, the decadal variation was 5.75 percent where as average annual exponential growth rate was 0.56 percent. This rates can be considered as normal as there were no significant seasonal fluctuations or famines which covered high mortality. Up to 1921, the rate of population growth was unsteady. The decade 1911-21 experienced a negative rate of growth. The percent decadal variation was - 0.31 percent and average exponential growth rate was -0.03 percent which was the lowest during the whole census history. Though agricultural conditions were favourable during this decade, the epidemic of plague swept millions of people.

Phase II: 1921-51

The second phase started after 1921 and continued till 1951. During this period, the annual population growth rate increased by three times. Thus the year 1921 can be termed as a great divide in the demographic history of the country, because it marked a beginning of regular growth and also a rapid growth of population. The decade 1921-31 recorded an average exponential growth rate of 1.04. During 1921-31, the all India decennial growth rate was 11.0 with the highest being Kerala 21.9 and the lowest being Uttar Pradesh with 6.7 percent.

During the 30 year period of 1921 to 1951, the Indian population grew on an overall growth rate of 44 percent. The population was substantially higher than the national average for some states like Assam, Kerala, Rajasthan, Tripura, Sikkim and West Bengal, the major factors responsible for this phenomenon being the migration of the workers into these areas from different parts of the country.

The post 1921 period witnessed a rapid growth of population. The major causes of high mortality have been gradually brought under control and between 1921 and 1951 the country witnessed a gradual size in population growth rates.

During this period the population increased from 251.3 million in 1921 to 361.1 million in 1951. During the decade 1941-51, the average decennial growth rate was 13.31 percent and average exponential growth rate was 1.25 percent. During this period, the all-India decennial growth rate was 21.9 percent the highest being Kerala with and the lowest being Punjab with 1.8 percent.

Phase III: 1951-2011

The population of India, which at the turn of the twentieth century was only around 238.4 million increased by more than four times in a period of hundred years to reach 1210 million in 2011. India achieved its highest decadal growth rate during 1971 (24.8 percent). In absolute terms, the population has increased by a 180.6 million during 1991-2011, which is more than the population of Brazil, the fifth most populous country in the world. The prevalence of high birth and death rates during the early years of the demographic history of India restricted the growth rate and the size of population. This phenomenon was highest during 1921 when the country registered a negative growth rate. India has passed through four phases of population growth from 1901 to 2011.

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Conclusion

Population is a botheration to countries prosperity. This study is undertaken to analyze the demographic transition of India. This study has confirmed that the problems of rural emigration, urban attraction, gender inequality and regional biass in terms of demographic indicators. The challenge of population explosion should be attended by the policy makers and planners. In order to stabilize the population growth, participatory approach by the citizens of India should be encouraged. We expect that the skill full India and skilled population will be the agenda of future.

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