

## Chapter- 6

# POPULATION

### STUDY NOTES

In this chapter, you will find the answers of mainly 3 questions:

1. Population size and distribution: How many people are there and where are they located?
2. Population growth and processes of population change: How has the population grown and changed through time?
3. Characteristics or qualities of the population: What are their age, sex composition, literacy levels, occupational structure and health conditions?

## Population Size and Distribution

### India's Population Size and Distribution by Numbers

- As of March 2011, India's population was 1,210.6 million which accounts for 17.5% of the world's population.
- Uttar Pradesh is the most populous state of India as it counts about 16% of the country's population.
- Almost half of India's population lives in just five states which are Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh.

### India's Population Distribution by Density

Population Density is calculated as the number of persons per unit area. The population density of India in the year 2011 was 382 persons per sq km. That's why India is considered one of the most densely populated countries in the world.

## Population Growth and Processes of Population Change

The numbers, distribution and composition of the population are constantly changing. This is the influence of the interaction of the three processes:

1. Birth
2. Death
3. Migration

## Population Growth

Growth of population refers to the change in the number of inhabitants of a country/territory during a specific period of time. This change can be expressed in 2 ways:

1. In terms of absolute numbers: The absolute numbers are obtained by subtracting the earlier population (e.g. that of 2001) from the later population (e.g. that of 2011).
2. In terms of percentage change per year: It is studied in percent per annum, e.g. a rate of increase of 2 per cent per annum means that in a given year, there was an increase of two

persons for every 100 persons in the base population. This is referred to as the annual growth rate.

## Processes of Population Change/Growth

Three main processes of change of population are:

**1) Birth Rates:** Birth rate is the number of live births per thousand persons in a year. In India, birth rates have always been higher than death rates.

**2) Death Rates:** Death rate is the number of deaths per thousand persons in a year.

**3) Migration:** Migration is the movement of people across regions and territories. Migration can be internal (within the country) or international (between the countries). It influences the distribution of population within the nation. In India, the rural-urban migration has resulted in a steady increase in the percentage of the population in cities and towns.

## Age Composition

The age composition of a population refers to the number of people in different age groups in a country. The population of a nation is grouped into 3 broad categories:

**1) Children (generally below 15 years):** They are economically unproductive and need to be provided with food, clothing, education and medical care.

**2) Working Age (15–59 years):** They are economically productive and biologically reproductive. They comprise the working population.

**3) Aged (Above 59 years):** They may be working voluntarily but they are not available for employment through recruitment.

## Sex Ratio

It is defined as the number of females per 1000 males in the population. Sex Ratio is an important social indicator to measure the extent of equality between males and females in a society at a given time.

## Literacy Rates

According to the Census 2011, a person aged 7 years and above, who can read and write with understanding in any language, is treated as literate. India's literacy rate is 73% as per the census of 2011.

## Occupational Structure

The distribution of the population according to different types of occupation is referred to as the occupational structure. Occupations are classified as:

- 1. Primary:** Primary activities include agriculture, animal husbandry, forestry, fishing, mining and quarrying, etc
- 2. Secondary:** Secondary activities include manufacturing industry, building and construction work, etc.
- 3. Tertiary:** Tertiary activities include transport, communications, commerce, administration and other services.

## Health

Health is an important component of population composition, which affects the process of development. The substantial improvement in Public Health in our country is the result of many factors such as:

- Prevention of infectious diseases
- Application of modern medical practices in diagnosis and treatment of ailments

### Adolescent Population

Adolescents are grouped in the age group of 10 to 19 years. They are the most important resource for the future. It constitutes one-fifth of the total population of India. Nutrition requirements of adolescents are higher than those of a normal child or adult.

### National Population Policy

The National Population Policy (NPP) 2000 provides a policy framework for imparting free and compulsory school education up to 14 years of age. It also helps in

- reducing infant mortality rate to below 30 per 1000 live births
- Achieving universal immunisation of children against all vaccine-preventable diseases
- Promoting delayed marriage for girls, and making family welfare a people-centred programme

NPP 2000 also put emphasis on other important needs of adolescents including protection from unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). It aims towards encouraging:

- Delayed marriage and child-bearing
- Education of adolescents about the risks of unprotected sex
- Making contraceptive services accessible and affordable
- Providing food supplements
- Nutritional services
- Strengthening legal measures to prevent child marriage

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