

## **Subject – Indian Economy - I**

### **Notes Unit 2 Part A**

**By -**

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### **Population of India -**

#### **Population Size and Distribution**

The current population of India contributes to 17% of the global population. Also, all these people are unevenly distributed across 3.28 million square kilometers of our geographical area.

According to the 2001 Census, Uttar Pradesh is the highest populated state in India with a total number of 166 million people. While on the other hand, states like Sikkim and Lakshadweep have the lowest population of 0.5 million in Sikkim and only 60000 people in the island state of Lakshadweep.

Furthermore, about half of the country's population is concentrated around five major states- Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar and Andhra Pradesh. Though Rajasthan is the largest state in size, its population contributes to only 5.5% of the total population of India.

This uneven distribution of the population is due to the varying population density of the country. Population density = the total number of people per unit of area. Also, population density is largely dependent on the geographical location and geological factors. Therefore, states like Assam, Himachal Pradesh, and other hilly terrains have a lower density of population. While the northern plains and coastal areas like Kerala, West Bengal, and Maharashtra have very high population density.

## **Population Growth and Processes of Population Change -**

Population growth is determined by the annual growth rate, which is calculated in percent per annum. Like, if there is an increase of two people per 100 people of the population, then the annual growth rate would be 2%.

Another important aspect of population study is the change in population. This is largely influenced by three main factors like birth, death, and migration of people in a given year.

- *Birth rate: The number of children born per 1000 people in a year*
- *Death rate: The number of people died per 1000 people in a year.*

What is most noteworthy here that the birth rate in India is and has always been higher than the death rate, which is a major reason behind population growth.

The third and one of the most important factors of population change is migration. Migration can be internal (between states) and international (between countries). While internal migration does not lead to population change, it does affect the population density in the migrated areas.

## **Characteristics of the Population of India -**

### **Age Composition**

One of the most important characteristics of the population of India, the age composition determines the country's social and economic structure. The total population is broadly divided into three age groups-

- Children- below 15 years
- Working-age- 15- 59 years
- Aged (Senior)- 59 years and above

## Adolescent population

This is one of the most important and influential elements of the age composition aspect of the population. Adolescents are people between the age groups of 10-19 years and in our country. Also, about one-fifth of the population comprise adolescent individuals. They are especially relevant to the future growth and are the most significant part of the population of India.

## Sex Ratio

The sex ratio of population is determined by the number of females for every 1000 males. This helps in understanding the equality of males and females in the society, which consequently gives an idea of the nation's culture. India's sex ratio has always been on the lower side, until recently. States like Kerala and Union Territory of Pondicherry have higher sex [ratio](#) than the major states.

## Literacy Rate

This is yet another important characteristic of the population because the literacy rate of a country determines its economic structure and growth. Literacy, according to the 2001 Census, is the ability of a person of 7 years and above to read and write in any language. The census states the literacy rate of the population of India is almost 74.04% (2016).

## Occupational Structure

The number of people in a population involved in different economic activities helps assess the growth of the country's economy. The occupational structure is the distribution of the population across different occupations. This is an important element of the population of India. Also, our occupational structure has three broad categories-

- Primary occupation- agriculture, fishing, mining, animal husbandry, forestry etc.
- Secondary occupation- manufacturing, building, construction work etc.
- Tertiary occupation- communication, transportation, administration etc.

## Causes for Increase in Urban Population:

The following are the two main causes of an increase in urban population:

### 1. Migration Effect:

In India, rural people have to face a number of difficulties like less opportunities of employment, low level of income, lack of education facilities, lack of health and medical facilities. Thus, in order to get rid of these difficulties rural folks migrate to urban areas.

### 2. Attraction Effect:

Urban life has its own attraction. Rural lives are very much lured by all these temptations and decide to live in towns and cities. According to National Sample Survey, “the main causes of rural male to migrate to urban areas is employment and rural female is wedding ties.”

### (iii) Age Structure:

The age structure is the indicator of the history of fertility, mortality and migration. The age structure in India since 1951 has been summarized in table 5.

**Table 5. Age Composition of Population in India : 1981 Census**

Age Group Year	0—14 Number (Million)	%	15—59 Number (Million)	%	60 Number (Million)	%
1951	135.2	37.4	205.5	56.9	20.3	5.7
1961	180.1	41.0	234.1	53.3	24.7	5.7
1971	230.3	42.0	285.2	52.0	32.7	6.0
1981	272.0	39.7	370.6	54.1	42.5	6.2

Table 5 reveals the stability in the age distribution during 1951-81. The proportion of persons in the age group 0—14 changed very little in this period. During the census of 1961 and 1971 there is an increase in the proportion of population in this younger age group, especially due to decline in infant mortality. By 1981, despite virtual constancy of the rate of population growth during the 1960's and 1970's, the proportion of children in the age group 0—14 and youth-dependency ratio have declined.

This was due to the fall in the fertility rates. The proportion of the age, 60 and over, which had shown a rise by 1971, has increased a little more to an unprecedented level of 6.2 per cent. The proportion of population in the working age group 15—59 has risen between 1971 and 1981 to value higher than that reported in 1961 census. It is expected further that decline in fertility, not compensated by a fall in mortality, will lower the proportion of population in the lower age groups.

**(iv) Expectation of Life:**

Expectation of life refers to the average life of the inhabitants of a nation. In India expectation of life before the start of planning was very low. But since the inception of planning in India, it has started to improve steadily. For instance, in 1921 expectation of life was 19.4 years which in 1931 increased to 26.9 years. In 1951, it was 33.0 years, 52 years in 1971 and 59 years in 1991.

In 2001, expectation of life was recorded to be 63.9 years as seen in Table 6. However, Prof. A.K. Dasgupta is of the view that in the process of economic development, growth rate of population is not as much a determining factor as the expectation of life. According to him up till now the significance of expectation of life in the context of economic development has not been properly recognized. In a country like India low rate of saving is also due to low expectation of life.

**Table 6. Expectation of Life**

Year	1921	1931	1941	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	1995	1997	2001
Expectation of Life (in years)	19.4	26.9	32.0	30.0	41.0	52.0	54.0	59.0	61.0	63.1	63.9

(Source : Eco-Survey, Govt. of India—2003-04)

**(v) Literacy:**

Literacy is one of the important social characteristics on which information is obtained of every individual in the census. A person aged seven and above, who can both read and write with understanding in any language is treated as literate. According to the census of 2001, the rate of

literacy in India is 65.38 percent. Males rate of literacy is 75.85 percent and females rate of literacy is 54.16 percent.

The highest male literacy rate is in Kerala. It is 94.2 percent. The female literacy rate of Kerala is 88 percent which is also the highest in India. The lowest female literacy rate is in Bihar which is only 34 percent. In Punjab the female literacy rate is 63.5 percent. In Haryana, it is 56.3 percent and in Himachal Pradesh it is 58 percent. In newly created three states the highest literacy rate is in Uttaranchal. It is 72 percent. In Chhattisgarh, it is 65 percent and in Jharkhand, it is only 54 percent. It may be noted that all the states and union territories have shown increase in literacy rate during 1991-2001.

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