

India-People and Economy

Chapter-1 Population: Distribution, Density, Growth and Composition

India is the 2nd most populous country after China in the world i.e. 1,028 million (2001). India's population is larger than the total population of North America, South America and Australia

Distribution of population

- India has a highly uneven pattern of population distribution
- Uttar Pradesh has the highest population followed by Maharashtra, Bihar and West Bengal
- 76% of population are contributed by the following states- U.P., Maharashtra, Bihar, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Karnataka and Gujarat,
- Very small percentage of population are share by the states of Jammu and Kashmir (0.11%), Arunachal Pradesh (0.11%), Uttarakhand (0.84%)

India has uneven spatial distribution of population. This is mainly due to the following factors

1. **Physical factors**- Climate along with terrain and availability of water largely determines the pattern of the population distribution. For example.the North Indian Plains, deltas and Coastal Plains have higher proportion of population than the interior districts of southern and central states, Himalayas, some of the north eastern and the western states.
2. Development of irrigation (Rajasthan), availability of mineral and energy resources (Jharkhand) and development of transport network (Peninsular States) have resulted in moderate to high concentration of population
3. **Socio-economic factors**- Evolution of settled agriculture and agricultural development; pattern of human settlement; development of transport network, industrialisation and urbanisation. The regions falling in the river plains and coastal areas of India have larger population concentration. Example- Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Bangalore, Pune,



Ahmedabad, Chennai and Jaipur have high concentration of population due to industrial development and urbanisation

4. **Historical factor**- the concentration of population remains high because of an early history of human settlement and development of transport network.

Density of population

- It is expressed as a number of persons per unit area
- It helps in getting a better understanding of the spatial distribution of population in relation to land
- The density of population in India (2011) is 382 persons per sq km
- There was steady increase of more than 200 persons per sq km over the last 50 years
- The density of population increased from 117 persons/ sq km in 1951 to 382 persons/sq km in 2011
- High density populated states- Delhi, Bihar, West Bengal, UP, Kerala and Tamil Nadu
- Moderate density populated states- Assam, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Jharkhand, Odisha
- Low density populated states- The hill states of the Himalayan region and North eastern states of India

Growth of population

- It is the change in the number of people living in a particular area between two points of time
- Its rate is expressed in percentage
- Population growth has two components namely; natural and induced
- The natural growth is analysed by assessing the crude birth and death rates, the induced components are explained by the volume of inward and outward movement of people in any given area
- The annual growth rate of India's population is 1.64 % (2011)

There are **four distinct phases of growth** identified within 1901-2001

1. **Phase I**- The period from 1901-1921 is referred to as a period of stagnant or stationary phase of growth of India's population, since in this period growth rate was very low, even recording a negative growth rate during 1911-1921. Both the birth rate and death rate



were high keeping the rate of increase low. Poor health and medical services, illiteracy of people at large and inefficient distribution system of food and other basic necessities were largely responsible for a high birth and death rates

2. **Phase II-** The decades 1921-1951 are referred to as the period of steady population growth. An overall improvement in health and sanitation throughout the country brought down the mortality rate. At the same time better transport and communication system improved distribution system. The crude birth rate remained high in this period leading to higher growth rate than the previous phase. This is impressive at the backdrop of Great Economic Depression, 1920s and World War II.
3. **Phase III-** The decades 1951-1981 are referred to as the period of population explosion in India, which was caused by a rapid fall in the mortality rate but a high fertility rate of population in the country. The average annual growth rate was as high as 2.2 %. It is in this period, after the Independence, that developmental activities were introduced through a centralised planning process and economy started showing up ensuring the improvement of living condition of people at large. Increased international migration bringing in Tibetans, Bangladeshis, Nepalis and Pakistan contributed to the high growth rate.
4. **Phase IV-** In the post 1981 till present, the growth rate of country's population though remained high, has started slowing down gradually. A downward trend of crude birth rate is held responsible for such a population growth. This was, in turn, affected by an increase in the mean age at marriage, improved quality of life particularly education of females in the country.

Regional variations

- Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Puducherry, and Goa show a low rate of growth not exceeding 20% over the decade
- Kerala registered the lowest population growth rate (9.4%) in the country
- High population growth rate- Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Sikkim, Assam, West Bengal, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, and Jharkhand (20-25%)
- During 2001-2011, the population growth rate has fallen in the following states Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh compared to 1991-2001



- Lowest growth rate recorded in the state of Andhra Pradesh (3.5%)
- Highest growth rate recorded in the state of Maharashtra
- Tamil Nadu (3.9 %) and Puducherry (7.1%) have registered some increase during 2001-2011 over the previous decade
- An important aspect of population growth in India is the growth of its adolescents
- At present the share of adolescents i.e., up to the age group of 10-19 years is about 20.9% (2011)
- Male adolescents constitute 52.7 % and female adolescents constitute 47.3%
- **Challenges for the society are** lower age at marriage, illiteracy – particularly female illiteracy, school dropouts, low intake of nutrients, high rate of maternal mortality of adolescent mothers, high rates of HIV/AIDS infections, physical and mental disability or retardedness, drug abuse and alcoholism, juvenile delinquency and commitment of crimes, etc.
- **Government of India undertaken certain policies to impart proper education to the adolescent groups. These are-**
- The **National Youth Policy** is one example which has been designed to look into the overall development of our large youth and adolescent population.
- The National Youth Policy of Government of India, launched in 2003, stresses on an all-round improvement of the youth and adolescents enabling them to shoulder responsibility towards constructive development of the country
- It also aims at reinforcing the qualities of patriotism and responsible citizenship
- The **thrust of this policy** is youth empowerment in terms of their effective participation in decision making and carrying the responsibility of an able leader
- Special emphasis was given in empowering women and girl child to bring parity in the male-female status
- deliberate efforts were made to look into youth health, sports and recreation, creativity and awareness about new innovations in the spheres of science and technology

Population composition

Population composition is a distinct field of study within population geography with a vast coverage of analysis of age and sex, place of residence, ethnic characteristics, tribes, language, religion, marital status, literacy and education, occupational characteristics, etc



Rural Urban composition

- Composition of population by their respective places of residence is an important indicator of social and economic characteristics
- It is significant for a country where about 68.8%(2011) of its total population lives in village
- India has 640,867 villages according to the Census 2011 out of which 597,608 (93.2 %) are inhabited villages
- Bihar and Sikkim have very high percentage of rural population
- Goa and Maharashtra have lowest percentage of rural population
- The Union Territories, on the other hand, have smaller proportion of rural population, except Dadra and Nagar Haveli (53.38%)
- The size of villages also varies considerably
- It is less than 200 persons in the hill states of north-eastern India, Western Rajasthan and Rann of Kutch
- And high as 17 thousand persons in the states of Kerala and in parts of Maharashtra
- The pattern of distribution of rural population of India reveals that both at intra-State and inter-State levels, the relative degree of urbanisation and extent of rural-urban migration regulate the concentration of rural population
- The growth rate of urban population has accelerated due to enhanced economic development and improvement in health and hygienic conditions
- In almost all the states and Union Territories, there has been a considerable increase of urban population
- This indicates both development of urban areas in terms of socio-economic conditions and an increased rate of rural-urban migration
- For eg. the main road links and railroads in the North Indian Plains, the industrial areas around Kolkata, Mumbai, Bengaluru – Mysuru, Madurai – Coimbatore, Ahmedabad – Surat, Delhi – Kanpur and Ludhiana – Jalandhar
- In the agriculturally stagnant parts of the middle and lower Ganga Plains, Telengana, non-irrigated Western Rajasthan, remote hilly, tribal areas of north-east, along the flood prone areas of Peninsular India and along eastern part of Madhya Pradesh, the degree of urbanisation has remained low

Linguistic Composition



- India is a land of linguistic diversity
- According to Grierson (Linguistic Survey of India, 1903 –1928) there were 179 languages and as many as 544 dialects in the country
- In the context of modern India, there are about 22 scheduled languages and a number of non-scheduled languages
- Among the scheduled languages, the speakers of Hindi have the highest percentage
- The smallest language groups are Kashmiri and Sanskrit speakers

Linguistic classification

The speakers of major Indian languages belong to four language families, which have their sub-families and branches or groups

Family : Austric (Nishada)1.38%

- Sub-family : Austro-Asiatic , Austric-Nesian
- Branch/Group : Mon-Khmer, Munda
- Speech areas : Meghalaya, Nicobar Islands (Mon-Khmer), West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Assam, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra (Munda)

Family: Dravidian((Dravida)20%

- Branch/group: South-Dravidian, Central Dravidian, North Dravidian
- Speech areas: Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala(South-Dravidian); Andhra Pradesh, M.P., Orissa, Maharashtra(Central Dravidian); Bihar, Orissa, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh(North Dravidian)

Family: Sino-Tibetan(Kirata)0.85%

- Sub-family: Tibeto – Myanmari, Siamese-Chinese
- Branch/group: Tibeto-Himalayan, North Assam, Assam- Myanmari
- Speech areas: Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim (Tibeto-Himalayan); Arunachal Pradesh(North Assam); Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Meghalaya(Assam- Myanmari)

Family: Indo –European(Aryan) 73%

- Sub-family-Indo-Aryan
- Branch/group: Iranian, Dardic, Indo-Aryan

- Speech areas: Outside India(Iranian), Jammu & Kashmir(Dardic), Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, U.P., Rajasthan, Haryana, M.P.,Bihar, Orissa, West Bengal, Assam,Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa(Indo- Aryan)

Religious composition

- Religion is one of the most dominant forces affecting the cultural and political life of the most of Indians
- Hindus are distributed as a major group in many states (ranging from 70 - 90 %and above) except the districts of states along Indo-Bangladesh border, Indo-Pak border, Jammu & Kashmir, Hill States of North-East and in scattered areas of Deccan Plateau and Ganga Plain
- Muslims, the largest religious minority, are concentrated in Jammu & Kashmir, certain districts of West Bengal and Kerala, many districts of Uttar Pradesh , in and around Delhi and in Lakshadweep. They form majority in Kashmir valley and Lakshadweep
- The Christian population is distributed mostly in rural areas of the country. The main concentration is observed along the Western coast around Goa, Kerala and also in the hill states of Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Chotanagpur area and Hills of Manipur
- Sikhs are mostly concentrated in relatively small area of the country, particularly in the states of Punjab, Haryana and Delhi
- Jains and Buddhists, the smallest religious groups in India
- Jains have major concentration in the urban areas of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra
- Buddhists are concentrated mostly in Maharashtra. The other areas of Buddhist majority are Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Ladakh in Jammu & Kashmir, Tripura, and Lahul and Spiti in Himachal Pradesh

Composition of work population

- The population of India according to their economic status is divided into three groups, namely; main workers, marginal workers and non-workers
- In India, the proportion of workers (both main and marginal) is only 39.8% (2011) leaving a vast majority of about 60% as non-workers
- This indicates an economic status in which there is a larger proportion of dependent



population

- The proportion of working population, of the states and Union Territories show a moderate variation from about 39.6% in Goa to about 49.9% in Daman and Diu
- The states with larger percentages of workers are Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Meghalaya
- Among the Union Territories, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu have higher participation rate
- The occupational composition of India's population shows a large proportion of primary sector workers compared to secondary and tertiary sectors
- About 54.6 % of total working population are cultivators and agricultural labourers, whereas only 3.8% of workers are engaged in household industries and 41.6 % are other workers including non-household industries, trade, commerce, construction and repair and other services
- The number of female workers is relatively high in primary sector, as well as in secondary and tertiary sectors their participation has increased
- . The proportion of workers in agricultural sector in India has shown a decline over the last few decades (58.2% in 2001 to 54.6% in 2011)
- The participation rate in secondary and tertiary sector has registered an increase. This indicates a shift of dependence of workers from farm-based occupations to non-farm based ones, indicating a sectoral shift in the economy of the country
- The spatial variation of work participation rate in different sectors in the country is very wide
- The states like Himachal Pradesh and Nagaland have very large shares of cultivators
- On the other hand states like Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh have higher proportion of agricultural labourers
- The highly urbanised areas like Delhi, Chandigarh and Puducherry have a very large proportion of workers being engaged in other services
- This indicates not only availability of limited farming land, but also large scale urbanisation and industrialisation requiring more workers in non-farm sectors

