

## **Effects of overpopulation on economic growth of India**

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### **Abstract**

According to the Indian census, carried out in 2011, the population of India was exactly 1,210,193,422, which means India has crossed the 1-billion mark. According to the statistics, it is estimated that in 1st of July 2014, India's population was 1,267,401,849, which corresponds to 17.5% of the total population of the world and places India on the 2nd place as the country with the biggest population, with a population density of 386 people/km<sup>2</sup>. India has more than 50% of its population below the age of 25 and more than 65% below the age of 35. It is expected that, in 2020, the average age of an Indian will be 29 years, compared to 37 for China and 48 for Japan; and, by 2030, India's dependency ratio should be just over 0.4. However, the number of children in India peaked more than a decade ago and is now falling. The issue has entered and remained in the agenda of the Indian governments after the independence, starting with an accent on contraceptives and later shifting to education, improved health care system and the diversified birth control methods. The issues of socio-economic backwardness, early marriages and family norms, lack of adequate health care infrastructure and education are among the major factors and implications that aggravate India's population problem.

**Keywords:** Indian census, population, government, problem and factors

### **Introduction**

According to the Indian census, carried out in 2011, the population of India was exactly 1,210,193,422, which means India has crossed the 1-billion mark. According to the statistics, it is estimated that in 1st of July 2014, India's population was 1,267,401,849, which corresponds to 17.5% of the total population of the world and places India on the 2nd place as the country with the biggest population, with a population density of 386 people/km<sup>2</sup>. India has more than 50% of its population below the age of 25 and more than 65% below the age of 35. It is expected that, in 2020, the average age of an Indian will be 29 years, compared to 37 for China and 48 for Japan; and, by 2030, India's dependency ratio should be just over 0.4. However, the number of children in India peaked more than a decade ago and is now falling. The number of children under the age of five (under-5s) peaked in 2007; since then the number has been falling. The number of Indians under 15 years old peaked slightly later (in 2011) and is now also declining. Further complexity is lent by the great variation that occurs across this population on social parameters such as income and education. Only the continent of Africa exceeds the linguistic, genetic and cultural diversity of the nation of India. The sex ratio is 944 females for 1000 males (2016) (940 per 1000 in 2011). This ratio has been showing an upwards trend for the last two decades after a continuous decline in the last century. This is the second most populous country of the world after China and the various studies have projected that India will be world's number-1 populous country, surpassing China, by 2025.

### **Causes to over population in India**

One of these issues is represented by the early marriage. The origins of child marriage in India are deeply rooted into its historical and cultural background. Early marriages were made backwards societies in order to maximize the chances

of survival of the children due the high rate of mortality. Therefore it was advantageous for the Indian people and also to other cultures to marry at a young age. Nevertheless, child marriages also created further economic, political and social relations due to the high rate of poverty and by the fact that sometimes the only chance of survival for a family was to marry the daughter and have one less mouth to feed. The role of woman in the Indian society is defined by their deeply rooted culture, which gives women a lower social status than to men. This cultural factor has a very large influence upon the development of society from many points of view. Firstly, since the women have a lower social status than men, families struggle to give a male heir, therefore they tend to produce as many children as it takes until one of them will be born a male. Therefore, the family is enlarged rapidly, without taking into consideration the economic issues regarding their welfare. This act of increasing the number of family members in order to have a male heir has a negative effect upon its lineage. When the family realizes that has no possibility to sustain economically, decides to give into marriage one of the young daughters, in order to obtain economic stability in the family. In this case, the family of the bride receives different kind of material reward from the groom's family. Even though legally the marriageable age of a girl is 18 years, the concept of early marriage still prevails and getting married at a young age prolongs the childbearing age. Also, in India, marriage is a sacred obligation and a universal practice, where almost every woman is married at the reproductive age.

### **Poverty and Illiteracy**

Another factor for the rapid growth of population is poverty. Impoverished families have this notion that more the number of members in the family, more will be the numbers to earn income. Some feel that more children are needed to

look after them in their old age. Also, hunger can be a cause of death of their children and hence the need for more children. Strange but true, Indian still lag behind the use of contraceptives and birth control methods. Many of them are not willing to discuss or are totally unaware of them. Illiteracy is thus another cause of over population. In India the poverty and illiteracy are the second biggest factors for the overpopulation phenomena. India's high population growth is another factor which maintains the rate of poverty and vice-versa, poverty sustains overpopulation. One of the reasons why this is happening is because of the Indian economic stagnation. The productivity rate in the agricultural sector is not increasing due to the farming methods of the population. Millions of people are able to survive only relying on farming, and knowing that the Indian arable land is too small in comparison with the population's desired exploitation quota, farming becomes less efficient. Farmers are not able, due to the high population density, to farm larger areas of land, this is why each farmer is limited to less than 1 hectare. The low efficiency in productivity of these small individual farms hampers the growth of hiring opportunities. To the contrary, as the family continues to grow, but the available land mass remains unchanged, the resources have to be shared between many, lowering both the efficiency and the family's income per capita. In order to achieve the necessary self-sufficiency levels, many people choose to migrate from the rural to urban areas, where they can find jobs only in mass-production factories, many of them in the textile sector. These jobs are unstable due to their profit-oriented strategies, neglecting the employees' needs and workplace security which can often lead to accidents and disasters. The problem complicates further when also failing to succeed in the cities, the families continue to expand in order to create more workforce able to economically sustain the family. And the cycle goes on. This method of family expansion, is leading to the faulty enlargement of the cities, which are unable to provide the population with an economically stable job supply, therefore the overpopulation in the urban areas leads to unsatisfiable job demand and to the urbanization of poverty. Another threat to the overpopulation, closely related to poverty is the lack of proper education and high rate of illiteracy. Many Indians are not going to school due to the low social status of families and poverty, but also because of the lack of the necessary educational infrastructure which is negatively influenced by the high birth rate. Therefore the government is not capable of keeping up with this pace of education demand. As a side effect, children also miss out on sexual education, which later translates into issues regarding family planning. One of the biggest effects which come with the overpopulation is the increasing of unemployment. Regardless the numerous opportunities provided by the developing country, the state is unable to provide a job for every job seeker. The rapid increase of population has created dis-equilibrium between the population and the food supplies. This results in the increase of health problems caused by malnutrition and affects the productivity of the population. As in this conditions it becomes harder to properly sustain a family, the standard of living is constantly decreasing. Even if people cannot afford to sustain families with large number of members, they continue to reproduce, in order to assure the survival of the family by producing more workforce and hoping for a bigger income.

## Review of Literature

Being a recent move, there have been various researches on different aspects of the initiative ranging from the economical to social and ethical dimensions. Some of these researches retrieved through internet searches have been reviewed here.

Nihar Rout, (2008) <sup>[1]</sup> "Linkages between population, land use and environment- A case study of Bhubaneshwar city., The study was primarily aimed at examining structure of population growth, profile serration of slums, flow of migrants, changing pattern of land use and resulting changes in the physical environment in terms of air water and solid waste pollution. This study was based on both primary and secondary data. A separate survey of was also conducted to assess the situation of slums. The study revealed that relatively faster higher growth of the city was mainly attributed to heavy inflow of migrants for purpose of better education, better and more employment opportunities and better health facility. Land use pattern showed exception growth toward residential level. This however raised the issue of 86 reduction forestry over vehicular traffic pollution leading to determinants health condition was also pointed for this work.

Krishnamurthy Ponapalli and Fauja an Ram; (2010) <sup>[2]</sup> "Religious taxonomy of states and districts of India of diversity (SID) of religion", In ordinary cavils population dynamic of religion is least irrulied on explored. However in Indian policy, given the secular demography setup, population by religion holds much significance. Two scholar jointly undertook a study regarding religious convergence/ divergence taking place in India and across its states and district. Broadly Indian population by religion is mainly divided into Hindu, Muslim, Shikh, Buddha, Christians, Jains and other. The study clearly revealed that in comparison were census data 1901, 2001 Population data indicated relatively uneven growth in the population of Muslims in comparison with Hindus. 326.23% rise in Hindus and 361.21% in Muslims. There is reported continuous increase in population of all religions at every census. It was mainly because of 1947 partition of India that 1951 census of India showed relative increase in population of Hindu and decline in population of Muslims.

Bhagat, R.B. (2011) <sup>[3]</sup> Emerging pattern of urbanization in India, Economic & Political weekly, Scholar provided a critical look) the declining trend in urban population growth rate observed in the 1980s and 1990s. It was reported in the 91 article that huge number of towns emerged during the last decade. This has contributed significantly to the speeding up of urbanization. On the other hand natural increase in India's urban population this has added to the problem of adding infrastructural facility in emerging town and cities.

Purushotam, M. Kulkarni; (2016) <sup>[4]</sup> How relevant in New Malthusianism in present day Asia" A working paper prepared as part of Mari Bhal memorial lecture persecuted most debating critical issue with respect to relevance of Neo-Malthusianism in present day Asia. Paper in earthier section highlighted demographic situation 93 in Asia in 1950-51. It was then followed by 1970s population scenarios and lastly 1910, having dealt with time series presentation scholar discussed and expired with examples regards actual significance and validity of Malthusian theories in current contrast.

### Methodology

The method used in this paper is descriptive-evaluative method. The study is mainly review based. It is purely supported by secondary source of data, i.e. books, journals, papers and articles and internet.

### Effects of Over Population

Even after 69 years of independence, the scenario of our country is not good, due to over population. One effect of the overpopulation, regarding the exploitation of the natural resources is the inefficient production method which is not in harmony with the demand. The majority of people from the agricultural sector continuously try to produce for themselves on small parcels of land even if it doesn't ensure a sustainable survival of the family. Another problem in this regard is the high demand of products which automatically brings higher prices. Some major impacts of the high population are as follows:

- **Unemployment:** Generating employment for a huge population in a country like India is very difficult. The number of illiterate persons increases every year. The unemployment rate is thus showing an increasing trend.
- **Manpower utilisation:** The number of jobless people is on the rise in India due to economic depression and slow business development and expansion activities.
- **Pressure on infrastructure:** Development of infrastructural facilities is unfortunately not keeping pace with the growth of population. The result is lack of transportation, communication, housing, education, healthcare etc. There has been an increase in the number of slums, overcrowded houses, traffic congestion etc.
- **Resource utilisation:** Land areas, water resources, forests are over exploited. There is also a scarcity of resources.
- **Decreased production and increased costs:** Food production and distribution have not been able to catch up with the increasing population and hence the costs of production have increased. Inflation is the major consequence of over population.
- **Inequitable income distribution:** In the face of an increasing population, there is an unequal distribution of income and inequalities within the country widen.

### Govt. Policy for Population Control in India

The Government of India, politicians, policy-makers should initiate a bold population policy so that the economic growth of the country can keep pace with the demands of a growing population. Major steps which have been already implemented but still need to be emphasised more control population. Increasing the welfare and status of women and girls, spread of education, increasing awareness for the use of contraceptives and family planning methods, sex education, encouraging male sterilisation and spacing births, free distribution of contraceptives and condoms among the poor, encouraging female empowerment, more health care centres for the poor, to name a few, can play a major role in controlling the population.

The National Policy for Empowerment of Women marked a diversification of population policy from control to family welfare and women empowerment. Among other ways of achieving this are the vocational training schemes for girls,

which have the possibility to fundamentally alter the logic behind India's family planning, and shows explicitly how women empowerment can be useful in this regard. As already mentioned, family planning has been driven by economic need and the desire to have sons. As daughters get married to ease the financial burden of the family, making women employable sources of income will not only discourage early marriages but also raise their bargaining power in family, therefore also in the matters regarding family planning.

Education provided by the competent institutions would illuminate and inform the students not only about the effects of the unhealthy reproduction, but also prepare children for responsible family planning and create ground for change in societal attitude regarding family norms. This way, the sexual and family education provided for the students may alter their understanding of sustainable family and help them plan for themselves a better future. Apart from sexual and family aspects, education in general lays ground for economic change, diverting the concentration of workforce from unskilled labour to specialized profitable sectors. India's strengths in the global world in various fields cannot be ignored, whether in science & technology, medicine and health care, business and industry, military, communication, entertainment, literature and many more. Experts are hopeful that by increasing public awareness and enlisting strict population control norms by the Government will definitely lead the way for the country's economic prosperity and control of the population.

### Conclusions

The issue has entered and remained in the agenda of the Indian governments after the independence, starting with an accent on contraceptives and later shifting to education, improved health care system and the diversified birth control methods. The issues of socio-economic backwardness, early marriages and family norms, lack of adequate health care infrastructure and education are among the major factors and implications that aggravate India's population problem. There is a repeating pattern of poor families making more children for number of reasons - creating more workforce in order to improve family's economic state; having male heirs; securing themselves in old age in the absence of adequate social security system - reasons largely based on erroneous calculations and family planning that usually further deteriorates the problems that they had tried to solve. Education offers two paths towards lowering fertility rates - responsible family planning through sexual education and increase in the level of education in general, which can ease poverty, one of the driving forces of overpopulation. And finally industrialization has the potential to alleviate the issue by increasing the benefits of investment in human capital, restricting child labor regulations, rising the costs of child bearing etc. Based on the arguments that explain the factors and implications of the phenomena, these three recommendations provide necessary ground for addressing India's overpopulation.

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