

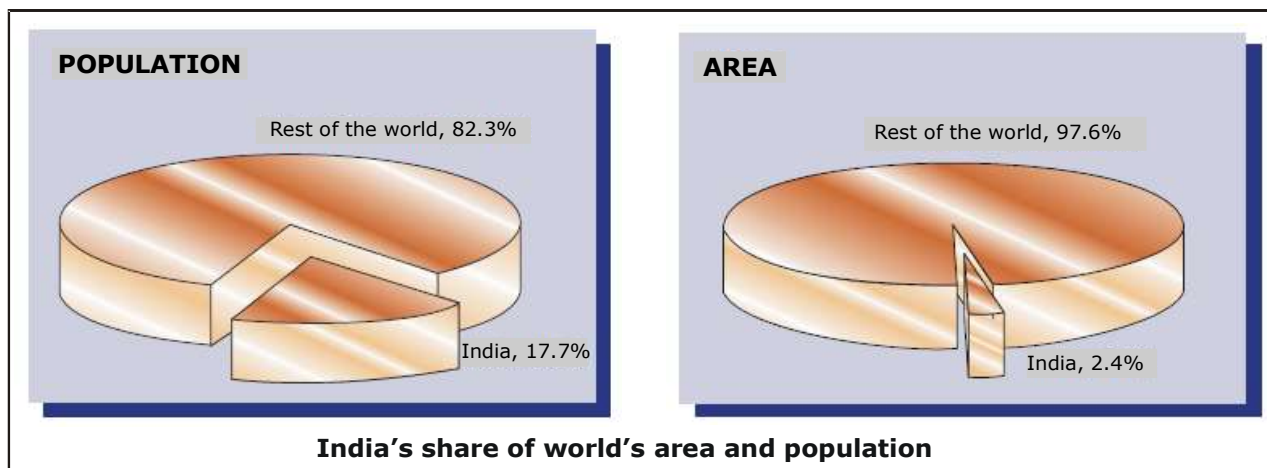
POPULATION

INTRODUCTION

The people are important to develop the economy and society. The people make and use resources and are themselves resources with varying quality. Coal was only a piece of rock, until people were able to invent technology to obtain it and make it a 'resource'. Hence, population is the pivotal element in social studies. It is the point of reference from which all other elements are observed and from which they derive significance and meaning. Their numbers, distribution, growth and characteristics or qualities provide the basic background for understanding and appreciating all aspects of the environment. Human beings are producers and consumers of earth's resources. Therefore, it is important to know how many people are there in a country, where do they live, how and why their numbers are increasing and what are their characteristics. Three major questions about the population are:-

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

Census: A census is an official enumeration of population done periodically. In India the first census was held in the year 1872. The first complete census however was taken in the year 1991. Since then census have been held regularly every tenth year. The Indian census is the most comprehensive source of demographic, social and economic data. (2011- population 1210 millions).



POPULATION SIZE AND DISTRIBUTION

1. **India's Population Size and Distribution by Numbers:** India's population as per census 2011 stood at 1, 210 million, which account for 17.7 per cent of the world's population. These 1.21 billion people are unevenly distributed over our country's vast area of 3.28 million square km, which accounts for 2.4 per cent of the world's area.

The 2011 Census data reveals that Uttar Pradesh is the most populous state of India followed by Maharashtra. Uttar Pradesh accounts for about 17 per cent of the country's population. On the other hand, the Himalayan state Sikkim has a population of just about 0.5 million and Lakshadweep has only 60 thousand people.

Almost half of India's population lives in just five states. These are Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar, West Bengal, and Andhra Pradesh. Rajasthan, the biggest state in terms of area, has only 5.5 per cent of the total population of India.

2. A Large Population has both Economic Advantages and Disadvantages: A large population makes positive contribution to economic growth.

(i) It ensures adequate supply of labour force.

(ii) Large number of people can be trained in all kinds of skills at all levels.

(iii) It provides a ready domestic market for all types of goods. This encourages the producers to produce on large scale.

A large population also works as a serious constraint on economic growth.

(i) National Income gets distributed among larger number of people, therefore, per capita income remains low.

(ii) A large part of the national income gets spent on consumption. This reduces the size of savings. Thus, less capital remains available for investment.

(iii) Rising population results in a rise in pressure on land. This adversely affects productivity in agriculture.

(iv) Rising population makes increasing demands on infrastructure, both social and economic.

In short, a large part of the national effort goes to maintain the present standards of living. These do not result in any economic improvement. Therefore, poverty and unemployment perpetuate.

3. India's Population Distribution by Density: Population density provides a better picture of the uneven distribution. Population density is calculated as the number of persons per unit area. India is one of the most densely populated countries of the world.

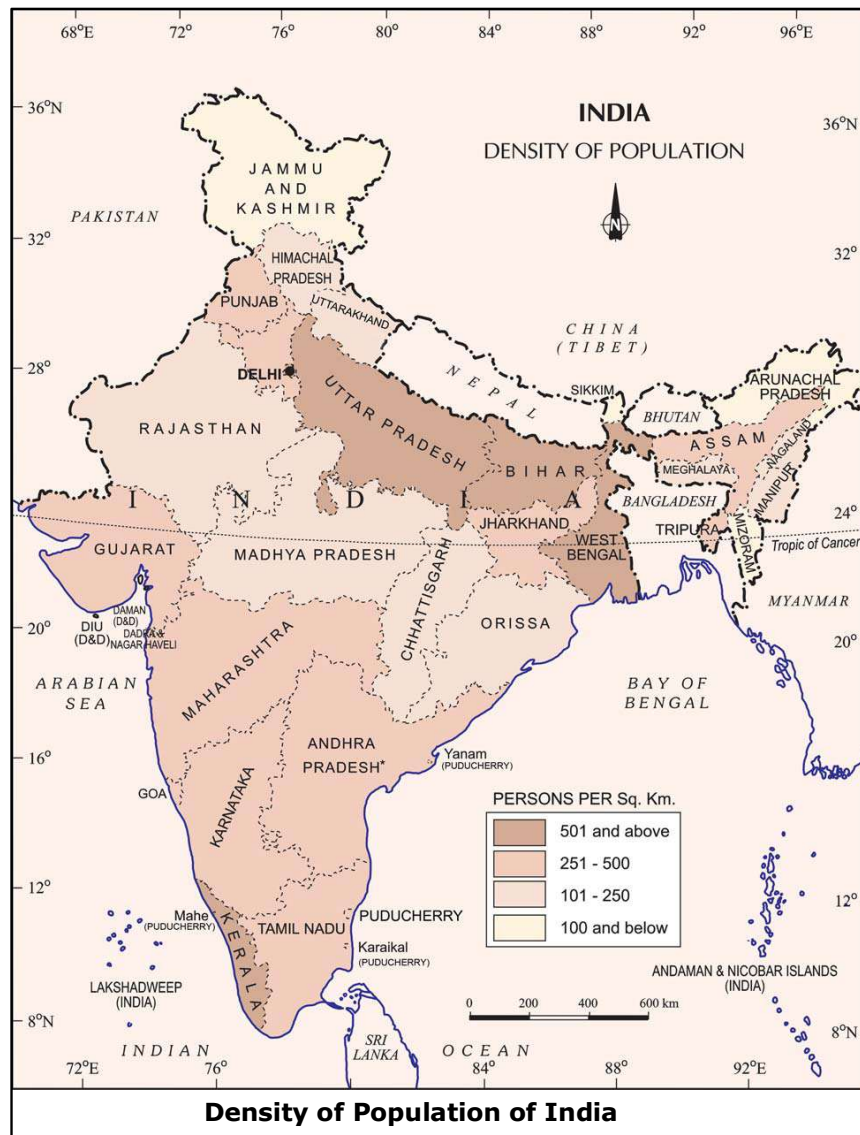
The population density of India in the year 2011 was 382 persons per sq km. Densities vary from 904 persons per sq km in West Bengal to only 17 persons per sq km in Arunachal Pradesh.

Note the states with population densities below 250 persons per square km. Rugged terrain and unfavourable climatic conditions are primarily responsible for sparse population in these areas.

Assam and most of the Peninsular states have moderate population densities. Hilly, dissected and rocky nature of the terrain, moderate to low rainfall, shallow and less fertile soils have influenced population densities in these areas.

The Northern Plains and Kerala in the south have high to very high population densities because of the flat plains with fertile soils and abundant rainfall. Identify the three states of the Northern Plains with high population densities.

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POPULATION GROWTH AND PROCESSES OF POPULATION CHANGE

Population is a dynamic phenomenon. The numbers, distribution and composition of the population are constantly changing. This is the influence of the interaction of the three processes, namely-births, deaths and migrations.

1. **Population Growth:** Growth of population refers to the change in the number of inhabitants of a country/territory during a specific period of time, say during the last ten years. Such a change can be expressed in two ways: in terms of absolute numbers and in terms of percentage change per year.

The absolute numbers added each year or decade is the magnitude of increase. It is obtained by simply subtracting the earlier population (e.g. that of 1991) from the later population (e.g. that of 2001). It is referred to as the absolute increase.

India's population has been steadily increasing from 361 million in 1951 to 1028 million in 2001.

From table it is reveal that from 1951 to 1981, the annual rate of population growth was steadily increasing; which explains the rapid increase in population from 361 million in 1951 to 683 million in 1981.

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Since 1981, however, the rate of growth started declining gradually. During this period, birth rates declined rapidly. Still 182 million people were added to the total population in the 1990s alone.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total Population (in millions)</i>	<i>Absolute Increase in the decade (in million)</i>	<i>Annual Growth Rate (%)</i>
1951	361.0	42.43	1.25
1961	439.2	78.15	1.96
1971	548.2	108.92	2.20
1981	683.3	135.17	2.22
1991	846.4	163.09	2.14
2001	1028.7	182.32	1.93

The Magnitude and Rate of India's Population Growth

The declining trend of the growth rate is indeed a positive indicator of the efforts of birth control. Despite that, the total additions to the population base continue to grow, and India may overtake China in 2045 to become the most populous country in the world.

2. **Processes of Population Change/Growth:** There are 3 main processes of population change. They are:

(i) Birth rates (ii) Death rates and (iii) Migration.

The natural increase of population is the difference between birth rates and death rates.

Birth rate: Birth rate indicates the number of births in a country during a year per 1,000 population.

Death rate: Death rate indicates the number of deaths in a country during a year per 1,000 population. Main cause of the rapid rate of growth of the Indian population is the fast decline in death rates.

Since 1981, birth rates have started declining gradually, resulting in a gradual decline in the rate of population growth. The reasons for this trend are:

- (i) Most of the people especially in urban areas have adopted two child norm.
- (ii) Birth rate has also declined at a faster rate.
- (iii) Standard of living has increased considerably.
- (iv) Women folk are more conscious of their health.
- (v) Family Welfare Schemes are being adopted in a big way.
- (vi) Muslim population is also trying to keep their family small.

Migration: The another component of population growth is migration. Migration is the movement of people across regions and territories. Migration can be internal (within the country) or international (between the countries).

Internal migration does not change the size of the population, but influences the distribution of population within the nation. Migration plays a very significant role in changing the composition and distribution of population.

In India, most migrations have been from rural to urban areas because of the "push" factor in rural areas. These are adverse conditions of poverty and unemployment in the rural areas and the "pull" of the city in terms of increased employment opportunities and better living conditions.

Migration is an important determinant of population change. It changes not only the population size but also the population composition of urban and rural populations in terms of age and sex composition. In India, the rural-urban migration has resulted in a steady increase in the percentage of population in cities and towns. The urban population has increased from 17.29 per cent of the total population in 1951 to 27.78 per cent in 2001. There has been a significant increase in the number of 'million plus cities' from 23 to 35 in just one decade i.e. 1991 to 2001.

Impact of Urbanisation in India:

- (i) Rapid urbanisation leads to lack of facilities like housing, sanitation, water, power and education, etc. Slums and other social tensions are created. Crime rate increases.
- (ii) It puts heavy pressure on transport. Heavy rush on roads creates transport problems traffic jams, accidents, etc. High urbanisation creates congestion and pollution it reduces forest cover and agricultural land. This leads to ecological imbalance and environmental pollution.

CHARACTERISTICS OR QUALITIES OF THE POPULATION

- 1. Age Composition:** Age composition of a population is the number of people in difference age groups in a country. It is one of the most basic characteristics of a population. A person's age influences what he needs, buys, does and thinks. Number and percentage of a population found within the children (young), adult (middle aged) and the aged (old) groups determine population's social and economic structure.

Age composition of population is expressed in terms of three broad age groups-

- (i) Children below the working age (below 15 years)- They are economically unproductive and need to be provided with food, clothing, education and medical care.
- (ii) Working Age (15 to 59 years)- They are economically productive and biologically reproductive. They comprise the working population.
- (iii) Aged (above 59 years)- They can be economically productive though they may have retired. They may be working voluntarily but they are not available for employment through recruitment.

The dependent population is either in the age group of below 15 years or in the age group of over 59 years. 41.3% of Indian population is dependent population who depend on 58.7% of Indian population who are of working age. So the percentage of dependent population is quite large. This is putting heavy burden on the families and state.

- 2. Sex Ratio:** Sex ratio is defined as the number of females per 1000 males in the population. According to the 2001 census, the sex ratio in India was 940 females per 1000 males. This information is an important social indicatory to measure the extent of equality between males and females in a society at a given time.

The sex ratio in the country has always remained unfavourable to females. Kerala has a sex ratio of 1084 females per 1000 males, Pondicherry has 1001 females for every 1000 males, while Delhi has only 821 females per 1000 and Haryana has just 861.

- 3. Literacy Rates:** Literacy is a very important quality of a population. Obviously, only an informed and educated citizen can make intelligent choices and undertake research and development projects. Low levels of literacy are a serious obstacle for economic improvement.

According to the Census of 2001, a person aged 7 years. and above who can read and write with understanding in any language, is treated as literate.

There has been a steady improvement in the literacy levels in India. The literacy rate in the country as per the Census of 2011 is 74.05 per cent; 82 per cent for males and 65 per cent for females.

- 4. Occupational Structure:** The distribution of the population according to different types of occupation is referred to as the occupational structure. An enormous variety of occupations are found in any country. Occupations are generally classified as primary, secondary, and tertiary.

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

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The people engaged in these activities are the basis to decide the countries as developed or developing countries.

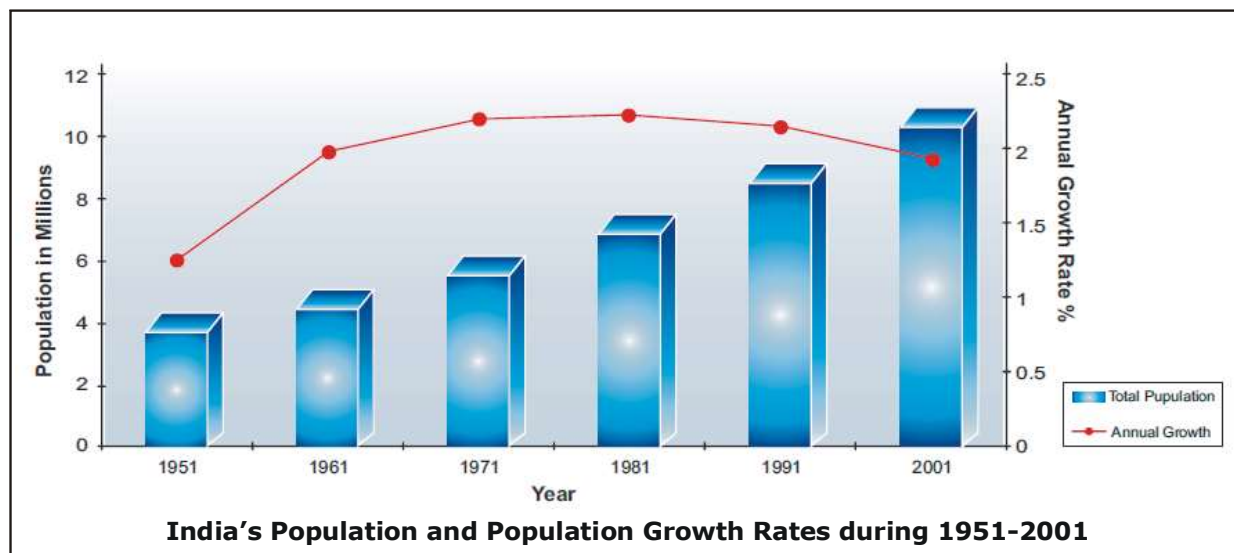
Developing countries tend to have a higher proportion of their workforce engaged in primary activities. In India, about 64 per cent of the population is engaged only in agriculture. The proportion of population dependent on secondary and tertiary sectors is about 13 and 20 per cent respectively. There has been an occupational shift in favour of secondary and tertiary sectors because of growing industrialisation and urbanisation in recent times.

5. **Health:** Health is an important component of population composition, which affects the process of development. Due to the sustained efforts of government programmes death rates have declined from 25 per 1000 population in 1951 to 8.1 per 1000 in 2001 and life expectancy at birth has increased from 36.7 years in 1951 to 67 years in 2011. The substantial improvement is the result of many factors including improvement in public health, prevention of infectious diseases and application of modern medical practices in diagnosis and treatment of ailments.

Despite considerable achievements, the health situation is a matter of major concern for India. The per capita calorie consumption is much below the recommended levels and malnutrition affects a large percentage of our population. Safe drinking water and basic sanitation amenities are available to only one-third of the rural population.

Advantages of having healthy population:

- (i) It is the healthy population which is considered the most important resource.
- (ii) Healthy population decreases the dependency ratio.
- (iii) It is the healthy population which can make full use of natural resources.



6. **Adolescent Population:** The most significant feature of the Indian population is the size of its adolescent population. It constitutes one-fifth of the total population of India. Adolescents are generally grouped in the age-group of 10 to 19 years. They are the most important resource for the future. Nutrition requirements of adolescents are higher than those of a normal child or adult. Poor nutrition can lead to deficiency and stunted growth. But in India, the diet available to adolescents is inadequate in all nutrients. A large number of adolescent girls suffer from anaemia. Their problems have so far not received adequate attention in the process of development. The adolescent girls have to be sensitised to the problems they confront. Their awareness can be improved through the spread of literacy and education among them.

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7. **National Population Policy:** Recognising that the planning of families would improve health and welfare, the Government of India initiated the comprehensive Family Planning Programme in 1952. The Family welfare Programme has sought to promote responsible and planned parenthood on a voluntary basis.

Major features of NPP 2000:

- (i) The NPP 2000 provides a policy framework for imparting free and compulsory school education to the children up to 14 years of age.
- (ii) It aims at reducing infant mortality rate to below 30 per 1000 live births. Another aim is to achieve universal immunisation of children against all vaccine preventable diseases.
- (iii) Promotion of delayed marriage for girls.
- (iv) It also aims at making family welfare a people centered programme.

8. **NPP 200 and Adolescents:** NPP 200 identified adolescents as one of the major sections of the population that need greater attention. Besides nutritional requirements, the policy put greater emphasis on other important needs of adolescents including protection from unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases (STD).

It called for programmes that aim 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.

Conclusion: People are the nation's most valuable resource. A well-educated healthy population provides potential power. That is why, we considered people as Human Resources.

