A Study on India's Population Trend

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Abstract

India has more people than Europe, Africa, and Western Hemisphere. Just one group, Indian boys below age 5, numbers 62 million—more than the total population of France. India's annual increase of about 19 million contributes far more to annual world population growth than any other country. India's population, which passed the 1 billion mark in 2000, will exceed that of Chinabefore 2025 to become the world's most populous country, a distinction it will almost certainlynever lose. With this paper I have tried to explain the India's population trend since 1901 by evaluating the growth rate pace, literacy rate, urban and rural population division, sex-ratio trend, and population density.
KEYWORDS: Population growth rate, urban and rural population, sex-ratio, literacy, density.

Introduction:

India became only the second country in the world after China to cross the one billion mark. Population in itself is not the problem. Lack of basic education and poor economic conditions are the main factor for growth of population. The fast rate of growth of population has affected the quality of life of the people. The time has come when future citizens while in educational institutions should understand various issues related to the population problem.

The demographics of India are inclusive of the second most populous country in the world, with over 1.21 billion people (2011 census), more than a sixth of the world's population. Already containing 17.5% of the world's population, India is projected to be the world's most populous country by 2025, surpassing China, its population reaching 1.6 billion by 2050.Its population growth rate is 1.41%, ranking 102nd in the world in 2010. Indian population reached the billion mark in 2000.

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'sdependency ratio should be just over 0.4.

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.

Objective of the research:

1. To study the growth rate India's population.
2. To study the literacy rate in recent census report.

3. To study the urban and rural population division.
4. To study the sex-ratio trend of India.
5. To study the population density of India over the census years.

Research Methodology:

For the present study information collected from various secondary sources are used to study the levels, trends and differentials in India's Population. The present study is mostly based on the census data. Various census volumes on of population, directory of towns, General population table and cities and other related census volumes, various reports, and internet have been utilized for this research.

Growth rate of India's Population:

The Indian subcontinent has long been one of the world's most populous regions, but as in many of today's developing countries, population growth took off in the 20th century. India began the century with a population of about 238 million and ended it with 1.21 billion (see Table 1). India added another 100 million by 2011.Following table will shows India's growing population.

Table No. 1
Growth rate of India's Population

Census Years	Population	Decadal growth	
		Absolute	Percent (%)
1901	23,83,96,327	--	--
1911	25,20,93,390	1,36,97,063	5.75
1921	25,13,21,213	-7,72,177	0.31
1931	27,89,77,238	2,76,56,025	11.00
1941	31,86,60,580	3,96,83,342	14.22
1951	36,10,88,090	4,24,27,510	13.31
1961	43,92,34,771	7,81,46,681	21.64
1971	54,81,59,652	10,89,24,881	24.80
1981	68,33,29,097	13,51,69,445	24.66
1991	84,43,24,222	16,09,95,125	23.56
2001	1,02,70,15,247	18,26,91,025	21.64
2011	1,21,01,93,422	18,31,78,175	17.84

Source: Register General and Census Commissioner, India published census results.

Above table no.1 shows that in 1901 Indian population was 238 million which grows rapidly by years. One of the important features of the present decade is that, 2001-2011 is the first decade (with the exception of 1911-1921) which has actually added lesser population compared to the previous decade. This implies that as a result of the combination of population momentum and somewhat impeded fertility, although India continues to grow in size, its pace of net addition is on the decrease.

In absolute terms, 13697063 people were added during the decade of 1901 to 1911. Indian population declined in the decade of 1911-21. The year 1921 is often referred to as the "Year of the Great Divide". In this decade population were declined by 772177. After 1921 absolute population never declined in the next census year. In

the decade of independence our decadal growth rate was 13.31. This decadal growth rate rose by 21.64, 24.80, 24.66, and 23.56, respectively to the decade of 1951-61, 1961-71, 1971-81 and 1981-1991. After the decade of 1971-1981 decade growth rate has been declined by over the years.

Literacy rates in recent census report:

The Literacy rate in India has improved a lot over the last one decade. Especially after the implementation of free education in the villages the literacy rate has gone up tremendously in India. Literacy rates defined as the number of literate population per hundred eligible populations. The gender differential in literacy is measured by the male-female ratio in literacy rates. The male-female ratios of literacy rates are decreasing for all the years since 1961 but still the gap is significantly much high. The decadal percentages of total literates as well as male and female in the literates from 1951 to 2011 are depicted in below table.

Table No. 2
Male & Female Literacy rates

Census Year	Persons	Males	Females
1951	18.33	27.16	8.86
1961	28.30	40.40	15.35
1971	34.45	45.96	21.97
1981	43.57	56.38	29.76
1991	52.21	64.13	39.29
2001	64.80	75.30	53.70
2011	74.04	82.14	65.46

Source: Register General and Census Commissioner, India published census results.

Table 2 shows the figures which reveal a steady increase in the literacy percentage. Female literacy is growing at a faster rate although their overall percentage remains lower than males. Increasing literacy bears testimony to the growing educational facilities in India. More and females are receiving formal education which augurs well for balanced development of society and equality of women.

As per the data published in 1951 literacy rate was 18.33% which indicated the real literacy situation of India. After this Indian govt. not only initiated strong educational policy but also various literacy programme which help India to raise the situation in well manner. Indian male literacy ration always dominated female literacy ratio but this scenario is going to change within one or two decade.   As per the data published by the 2011 census India has managed to achieve an effective literacy rate of 74.04 per cent in 2011. In the 2001 census the country's literacy rate stood at 64.8 percent. The most notable thing that came across in the 2011 census is the sharp rise in the literacy of females over males. According to the report released by the latest census there are almost 74 per cent literates that constitute the total population of India aged between seven and above.

Urban and rural population division:

There is a linkage between the rural and urban development. These linkages matter

because rural and urban livelihoods are interconnected economically, financially, and socially. Rural- urban disparities have for long been one of the causes of concern for the policymakers. The disparities are seen in all spheres of human life- economic and non-economic. The extent of the disparities, however, differs from country to country. India is the largest democracy with consistent economic growth rate since independence. India is also third largest scientific and technological workforce. Despite these developments there is a wide gap between rural and urban with respect to technology, living condition, economic empowerment etc. The status of Indian urban and rural population division is shown in following table no.3

Table No.3
Urban and rural population division 1901 to 2011

Sr. no.	Census Year	Total Population	Urban Population	Rural Population	Percent of urban population to total population
1	1901	238396327	25851873	212544454	10.84
2	1911	252093390	25941633	226151757	10.29
3	1921	251321213	28086167	223235046	11.18
4	1931	278977238	33455989	245521249	11.99
5	1941	318660580	44153297	274507283	13.86
6	1951	361088090	62443709	298644381	17.29
7	1961	439234771	78936603	360298168	17.97
8	1971	548159652	109112977	439046675	19.91
9	1981	683329097	159462547	523866550	23.34
10	1991	844324222	217177625	627146597	25.72
11	2001	1027015247	285354954	741660293	27.78
12	2011	1210193422	377105760	833087662	31.16

Source: Register General and Census Commissioner, India published census results.

Above table no.3 shows the urban and rural population division in the various census years. As in other countries of South Asia, India's urban population has grown relatively slowly for the last century. The percentage of Indians living in urban areas rose from 10.84 percent in 1901 to 31.16 percent in 2011. Rural to urban migration is a contributing factor to the growth of the urban populations. In 1901 urban population was 25851873 & it's percentage to total population was 10.84. The contribution of the agricultural sector to the GDP of India started to decline and the percentage contribution from secondary sector increased. The period after 1941, witnessed rapid growth of four metropolitan cities in India, which were Kolkata, Delhi, Mumbai, and Chennai.The nation's economy saw a rise due to industrial revolution and the invention of new technologies increased the standard of living of people living in urban areas.The growth of public sector resulted in development of public transport, roads, water supply, electricity, and hence the infrastructure of urban areas.In 1951 urban population was 62443709 & it's percentage to total population was 17.29. As India was implementing its five year plan effectively and giving importance to industrialization and

service sector it leads to raise the rate of urbanization. By the census of 2011 urban population was 377105760 & its percentage in total population remained 31.16. It indicates that urbanization in India is taking pace day by day.

Sex-ratio trend of India:

Sex composition of the human population is one of the basic demographic characteristics, which is extremely vital for any meaningful demographic analysis. Indian Census has the tradition of bringing out disaggregated information by sex on various aspects of population. The first and foremost is the simple count of males and females. A change in sex composition largely reflects the underlying socio-economic and cultural patterns of a society in different ways. Sex ratio defined here as the number of females per 1000 males in the population, is an important social indicator to measure the extent of prevailing equity between males and females in a society at a given point of time. Following table no. 4 will show the sex-ratio trend of India.

Table no. 4
Sex-ratio trend of India

Sr. No.	Census Year	Sex-ratio (Females per 1000 males)
1	1901	972
2	1911	964
3	1921	955
4	1931	950
5	1941	945
6	1951	946
7	1961	941
8	1971	930
9	1981	934
10	1991	927
11	2001	933
12	2011	940

Source: http://censusindia.gov.in

Above table no.4 shows the data related to sex-ratio trend in India since 1901. According to the Census of India, 2011, the sex ratio stands at 940 for the country as a whole. This is a welcome improvement from the 2001 Census, which had recorded 933 females for every 1000 males. According to the Census of India, 1991, the sex ratio stands at 927 for the country. The sex ratio in the country had always remained unfavorable to females. Moreover, barring some hiccups, it has shown a long term declining trend. The sex ratio at the beginning of the twentieth century was 972 and thereafter showed continuous decline until 1941. In 1951 there was a marginal increase of one point, but thereafter it again dropped for two consecutive decades to reach 930 in 1971. In fact, between1961-71, the country saw the sharpest decline of 11 points in the sex ratio. Thereafter, it has fluctuated marginally around 930 in successive censuses.

The imbalance in the number of males and females begins in the beginning. It is now a well-established law of nature that the males exceed females at the time of birth. It is believed that generally 943-952 females birth take place for every 100 male births,

which in effect would mean that there is a deficiency of about 50 females per 100 males in every birth cohort.

Density of Population:

Density of population refers to average number of people living per square kilometer area. It is measured by dividing total population of a country by its total area. It is an important index of population which shows concentration of population in a particular area. Following table no.5 shows the trend in population density in India since 1901.

Table No.5
Trend in population density in India since 1901

Sr. No.	Year	Density of population per sq. km.
1.	1901	77
2.	1911	82
3.	1921	81
4.	1931	90
5.	1941	103
6.	1951	117
7.	1961	142
8.	1971	177
9.	1981	216
10.	1991	274
11.	2001	324
12.	2011	382

Source: Source: http://censusindia.gov.in

Above table no. 5 shows the population density of India by census year. In the beginning of the twentieth century i.e. in 1901 the population density of India was as low as 77 persons per sq. km. It steadily increased in each decade to reach 382 persons per sq. km. in 2011. The rate of increase in population density of India has exhibited a sharp decline during 2001-2011 (17.5 per cent) compared to 1991-2001 (21.7 per cent). With a population density of 382/km2, India ranks 31st among the most densely populated countries in the world. Even though India accounts for only 2.4% of surface area of the earth, it contributes 17.5% to the world population, which is extremely large. Whereas USA, accounting for 7.2% of the earth's surface area, contributes only 4.5% to the world population.

High increase in the density of population is a matter of great concern as it puts immense pressure on our natural resources and existing infrastructural facilities and adversely affects the quality of life. Pressures resulting from unrestrained population growth put demands on the natural world that can overwhelm any efforts to achieve a sustainable future.

Summary & Conclusion:

Although India has created several impressive goals to reduce its population growth rates, the India has a long way to go to achieve meaningful population controls in

this country. The expansion of the health care system has raised life expectancy at birth to 63 years from less than 40 years in 1950. But less than half of births are attended by skilled health personnel, and maternal mortality is still high. During the 20th century, India's population growth awoke from the doldrums as real progress was made against disease and hunger.In the last 100 years, percentage of urban population in the country has increased from 13 per cent to 30 per cent. It proves that in the economic life of India, role of cities has been increasing. India's future population size will depend upon what happens in the heavily populated north. In 2000, India's population reached 1 billion. Now the question of 2billion arises. Will India become the world's first population "double billionaire?" Such a development is well within mathematical possibility. That is one of India's most compelling future issues.

Perhaps if solutions like the one child policy or birth control and others were applied to India the population growth would slow, giving us more control of our own destiny. However, as of now we have yet to see these changes or any change for that matter to slow a growing problem that is a large undisputed problem for all of mankind. Only with the effort of many people can we reduce the population growth and continue to live the lives we currently have. If we continue to have such a high population growth rate we will struggle to support the billions of people on this planet. This will cause famine and conflict and will limit the resources for future generations. We will destroy the earth rather than preserving it which is our duty since we inhabit the earth.

By implementing birth control effectively it would directly limit the birth rate in country.It will ultimately slow the population growth. By informing young adults of the consequences of sex including pregnancy hopefully it will limit the amount of young unplanned pregnancies. By searching for better ways to use our resources more effectively more people could live on less resources. Providing that we do become extremely overpopulated (which is where we are headed right now) by allowing less resources to be spent on each person we can spread resources out making each resource more effective than it would have been. Although this is a drastic measure precautions need to be taken to make sure our earth does not exceed its limitations. In India this could be justified by the use of dharma in their religion which states they must put the world's needs before their own. If these solutions were implemented it would help cut down an increasing problem that concerns not small groups of people but everyone that inhabit the earth.

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