The Concepts of Distribution and Density in Geography

Summary

The note discusses the concepts of distribution and density in geography. It explains that distribution refers to the way people are spread out across the surface, often shown through a dot map, while density refers to the number of people living in a certain area, usually shown through a choropleth map. The note also highlights the factors that affect distribution and density, including physical factors like relief and climate, and human factors like social and economic factors. Additionally, the note introduces the demographic transition model, which explains population growth patterns in different stages, with factors like birth rates, death rates, and societal changes playing a role.

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Distribution

… describes the way in which people are spread out across the surfce. Distribution is uneven and changes over time. Usually shown by means of a dot map.

Density

… describes the number of people living in a certain area. Usually a square kilometer (1 km^2). Usually calculated by dividing the total Population by its area. Normally it is shown by a choropleth map.

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+ Easy to red, generalisations
- Hides population concentrations
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Distribution and density are affected by

physical factors

- relief
- large bodies of water / water supplies
- natural resources
- climate
- vegetation
- soil

human factors

- social
- economic
- political

Population growth

Pupulation change depends on

- the balance between the birthrate and the death rate
- [migraiton]

Birthrate
... is the average number of live births in a year for every 1000 people in the total population.

$\Longrightarrow$ natural increase or natural decrease!

Throughout history there is a steady world population increase with some years or centuries of exceptions.

Demografic transition model

Stage 1

High Birthrate

- no irth control for family planning
- many children needed to
  - work on the land
  - care for the parents
- high child mortality rate
- children are regarded as sign ov virility[1]
- religious beliefs

High death rates

- limited healthcare infrastructure
- diseases & plagues
- poor hygene (no piped, clean water; no sewage)
- famine, uncertain food supply, poor diet
- (wars)

Stage 2

Birthrates remain high, death rates drop rapidly $\Longrightarrow$ rapid population growth

Dropping death rates

- improved medical care (vaccinations, scientific inventions, …)
- improved sanitation and water supply
- improved food production / supply (quality & quantity)
- improved transportation
- decrease in child mortality

Stage 3

birthrates fall rapidly
death rates continue to fall slightly
$\Longrightarrow$ slowly increasing population

Falling birth rates

- family planning (contraceptives[2], sterilisation, abortion, goverment incentives[3])
- lower infant mortality rate $\Longrightarrow$ less need to have many children
- increased industrialisation and mechianisation $\Longrightarrow$ fewer laborers needed
- increased desire for material possesion and less for large families
- emancipation of women (their own carreers)

Stage 4

birthrates and death rates remain low, fluctuating slightly
$\Longrightarrow$ quite steady population

Criticism about this model

- situation is siplified
- assumption: population change results mainly from an increase in industrialisation

[0] virgility … Potenz, Männlichkeit
[1] contraceptives … Verhütungsmittel
[2] goverment incentives … staatliche Anreize

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1. 0 ↩
2. 1 ↩

3. 2 ↩