

17 Dec '20

Geography

Q Do you think poverty is the reason behind low sex ratio in India?

— Son Meta preference.

Q What do you mean by 'Son Metapreference' & how does it impact India's performance in UNDP's Gender Inequality Index?

* Poverty, not a reason for skewed sex ratio:-

- Techniques like Sex determination, Infanticide etc, requires money, which poor does not have in plenty.
- Many times, orthodox poor families, in desire of male child, keep on giving birth to female children, thus help in improving sex ratio.
- In order to get benefitted from various govt schemes for girl child, poor people 'does not mind having a baby girl.'
- Punjab & Haryana, are one of the highest per capita income states in India, & yet sex ratio is very low.

* Poverty, is the reason for skewed sex ratio! -

- As poor people mostly are uneducated, there is an intergenerational orthodoxy prevalent among them.

- This leads to increased cases of child marriages, which may result into early pregnancies.
- This ↑s chances of deaths among young pregnant women.
- Due to scarcity of resources, many a times, the child in the family gets ignored, which ↑s chances of death due to malnourishment, harmful health hazards etc --.
- Many a times, poor people prefer to bear the cost of illegal abortions, rather than spending resources on a girl child, for next 20-25 yrs.

* Son Metapreference:-

- A situation, in which a family keeps on giving birth to female children, until male children are born.
- Although, it could improve the sex ratio, but the quality of lives of female children would be affected.
- Acc to economic survey, there are over, 21 mn unwanted girls in India, by analysing the sex ratio of last child.
- Due to strict implementation of Pre-conception & pre-natal Diagnostic Act in India, the sex selective abortions of female foetus have become difficult.
- However, couples have adopted a different strategy, where they will continue to produce children, until desired no. of sons are born.

- UNDP's Gender Inequality Index, measures, the gender disparity among countries, among following parameters
 - (1) Reproductive health, as seen from MMR & adolescent birth rate.
 - (2) Empowerment through higher education and Parliamentary seats.
 - (3) Labour market participation.

→ Reproductive health

- Due to son metapreference, the wife is often forced to produce to more than 2 children, which is detrimental to her health.
- As such girls are neglected in food and health needs, majority of them suffers from anaemia and mal-nutrition.
- As a result, India's MMR is 113 / 1000 live births.
- Since daughters are seen as burden, poor parents are keen to marry them as soon as possible.
- Child marriage leads to early pregnancy.
- for India, 23 / 100 children, are born by mothers in 15-19 age grp.
- Thus, adolescent ^{birth} girls rate is high.
- Having child at early age hinders, the mother, in pursuing higher studies and career ambitions for herself.

* Education & Occupation:-

- Since, sons are given preference over daughters in education & nutrition, the girls lag behind.
- Less than 40% of Indian women complete secondary education. As a result, their share in jobs & politics also remains dismal.
- India's total female labour force participation rate is < 30%, whereas in China, it is > 60%.
- India's female share in parliamentary seats is $> 14.7\%$ for doing it is $> 24\%$.

* Conclusion:-

- SDG-5 requires India to achieve Gender Equality, and empower all women and girls. Son preference is an obstacle in this. For both human & economic development of India, it is imperative that we address this mentality of giving preference to sons over daughters.
- Govt initiatives such as Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao & Sukanya Samridhi Yojana, which are imp. steps in gender empowerment, yet India's GII rank has been 112 in 2019. It shows that govt's schemes alone cannot reduce gender inequality, until the collective will & mindset of the Indian society changes.

* Child Sex Ratio:-

927 → 919 (CSR) (0-6)

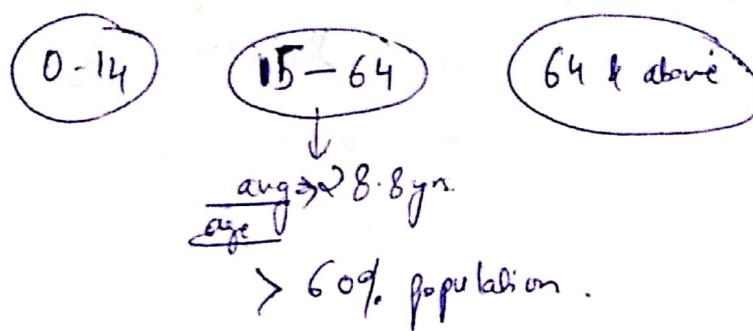
933 → 943 (Sex ratio)

- As per census, 2011, while overall sex ratio has gone up to touch 940, against 933, the child sex ratio, has declined to 919 from 927.
- The increasing trend has been seen in Punjab, Haryana, H.P., Gujarat, T.N., Mizoram & A & M islands. While, in all the remaining states & U.T.s, the ratio has shown a decline.
- This anomaly can be broadly attributed to biological & social reasons:
 - 1) The decline in child sex ratio is due to the preference for male child in our patriarchal society.
 - 2) Pre-natal diagnostic technique lead to female foeticide, due to which, the child sex ratio can be said to be declining.
 - 3) ~~fact~~ At such an age, children are mostly dependent on their parents for nutrition, where males are given the preference.
- As the industrialisation of India, picked up in 1960s, demand for labour has ↑. Supplementing already high preference for male children.
- This coupled with development of medical facilities in India, since early 1960s, the child sex ratio has declined continuously.

On other hand, natural life expectancy of females is greater than males, thus, they live longer & sex ratio more than CSR.

- Due to ↑ educational opportunities for women, & favourable govt policies, more & more women are becoming independent, which also ↑s their life expectancy.

* Demographic Dividend :-



⇒ Need :-

- Young → tax payment ↑.
- Boost to diverse sectors in economy.
- Cost of healthcare infras. is less
- More aspirations → More innovation & development.

⇒ 3 conditions reqd for productive population.

- Health Primary
Secondary
 - Education
 - Employment
 - Employer Employee
- Enrollment ratio (91.6%)
→ Dropout ratio (17.06%)
→ Teacher Pupil ratio
→ Quality of teaching
→ Quality of physical infrastruc.

* Demographic Dividend:-

- India has one of the youngest population in the ageing world. Today the median age in India is 28.8, compared to 37 in China & U.S., 45 in western Europe, and 49 in Japan.
- In order to reap this demographic dividend, some of the prerequisites are -
 - 1) Better skills & Education for employability,
 - 2) Improved health for an improved human capital.
 - 3) Job creation to absorb both men & women.

* Why Demographic Dividend is important? :-

- Younger people in the country means the presence of more stable labour force.
- Their presence implies opportunity to invest more in human & physical infra.
- Otherwise, there will be more children & expenditure on education would be more.
- More young women workforce means declining fertility that may enhance, the growth aspect of an economy.
- This may have a negative impact in the long run for an economy.
- It helps more savings in an economy, as there is more working age population.
- Such a situation leads to forming a bigger middle-class society.
- This in turn leads to higher & higher marginal propensity to consume & help increase the rate of

GDP growth.

- However, India may not be able to reap demographic dividend, because in 2015, India added fewest organised sector jobs.
- India is weak in technological innovation, as we are mainly the consumers of technology.
- the caste syst and gender discrimination are also pull factors retarding economic goals.
- The proportion of jobs in unorganised sector without formal monthly payment, or social security benefits, is said to rise 93% , in 2017.
- Rural wages are at a decadal low, as agriculture, which accounts for 47% of jobs, contracted 0.2% in 2014-15, growing 1% in 2015-16.
- As many as 60% of those which jobs do not find employment for the entire year , indicating widespread underemployment and widespread temporary jobs.

- With large corporations & PSBs - financially stressed, the avg size of companies in India is reducing, at a time, when well organised large companies are central to creating jobs.
- Paucity of good quality schools, proper infras, & well-trained teacher.
- Huge dropout rate, i.e. > half of India's literate youth drop out of education syst by the age of 15.
- Significant no. of women, drop out of work force, for reasons from no suitable jobs to family responsibilities & marriage.

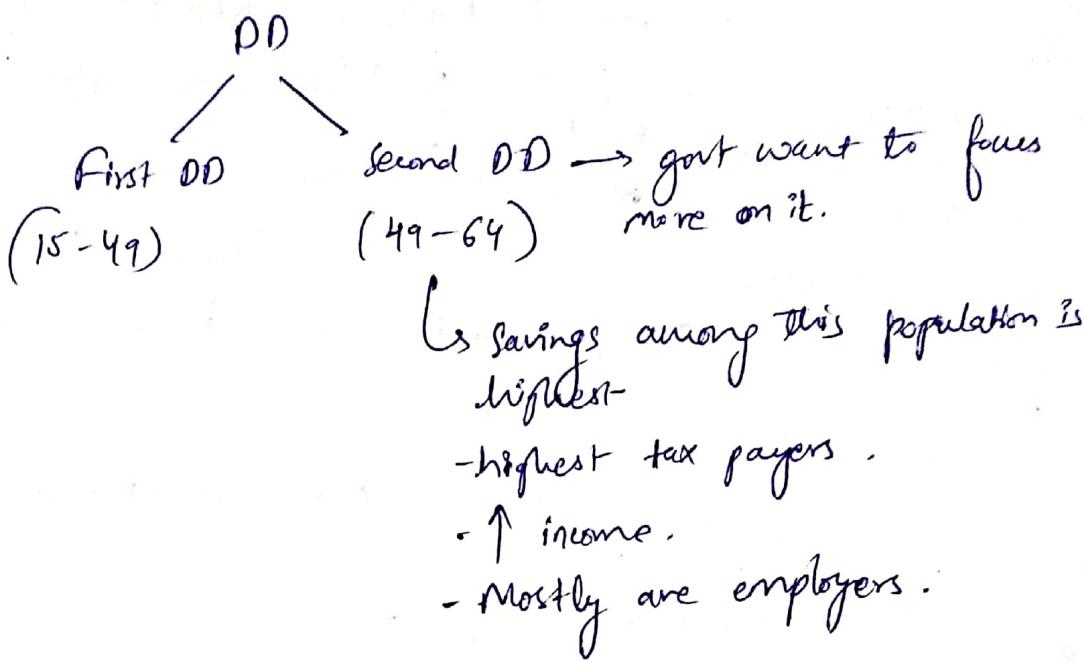
★ Measures:-

- Improved infrastructure, skill development, access to easy finance, reducing barriers to entrepreneurship & forums for mentorship of emerging entrepreneurs, in partnership with corporates, are some of the measures.
- The current situations calls for more & better schools, especially in rural areas. It also calls for better transportation links between rural areas, and regional urban hubs.
- The govt must also ensure better quality of jobs, with a focus on matching skill sets & job opportunities.
- There is a need to look into these qualitative issues ~~and~~ of job profile, job satisfaction & job matching & the creation of opportunities for

entrepreneurship. in order to be able to harness, the vast potential of human resources.

- ↑ is the no. of vocational training centres, so as to improve uptake of people for skill education.
- Special training for ~~more~~ mainstreaming out of school children, through initiatives like Padhe Bharat, Baalhe Bharat, Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan, & Udan.
- National Health Mission (rural + urban), integrated with ASHA, Janani Suraksha Yojana, Janani Suraksha Yojana & penetration of Ayush mission.
- Faster implementation of National Food Security Act, & innovation in the form of Bio-fortification, for nutritious rich food, & there should be a longevity dividend.
 - It is used to describe economic & health benefits that would accrue to individuals and societies, if we extend healthy life by biological process of ageing.
 - The idea is to shift emphasis from disease management to delayed ageing.
 - Thus, unlike current vertical approach to disease, that targets individual disorders, as they arise, longevity seeks to prevent / delay the root causes of disease & disability, but attacking one main risk factor for them, i.e. biological ageing.

* Second Demographic Dividend :-



- The second DD signify the working age population, who are in the age of (49-64).
- Second DD operates in 2 ways:
 - 1) Greater accumulation of wealth → lower fertility & ↑ life expectancy, generally lead to greater wealth.
As people accumulate wealth during their working yrs, by the time, they reach their old age, their wealth is at/near its peak.
 - 2) As people realise, they will live longer, they will be more motivated to accumulate wealth, that can be used to support wealth in old age, in ^{the} case large working age population induces, higher national savings, which creates capital accumulation & thus, high economic growth.
- 2) Greater investment in human Capital - As people's

wealth ↑s, research indicate that, they are more likely to invest in health & education of each of their children. With fewer children to care for, it is possible for parents to invest more resources in each child.