



1. Explain the basic argument of the theory of the demographic transition. Why is the transition period associated with a 'population explosion'?

Ans: Theory of demographic transition suggests that population growth is linked to overall levels of economic development and that every society follows a typical pattern of development related population growth.

There are three basic phases of population growth:

Stage I: Primitive Stage [Underdeveloped countries]

- Low population growth in a society that is underdeveloped and technologically backward.
- In such societies like Africa birth rate is high since people are unaware of the advantages of having small families, they are not educated.
- Death rate is also high since health and medical facilities are not available, therefore population is low.

Stage II: [Developing countries]. The birth rate and death rate rank very high, the net growth rate remains low.

Birth rate is high as in this society people live in a patriarchal society in which men decide how many children must be born and male child is preferred. People are illiterate and ignorant.

Death rate is also high since health and medical facilities are not available.

Stage III: [Developed countries]. Birth rate is low because people are educated and aware and use contraceptives, birth control is popularised. Death rate is also low because of availability of health and medical facilities, therefore population is low.

Transitional Stage: The stage between backwardness and skilled people]; In this stage growth rate of population is very high whereas death rates are brought down due to better medical facilities, nutrition and better medical and technological advancement therefore this transition period is associated with a population explosion.

2. Why did Malthus believe that catastrophic events like famines and epidemics that cause mass deaths were inevitable?

Ans: English political economist Thomas Robert Malthus argued that human population tends to grow at a much faster rate than the rate which the means of human subsistence (land, agriculture) can grow.

He said population rises in geometric progression whereas agricultural production can only grow in Arithmetic progression. Malthus believed that positive checks to population growth in the form of famines and diseases, was inevitable. These are nature's way of dealing with the balance between food supply and increasing population.

According to him, these natural checks are extremely painful and difficult. Although it helps to achieve a balance between population and subsistence by increasing the death rate.

3. What is meant by 'birth rate' and 'death rate'? Explain why the birth rate is relatively slow to fall while the death rate declines much faster.

Ans: Birth rate and death rate are fundamental concepts in

Demography.

Birth rate: It refers to the total number of births in a particular area, which can be the entire country, a state or any territorial unit during a specific period.

- Crude birth rate is expressed through the following method :  
 $B/p \times 1000$   
B = Number of births P = Entire population
- It is crude birth rate because it does not include the ratio of bearing age.
- Birth rate can be defined as the number of live births per thousand persons in a years.
- Birth rate gets significantly affected by Age of marriage, infertility, climatic conditions, social condition, religious beliefs and education.

Death rate: It is the number of deaths per thousands persons in a year in a particular area, which can be the entire country, a state or any other territorial unit.

Causes of slow birth rate:

Birth rate is relatively slow while the death rate can be brought down at much faster rate for the following reasons:

Public health measures and medical advancement can control the death rate immediately. Everybody wants good health and wants to live a long life. Because of the love for life everybody adopts all medical and technological measures with high level of motivation. Birth rate continues to be high because it is related to attitude, beliefs and values of people. Birth rate is related to religious beliefs and by and large it is socio-cultural phenomena which is significantly slow to change.

4. Which states in India have reached or are very near the 'replacement levels' of population growth? Which ones still have very high rates of population growth? In your opinion, what could be some of the reasons for these regional differences?

Ans: Replacement level refers to the rate of growth required for new generations to replace the older ones that are dying out.

Replacement level refers to giving birth to two children that replacement completes. States at the replacement level of population growth: Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Goa, Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura, Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab.

States very near to the replacement levels of population growth: Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and West Bengal.

States having very high rates of population growth: U.P., Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh.

Reasons of regional differences:

- Difference in Literacy Percentage in different states.
- Societal conditions vary in different states. Terrorism, war-like conditions and insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir and North-East.
- Socio-Economic conditions vary in different states.

(i) Number of BPL people is highest among states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Odisha.

(ii) Socio-cultural formation: A belief that more children means more hands to earn or religious beliefs.

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