

## Unit 15

# Population and Development

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### Learning Objectives

This unit will help you to explain:

- Malthusian and Neo Malthusian perspectives on development;
- role of church and State on population control;
- politics of population control; and
- India's population experience and developmental concerns.

## 15.1 Introduction

This unit seeks to outline the role of population and its relationship with development. Conventionally in India, the study of population is understood to be the concern of demographers and, at the most, of government census officials who bring out the *Census of India Report* once in ten years. Population studies, however, is more than just keeping count of numbers, or of births and deaths. It presents an overview of the socio-economic condition of society and is relevant in determining its course of social and economic development. The Census is a mammoth exercise, a long drawn out process of collecting data on the number of persons in India with an assemble of information on the socio-economic status of the population. With every census, routine concerns have been raised and pronouncements made over the issue of over-population, levels of poverty and unemployment, and social inequities. The significance and importance of population studies to the understanding of society as a whole, that is, the social, economic and political spheres of life, has attracted the interests of experts from various disciplines. Concomitantly, the study of population has been marked by controversies, conflicts of opinion and long-standing debates on the desired course of development for the country.

For long, a major global concern has been the overpopulation of the world. High population rates in the so called developing countries (primarily Asian and African countries), it is argued, adds to the global crises of providing for more persons from the limited and already over-exploited natural resource base on earth. There are various perspectives on the understanding of the global crises and the issue of overpopulation. According to some experts, the hype associated with the role of overpopulation in aggravating the global crises is overstated. The overemphasis on population as the cause for the crises, they argue, shift the focus from other structural reasons for over and wasteful utilisation of natural resources by the advanced countries. In this context, the development debate gains significance and brings to light the politics around the population question.

The present unit attempts to present some of the key issues that are central to the debate on population and development. The first section would present

a historical backdrop to the concern in population, the reasons for its inception, the issues that it raised, the politics that accompanied the same and as to how the subject of population became an institutionalised concern in international circles. The second section would delineate the substantive issues that emerge from what is popularly termed as 'population questions', on how population becomes a point of altercation and negotiation between the advanced and the so called developing world over issues of development and the related environment and gender concerns. The third section would present the Indian experience with population issues and development and the broad policy shifts in understanding the population crises in the country. The conclusion would summarise the key issues raised in the different sections of the unit in relation to the debate on population and development.

## 15.2 Historical Background

Thomas Malthus' work *Essay on the Principle of Population* (1798) is considered as the pioneering work on population in which he explicated the fundamental theory of population growth. According to the theory, population grows at a much faster rate than what the natural resources can provide for. The number of people doubles every 25 years if unchecked and thus grows at a geometric rate (1,2,4,8, etc.) while food production increases at an arithmetic rate (1,2,3,4,5, etc). And given the limited natural resource base, there will be a shortage of food supply. This gap between the rates of increase of population and food supply creates what he termed as 'positive' conditions such as wars, famines and epidemics that act as checks against overpopulation. He was against the use of birth control methods and abortion to check population. He suggested some 'preventive' checks for overpopulation like prolonged celibacy and late marriage.

Malthus proposed his theory at a time when Europe was experiencing a decline in death rates due to improvements in medicine and an overall industrial growth. Subsequently there was a rapid growth of population in Europe, but the spread of industry and acquisition of colonies accommodated the growing population. Moreover, between the years 1800 and 1930, an estimated 400 million migrated from Europe to North America in search of better opportunities of work. Europe experienced 'depopulation' rather than 'overpopulation'. America was concerned about the rise in population, largely because of the influx of migrants as well as the high rate of fertility among them. America came up with strict immigration policies, which was resented by some European countries, as it closed doors to greater economic opportunities. France was the first country to experience a fall in birth rates around 1800 and her low fertility rate was considered as one of the reasons for her defeat against Prussia in 1870. Government efforts were made to deal with the problem in 1919 when a separate Council was established as a part of the Ministry of Health to suggest remedial action. The government introduced a number of measures to encourage larger families. Family allowances were granted to assist wage earners with large families. In 1923, the law against abortion was amended to make it more effective.

Other European countries too registered low birth rates, which led to pro-natalist measures (measures to keep the locals at home) in countries like Italy and Germany. For example in Italy, strict laws against abortion and birth control measures and emigration were introduced. In Nazi Germany, marriage loans were extended to couples to start families. A feature, which was already in place in Italy and France. The pro-natalist measures related well to the Fascist and Nazi propaganda of the time and took on ethnic and racist hues. Considerations of race and science led to the emergence of eugenics, a political movement and a philosophy that dominated Europe in the early twentieth century, particularly in Germany under Hitler. Eugenics is the selective breeding of the supposedly 'superior' human genes to improve the quality of the human

race. Eugenics became the fundamental justification for the persecution of Jews in Germany and racial discrimination in general.

Demographic considerations dominated many of the fears and consequent policy measures in Europe till the end of World War II. Population concerns became internationalised with the League of Nations (between 1900 and 1914) taking up issues of birth control and immigration for discussion in its various forums. Advocates of Malthus' prophecy from countries such as France, Italy and Holland, debated over the relationship between overpopulation and war. According to them, population pressure was the major reason for international tensions and economic rivalry between countries as well as colonialism. Pro-natalist movements were viewed as expressions of disgruntlement with the lack of access to economic resources leading to racist and ethnic rivalries. The Neo-Malthusians, in their various forums such as the British Malthusian League (1919) and the Sixth International neo-Malthusian and Birth Control Conference (1925) repeatedly pledged to restrict the birth rate so that people are able to live in comfort in their own country without feeling the need to expand their territorial base. The British Malthusian League adopted a resolution to deny membership to any country that did not pledge to restrict its birth rate.

The term neo-Malthusianism was first used in 1877 by Dr. Samuel Van Houten, one of the vice-presidents of the Malthusian League. Neo-Malthusianism was not just a campaign in favour of birth control; it was particular perspective on the effects of population on human conduct and behaviour. The neo-Malthusian movement therefore was different from conventional Malthusian position on two counts: it stressed on birth control methods and also identified the working class with the problem of overpopulation. The overcrowded industrial slums were identified as sites of moral degeneration. This diverted the debate on population from issues of poverty and unequal access to resources, to birth control per se. Infact, the assumption was that access to commons or availability of resources would give the poor little reason to abstain from having more children. Neo-Malthusianism thereby reinforced the ideology of private property, individualism and capitalism (Ross 1998). The neo-Malthusian position found favour with the elite sentiments on the issue of overpopulation. The elite, threatened by the growing numbers of commoners, considered birth control as an important means of checking future conflict over their property.

The French delegates tried to maintain a stance of ambivalence though they were wary of contraception on the grounds that it encouraged the idea of seeking sexual pleasure without taking the responsibility of the consequences of the act. According to them, it devalued the institution and sanctity of marriage and family values. For the Catholic Church, birth control was illicit and immoral and went against the basic tenet of Christianity. Till the 1920s, most medical opinion was also against birth control, as it considered it unhealthy and immoral. The attitude started changing subsequently, as evidenced by the effort made by the British medical professionals in 1921 to appeal to the Anglican Church to reconsider their position on birth control in the light of existing medical knowledge. In America too, after a court ruling in 1929 that upheld the right of doctors to prescribe contraceptives for health reasons, birth control was included in medical curricula. Birth control clinics were set up in different parts of Europe and America and marked the new phase of the birth control movement. Birth control came to be popularised by taking recourse to the less "offensive" and more "social" terms like "family planning" or "planned parenthood", and the emphasis was on spacing of children and women's health.

In its bid to control sexuality and the domestic sphere of a person's life, birth control went against the modern values of individual freedom and the right of an individual to her/his privacy. On the other hand, it also questioned the orthodoxy of the times and presented birth control as an attempt to present

a choice to the individual to have a child or not. However the source of the birth control debate was not whether individual freedom should be protected or not, but on how to control overpopulation, depopulation or under population and its consequent effect on the world. Central to the debate were the issues of migration, availability of labour, conflict over resources, and poverty. The concerns were developmental and political.

The erstwhile Soviet Union was the first country whose government attempted to make birth control advice and services freely available. Lenin, a key supporter of family planning, distinguished neo-Malthusian propaganda from what he termed as 'the freedom of dissemination of medical knowledge and the defence of the elementary democratic rights of citizens of both sexes' (Symonds and Carder 1973: 21). The socialists consistently maintained that the hue and cry over population was a way to divert the focus from the core issues of inequality and class struggle. For the socialists, the real issue was unequal access to resources than rising population. According to them, there was enough for everyone, provided resources are shared equally. The problem lay in the lack of equal distribution, with the bourgeois and the propertied class unwilling to give up the large share of resources under their control.

After World War II, the situation altered with a number of newly independent states joining the United Nations. By then the neo-Malthusian demographic transition theory was well accepted. According to this theory, all countries pass through four stages of demographic evolution. The first phase is the pre-industrial stage, marked by a high birth and death rate and slow population growth. The second stage is characterised by a population explosion, with improvement in technology and social conditions of life. The death rate is low but the birth rate remains high leading to a high population growth rate. The third stage marks the beginning of the decline in the birth rate due to socio-economic changes and the fourth stage stabilises this trend and establishes a low and steady population growth rate. The interesting aspect of the theory is that population growth was supposed to reflect the level of economic development of a society. It established a low population rate as a key indicator of an economically developed country.

The post-colonies or the countries of the 'third world' stood out in terms of the neo-Malthusian analysis. The countries that break oil of the dutches of colonial rule seemed to be undergoing the second stage of demographic transition, that is, they were experiencing high birth rates and low death rates. With better medical facilities and infrequent famine conditions, population had not only stabilised but also increased at a rapid rate. They were considered as backward, far behind the advanced societies in terms of economic development and technological growth, which was reflected in the persistent high rate of population growth rate. These were a matter of concern for the developed world. Years of colonialism had left these countries poor, with a large population to provide for.

Reduction of population became a priority with the UN. The focus was on raising nutrition levels in developing countries and providing better health facilities to women and children. The proposal to set up the Population Commission came up in 1945, which was opposed by former USSR and Yugoslavia on the grounds that another Commission would only confuse matters, given the proliferation of international bodies within the UN. But the main reason for opposing the Commission was because it focussed primarily on "population changes" and the impending doom following the population explosion, rather than on "growth". It ignored the role of global capitalist development in the production of economic backwardness in developing countries. The Commission was nonetheless formally established in 1946. Although it had no decision making power, it worked in collaboration with the other specialised agencies of the UN such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO), Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Reflection and Action 15.1

What are the major differences between Malthusian and Neo-Malthusian views on population growth and control? What has been the role of Church in population control in Europe?

### 15.3 The Politics of Population Control: Environment and Gender

As discussed in the earlier section, scientific studies to evolve ways and techniques of engineering demographic transition in the developing world had been well established in the United States around the Second World War itself. The UN too had taken upon itself the task of encouraging third world countries to include birth control and family planning within its official responsibilities. The general perception was that the primary reason for underdevelopment and poverty in developing countries is overpopulation, in that whatever is produced is spent on feeding that many persons. This keeps the per capita incomes low and people are unable to come out of situations of poverty. They live in unhygienic conditions, have no access to education, health facilities, and family planning techniques, and have more children with the hope that there would be more persons to labour and earn a living. According to the neo-Malthusians, it is this vicious circle that perpetuates poverty and the only way to cut through this mesh is by controlling population growth.

This position is intolerant to the argument put forward by the third world countries that development is the best contraceptive. The idea being that with socio-economic development and consequent improvement in the standard of living, population rates will slow down. This, however, is unacceptable to the neo-Malthusians on the premise that the world cannot afford to wait that long, given the alarming rate at which the population is growing. The impatience has also grown with an increasing awareness about the global ecological crises. The ecologists have drawn attention to the limited carrying capacity of the earth and the limit to its resources, an idea central to Malthus' thesis. The ecological movement, which gained momentum over the last century, has consistently predicted doom in the near future if the earth continues to be overexploited at the present rate. For the neo-Malthusians, this argument directly addresses the issue of overpopulation, that is, the overexploitation of the earth is a direct consequence of the larger number of people who feed on it.

This argument however has been criticised for being simplistic and factually incorrect. The industrialised nations, which account for less than 25% of the world population, account for 75% of the world's energy use and two-thirds of green house gases that damage the ozone layer. The effects are global and affect everyone. Moreover, the third-world countries have been used as dumping grounds for the toxics and chemicals produced by the multinational companies of the advanced countries in the third world. Thus it seems that the source of the ecological crisis is not 'overpopulation' but 'over consumption'. The crisis lies in the fact that the rate of reproduction of nature is slower than the rate of industrial production.

The neo-Malthusian position on poverty and population also fails to explore the role and extent of structural inequalities of class and status, unequal access to the means of production and a lack of structural reforms in the perpetuation of the conditions of poverty. The mechanisation of the hitherto labour intensive agricultural sector has accentuated class differences and hastened the marginalisation of the lower strata. In India, the Green revolution, a movement to increase food production and to realise the goal of food self-sufficiency in the country, was achieved through technological upgradation of the methods of agriculture and the introduction of high yielding variety of

hybrid seeds. The example is of interest more so because it was introduced to boost economic growth and agricultural production. Despite the immediate gains of the green revolution, it triggered off a series of social, economic and environmental complications. In the absence of land reforms, the commercialisation of agriculture benefited the rich farmers and created conditions of indebtedness among the poor farmers. The poor farmers did not have as much land or the financial resources to benefit from the green revolution.

**Box 15.1: Myth and Fact**

**Myth:** Poor people will be better off if they had fewer children to feed and clothe.

**Fact:** This depends on whether children are an asset or a liability. In the US, for instance, the cost of supporting a child to the age of 18, excluding college fees, is over \$100,000 and 50% of American women using contraception are doing so because they feel they cannot afford another child. But in countries of the South, boys are already producing more than they consume by the age of 10 and have repaid their parents' investment in their upbringing by the time they are 15.

(Source: Facts Against Myths 1993)

As for the environmental consequences, the use of pesticides, chemical fertilisers and hybrid seeds have had a negative effect on the soil quality. In fact, commercial agriculture and the over utilisation of ground water has created conditions of drought all over India. The environmental crisis has put even the tried and tested route to development of the modern and advanced countries to question. The construction of large dams, monoculture plantations and commercial agriculture have not only created conditions of poverty, but also questioned the explicit faith in the dominant ideas of progress and development to bring about the appropriate demographic changes. The overexploitation of the environment has put a large section of the world population at risk. Millions of persons have lost their livelihoods, face severe health risks, and have been forced to migrate to the already overpopulated cities in search of alternative employment. The indigenous peoples across the world or tribes, as they are known in India, have collectively campaigned against the destruction of their natural habitats, which has cut into their source of livelihood and forced them to migrate in search of employment.

Studies on fertility and poverty reveal the complex relationship between poverty and the tendency to have more children. For one, unlike the neo-Malthusian belief, children are not viewed as liabilities but as assets. The motivation to have more children varies from class to class. Landless labourers, who depend on manual labour, and the poor farmers, who cannot afford mechanised alternatives to manual labour, prefer to have more children. Overpopulation then is not the cause of poverty, but perhaps or at the most a symptom. This is to say that having more children is not the reason for their impoverishment, but is a calculated, rational economic decision on their part. According to the ILO statistics, 1995, there are 250 million children in the age group of 4 - 14 years working for a living and 50% of them are employed full time (Bandarage 1997: 159). The *World Development Report*, 1984 further supports this argument through its findings in Thailand, South Korea, Indonesia and Turkey; children here are considered as investments, as persons who would take care of their parents in the future. This heavy reliance on children also demonstrates the absence and poor performance of other forms of institutional support structures and welfare programmes in the third world. Clearly a unidirectional focus on population cannot explain or 'cure' poverty and its persistence in the third world.

**Box 15.2: Myth and Fact**

Myth: Muslims do not practice family planning because of their religion

Fact: Islam does not prohibit family planning. Several '*Ulemas*' of different countries infact have already issued '*fatwas*' saying that all temporary forms of family planning for medical and economic reasons are permitted. In Islamic countries like Turkey and Indonesia, for instance, family planning methods are quite popular. In Turkey, 63% of the population uses contraception and in Indonesia the figure stands at 48%.

Islam prohibits abortion only after 120 days of conceiving, except to save mother's health.

(Source: Facts Against Myths 1993)

Another factor that needs to be discussed alongside the issue of overpopulation is the simultaneous prevalence of high rate of infant mortality and fertility in developing countries. An analysis of the reasons reveals structural factors for the same. The low status of women, lack of proper nutrition and personal health emerge as common reasons for high rates of infant mortality. Infant mortality only registers death of children in the first year of birth, while many of the children who do survive beyond the first year die due to lack of proper nutrition and care. In a system dominated by patriarchal values, which attaches greater value to a male child and recognises women primarily by their reproductive functions, the motivation for having many children is structural. In such a situation, women either lack the power to decide whether to have a child or not, or exercise their reproductive role in order to find acceptance in the system.

Contraceptives or other techniques of birth control have been misused to control women's fertility. Thus instead of providing women greater control over their reproductive functions, birth control techniques have provided a means of controlling women's bodies. The proliferation of illegal and private sex determination clinics all over India is the case in point. Female infanticide and termination of pregnancy to avoid having a girl child is a common practice. Similarly, in China, the resurgence of female infanticide and abandonment of children in the early 1980s was attributed to the pressure created by government's family planning program. The fear is that the drop in the number in females will lead to other forms of exploitative practices against women such as revival of infant betrothal and new forms of sexual and economic slavery.

There is also a controversy over the politics of technology transfers from the first to the third world. The concern about population, and now HIV/AIDS, has also been viewed as a circuitous means of creating a market, or rather a "dumping ground" for many of the obsolete technologies, of the first world in the developing world. In such a scenario, is it good enough to control birth and bring down the population? Is it not important to address the ethical issues surrounding birth control technologies and the overdrive to check overpopulation without dealing with the larger structural dimensions of the problem? In order for family planning techniques and birth control measures to be meaningful, social and economic conditions of women have to be improved. By concentrating on women's reproductive roles, women's productive lives are not considered in comprehending their compulsions and the reproductive choices that they make.

**Reflection and Action 15.2**

How does population control policy of the state affect women's status in society?

## 15.4 INDIA: The Population Experience and Developmental Concerns

India was one of the first countries to recognise the population problem and adopt an official national programme on family planning in 1952. Concern over the rise in population in India started well before independence, in the 1930s. Between 1881 and 1931, India's population grew from 27.7 million to 279.0 million; and between 1931 and 1940, it grew from 279.0 million to 318.7 million. The rise was phenomenal, from 10% in the first decade to a 14% in the second. This growth was unprecedented, primarily because of the measures taken to control epidemic and famine situations. The concern over the rise of population was more among the social reformers, intellectuals, and the Congress party than in the British government. The British government was cautious in raising the issue, as they had witnessed the reaction of people to birth control back in Britain and also because they did not want to create conditions of unrest among the Indians over the issue.

Most Congress workers, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, were against birth control measures. The use of contraceptives was considered sinful; it was seen as a method to offset the procreative role of sex. But many leaders, scholars and trainees of the Indian Civil Service, who had been to England and were acquainted with the Malthusian theory, considered India as a likely casualty of the 'positive' checks – wars, famines and epidemics – due to overpopulation and poverty. The Neo-Malthusian League was established in Madras (present Chennai) as early as in 1929. The League brought out a propaganda journal titled *The Madras Birth Control Bulletin*. It was in Mumbai that birth control was for the first time seen not as a means to control the population, but as a method of liberating women from the frequent and difficult task of childbearing, preventing unwanted pregnancies, and improving the health of women. Professor R.D.Karve in Mumbai made it his life long mission to campaign for the rights of women and educate people about birth control. He later became the member of the Family Planning Association of India formed in 1949. In 1935, the All India Women's Conference also took up the issue of birth control in the annual meeting held in Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala) and adopted a resolution to uphold birth control with the view to improve the status of women in society.

The Bengal famine, in which over 1.5 million people died, and the inquiry that followed brought to light the effect of a rising population on the economy and poverty. Similarly the *Bhore Committee Report* of 1949 also related issues of public health, sanitation, and prevention from communicable diseases with population control. Both the reports formed the foundation for the family planning programme after independence and its inclusion into India's five-year development plans. The First Five-Year Plan (1951-6) stated its intention as follows, "the reduction of birth rate to the extent necessary to stabilize the population at a level consistent with the requirements of the national economy" (Srinivasan 1995: 30). Clearly, the intention was not just to reduce population, but also to stabilise population growth rate at a level that can be sustained by the national economy. But population control was pursued as an independent agenda, separate from the concerns of development and social change.

No numerical targets or demographic goals were set in the First and the Second Plan (1956-61) and people were expected to go to the clinics and seek family planning services. Besides providing the regular methods of birth control such as diaphragm, condoms, vaginal foam tablets, sterilisation services were also provided. The Third Plan (1961-66) replaced the clinic-oriented approach with an extension-education approach, which aimed at taking the message of birth control to the people instead of waiting for them to approach the government clinics. The message to the people was to adopt the small family



norm, which was not only a sensible choice in terms of giving their children a better future and improving the health of women, but also the need for building a healthy and prosperous country. The family planning programme was officially made a part of the public health departments and peripheral health workers such as the Auxiliary Nurses-Midwives (ANMs) were appointed in primary health centres to inform, motivate and encourage villagers to adopt family planning methods. By the Fourth Plan (1969-74), targets for sterilisation were set and camps were held to operate on people to meet targets. Although 61% of the target was achieved, population growth increased at the same rate, which perplexed policy makers and administrators.

It was in the Fifth Plan period (1974-79) that the National Population Policy (1976) was formulated. Concerted effort was made to improve the organisational structure of the health department and increase its efficiency in achieving family planning goals. Government offices, villages and urban centres were targeted for sterilisation. The Emergency that followed soon after, as per many analysts, brought out the uninhibited and obsessive side to this drive of bringing down the population. The emergency created a fear among people about forced sterilisation, and the newly elected Janata government changed its approach to pacify people's fear regarding birth control. It adopted the term "family welfare" instead of "family panning" to suggest a malleable character of the programme. The concentration was now on educating people and thereby motivating them to adopt family welfare measures. A number of recommendations of the 1976 policy were nonetheless adopted. For example, the age of marriage of boys and girls was raised to 21 and 18 respectively. The Sixth Plan (1980-85) set long and short-term targets, which persisted through the Seventh Plan (1985-91); the long-term goals focussed on reducing the size of the family, the birth, infant mortality and death rates, while the short-term goal was to encourage sterilisation, use of Intra-Uterine Devices (IUDs) and other conventional contraceptives.

The Plans demonstrated, time and again, that enacting laws or implementing birth control programmes was unable to deliver the desired results. The deeper analysis of the population puzzle reveals that the accompanying measures to reduce poverty levels, economic and social disparities in the country were not effectively translated into practice. Most remained on paper; the goal of employment for all, improving the quality of life of people by providing efficient and regular basic services of education, health and sanitation, and water and most importantly strengthening the capacity of people to procure these services without difficulty are yet to be achieved. High population growth rate is found in the northern states of India in comparison to the rest of the country. Interestingly, Kerala, which is one of the states that has brought down its fertility rates, is still one of the most economically backward states in the country. The Kerala experience illustrates how economic growth is not the only important condition for population regulation. Infact, the case of West Bengal, the other communist stronghold in the country has not been able to achieve the success of Kerala, primarily due to the lack of attention given to female literacy.

An analysis of states like Goa, Kerala and Tamiladu, which have registered a drop in population growth, demonstrates other supposedly "extraneous" reasons for the same. Goa despite the strong presence of the church has never been averse to family planning propaganda. It has like Kerala always recorded high female literacy level. The age at marriage of women has been higher than the rest of India. Kerala with a communist state in power for over two decades in the State and a strong workers' movement was able to direct economic and social change. Land reforms, regularisation of minimum wages in agriculture and the organised sectors, and premium attention to primary and secondary education ensured social justice and reduction of poverty levels, and thereby created conditions for fertility regulation and decline in population growth.

Tamilnadu's experience reveals the role of a strong bureaucracy and political will in popularising the family planning programmes. Known for the self-respect movement spearheaded by Periyar and his strong radical views on caste, status of women and education, marriage and contraception in the 1920s, the political and social climate was already set for implementing birth control programmes. The bureaucracy in Tamilnadu pioneered the family planning programmes and developed a comprehensive maternal and child welfare programme in the state. The 'camp approach' was also systematically institutionalised in the state. The programme was also decentralised to the district level and was made a special responsibility of the district administrators. Components of teaching or awareness building, extension or instructions about contraceptive services and 'after care' services to persons who undergo vasectomy was included in the programme. Popular initiatives (funded by International agencies) like midday meals for over 9 million school children, which also generated employment for over two hundred thousand women in the villages, further helped in building a mass base for the programme.

Evidently the supply driven services of fertility and population regulation have to be complemented by the principle of demand for these services. The demand or motivation for fertility regulation has to be created by concerned citizens, organisations and the government. Increasingly it is clear that a target-oriented programme of population control is narrow and does not address the larger social, political and economic issues that perpetuate conditions of poverty, illiteracy and ill health. Any policy framework for population control has to create favourable conditions for economic, social and political equality as well as environment friendly economic growth. Bureaucratic efficiency and good governance are also at the heart of a successful delivery system of health services. Unless this multi-pronged approach is adopted and implemented with right earnest, containing population growth will be difficult, if not impossible. The National Population Policy of India, 1994, explicitly argues for a pro-poor, pro-nature and a pro-women population programme, which views people as active partners in dealing with the population problem rather than the source itself. Initiatives by the Indian government to decentralise development concerns to the lowest levels of administration and thereby involving the elected representatives of the village councils and non-governmental organisations in implementing health programmes, as well as mainstreaming alternative medicine systems and health delivery systems within the government have been attempts to evolve a multi-pronged approach to population and development. The policy changes, however, have to be supported by a strong political will and a sense of social responsibility.

### Reflection and Action 15.3

Select any two States in India. Collect data on these States of the 1991 and 2001 census on

- i) population by rural, urban, male and female;
- ii) literacy by rural, urban, male and female; and
- iii) work participation by rural, urban, male and female.

Arrange these data in a tabular form and compare the co-relationship among these variable as emerged in these states keeping the following questions in mind:

- a) What is the pattern of population growth in these states by gender?
- b) Is there a relationship between literacy and population growth?
- c) What is the relationship between work participation and population growth?

## 15.5 Conclusion

In this unit, the attempt is to move beyond statistics in understanding the issue of population growth. The issue of population control has always been surrounded by controversies. The first section illustrates how the population debate at its inception was closely associated with the social and economic changes in the western world. Religious orthodoxy, concerns of depopulation and the availability of labour and the overcrowding of urban centres and rising poverty plagued the debates on population growth. The attempt is to demonstrate the importance of ideological positions in the adoption of particular strategies in dealing with the issue of population.

The second section carries the debate further, as it evolved after the Second World War between the advanced countries and the newly independent nations of the third world. Over population was identified as the main reason for backwardness and poverty in the third world. While the third world believed that economic development would lead to a decline in the population rate, the same did not convince the advanced countries. The pressure to control population was mounted on the third world especially in the wake of the 'limit to growth' thesis, which argued that earth would not be able to sustain the ever-growing population on her limited resource base for long. The section also examines the implications of the population politics on women.

The third section traces the broad policy orientations on population in India and presented case studies to understand the reasons for the failure and success of the programmes in different parts of the country. Analyses revealed the role of larger structural and social reforms, and efficient government delivery systems as the underlying reasons for their success. These cases have prompted a countrywide debate on population, and some of issues have been included at least at the policy level. This unit traces the debate from its inception to the present with a view to addresses some of the issues that have contributed to its growth and intensity all over the world as well as in India.

## 15.6 Further Reading

Ahmed, Aijazuddin, Daniel Noin and H.N. Sharma (eds.) 1997. *Demographic Transition. The Third World Scenario*. Rawat Publications: Jaipur and Delhi

Bandarage, Asoka 1997. *Women, Population and Global Crisis. A Political-Economic Analysis*. Zed Books: London

Chaubey, P.K. 2001. *Population Policy for India. Perspectives, Issues and Challenges*. Kanishka Publishers: Delhi

**Altruism:** The dictionary meaning of altruism is the behaviour intended to help others and done without any expectation of personal benefit. Durkheim, the social thinker talks extensively about altruism and altruistic suicide. For him altruism is the violent and voluntary act of self-destruction for no personal benefit. Altruistic suicide occurs when the individual's integration with the society is too great and the collective consciousness is also too strong.

**Asceticism:** It is rejection of bodily pleasures through sustained self-denial and self-mortification, with the objective of strengthening spiritual life. Asceticism has been common in most of the major world religions, including Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Christianity etc., all of these have special ascetic cults or ascetic ideals. 'Fasting' is one of the most common ascetic practices seen among these religious practitioners.

**Balance of Payments:** It is a record of official estimates of all transactions between two countries during a year. It shows the sum total of all external transactions arising from export and import of goods and services and transfers, such as remittances and capital inflows and outflows (transactions on capital account).

**Barbarism:** An uncivilized or coarse state or condition; rudeness of manners; ignorance of arts, learning, and literature etc.

**Biodiversity:** A term for the variety of ecosystems, plants and animal species, and genetic differences that exist on the earth. Scientists estimate the number of species existing on earth as between 5 million and 30 million.

**Bureaucracy:** Bureaucracy is a sociological concept of government and its institutions as an organisational structure characterised by regularised procedure, division of responsibility, hierarchy, and impersonal relationships. According to Weber, the attributes of modern bureaucracy include its impersonality, concentration of the means of administration, a leveling effect on social and economic differences and implementation of a system of authority that is practically unyieldable.

**Civilisation:** An advanced state of intellectual, cultural, and material development in human society, marked by progress in the arts and sciences, the extensive use of record-keeping, including writing, and the appearance of complex political and social institutions.

**Common Property Resources:** Natural resources accessed through social and legal institutions that ensure sharing of benefits from the resources but that may also impose regulations on their use. The management of such natural resources will be community based. This is different from "open access" resources.

**Commons:** Commons are pieces of land historically available for grazing by anyone. They are any sets of resources that a community recognizes as being accessible to any member of that community and "owned" equally by every member of the community, even though the community recognises that only a limited number of members may use the resource at any given time. The nature of commons is different in different communities, but they often include cultural resources and natural resources. The Commons are most often a finite but replenishable resource, which requires responsible use in order to remain available.

**Comparative Advantage:** A component of free market theory that states that if each nation made just those things which it could produce cheaper relative to a foreign country and then trade with other nations to get that which they could produce relatively cheaper, wealth would expand and everyone would benefit. For David Ricardo, the economist who formulated the concept of comparative cost (today called as comparative advantage), comparison is of "unit labor requirements". His argument is that a country that trades for products that it can get at lower cost from another country is better off than if it had made the products at home.

**Concomitant:** Interrelated facts or phenomenon. It may be a social event or situation that happens at the same time as or in connection with another.

**Diffusion:** Diffusion is the spontaneous spreading of something such as particles, heat, or momentum. In cultural anthropology diffusion means spread of ideas or artifacts from one culture to another.

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**Discourse:** a term described by Dr. Ortwin Renn in the theory of communicative action, to denote a special form of dialogue in which all affected parties have equal rights and duties to present claims and test their validity in a context free of social or political domination. Michel Foucault saw a discourse as a system of ideas or knowledge, inscribed in a specific vocabulary (eg psychoanalysis, anthropology, cultural/literary studies). The important thing, for Foucault, was that such discourses were used to legitimate the exercise of power over certain persons by categorising them as particular 'types'.

**Economic Growth Model of Development:** The model of development essentially concerned with economic growth of a nation-state, which is measured in terms of increase in Gross National/ Gross Domestic Product (GNP/GDP) and per capita income. This model of development is based on capital accumulation from within the country wherever possible and with foreign assistance where domestic accumulation is not possible, and is characterized by rapid industrialisation. The strategies of economic growth, which had already proved successful in Western countries, were recommended for newly independent less developed countries. One of the assumptions of the economic growth model of development was that, the GNP/GDP growth would automatically trickle down to the lower income groups.

**Ecosystem:** A localised group of interacting and interdependent organisms together with the environment that they inhabit and depend on.

**Egalitarian:** A type of social organisation that assumes the equality of all people, in which every individual has an equal opportunity to obtain resources and the esteem of others in leadership activities.

**Environment:** Natural environment; the natural world as a whole or in a particular geographical area, in which plants, animals (including human beings) live and operate, influence the other elements of it and are being influenced by them.

**Environmentalism:** Environmentalism is the movement or activism that works toward protecting the natural world from harmful human activities. It is aimed at protecting the environment or improving its condition, particularly nature and quite often takes the form of public education programs, advocacy, legislation and treaties.

**Exogenous:** Exogenous (or exogeneous), originated from the Greek words "exo" and "gen", meaning "outside" and "production", refers to an action or object coming from outside a system. It is the opposite of endogenous that means something generated from within the system.

**Gemeinschaft and Gessellschaft:** Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft are sociological categories introduced by the German sociologist Ferdinand Tonnies for two normal types of human association. (A normal type as coined by Tonnies is a purely conceptual tool to be built up logically, whereas an ideal type, as coined by Max Weber, is a concept formed by accentuating main elements of a historic/social change). Gemeinschaft is a form of community said to be common in traditional societies and associated with notions of stability and informal personal contact. Gesellschaft is a form of association common in urban-based industrial societies and associated with non-permanent and utilitarian social relationships.

**Gender:** Gender refers to the socially constructed roles ascribed to males and females and the resulting socially determined relations. These roles are learned, change over time, and vary widely within and across cultures. Gender is one of the key entry points for social analysis/ assessment. It is important to understand the social, economic, political, and cultural forces that determine how men and women participate in, benefit from, and control project resources and activities and thereby to highlight gender specific constraints, risks and opportunities.

**Globalisation:** Globalization (or globalisation) is a term used to describe the changes in societies and the world economies that are the result of dramatically increased international trade and cultural exchange. In specifically economic contexts, it is often understood to refer almost exclusively to the effects of trade, particularly trade liberalisation or free trade. Globalization is a comprehensive term referring to the processes leading to the emergence of a global society in which economic, political, environmental and cultural events in one part of the world influence people in other parts of the world. The process of globalisation is the result of advances in communication, transportation and information technologies, due to which there is phenomenal growth in linkages that connect individuals, communities, business and commercial institutions and governments around the world.

**Gross Domestic Product:** The monetary value of all of a nation's goods and services produced within a nation's borders and within a particular period of time, such as a year.

**Hegemony:** Hegemony is the dominance of one group over other groups, with or without the threat of force, to the extent that, for instance, the dominant party can dictate the terms of trade to its advantage; more broadly, cultural perspectives become skewed to favour the dominant group. Hegemony may result in the empowerment of certain cultural beliefs, values and practices to the submersion and partial exclusion of others.

**Human Rights:** Human rights are rights to which people are entitled simply because they are human beings, regardless of their nationality, race, ethnicity, gender, or religion. These are those basic standards without which people cannot live in dignity. To violate someone's human rights is to treat that person as though she or he were not a human being. To advocate human rights is to demand that the human dignity of all people be respected.

**Immediacy:** A lack of an intervening or mediating agency; for example, the immediacy of television coverage.

**Imperialism:** The policy of imposing the rule or command of an empire or nation over foreign countries, or of obtaining and occupying colonies and dependencies. Imperialism reached its peak in 1914, when almost 85% of the world's land surface was controlled by a handful of colonial powers, mostly European.

**Import Substitution:** An economic development strategy that replaces imports with domestic production. Its proponents favour the export of industrial goods over primary products. They emphasise the growth of domestic industries, often by import protection using tariff and non-tariff measures. Their argument is that the export of raw materials and the import of finished products do not make a favourable condition for industrial growth in developing countries.

**Laissez-faire:** *Laissez-faire* is a French phrase meaning idiomatically "leave to do, leave to pass" or more accurately "let things alone, let them pass". This phrase was first used by the eighteenth century Physiocrats as an injunction against government interference with trade, it is now used as a synonym for strict free market economics. The *laissez-faire* school of thought holds a pure capitalist or free market view. Their basic idea is that less government interference in private economic decisions such as pricing, production, and distribution of goods and services makes for a better system. Adam Smith played a large role in popularizing *laissez-faire* economic theories in English-speaking countries, though he was critical of a number of aspects of what is currently thought of as *laissez-faire* (such as lack of government regulation of business practices).

**Land Reforms:** Land reform, also known as agrarian reform, is the government-initiated or government-backed redistribution or transfer of ownership of or tenure in agricultural land. The term most often refers to transfer from ownership by a relatively small number of wealthy (or noble) owners with extensive land holdings (e.g. plantations, large ranches, or agribusiness plots) to individual or collective ownership by those who work in that land.

**Metaphor:** An idiom used to explain a fact or a phenomenon. This is a figure of speech in which two things are compared, usually by saying one thing is another, or by substituting a more descriptive word for the more common or usual word that would be expected. Some examples of metaphors: the world is a stage; he was a lion in battle; drowning in debt; a sea of troubles etc.

**Mixed Economy:** A mixed economy is an economy that combines capitalism and socialism. Some sources prefer the use of command economy over "socialism" in defining a mixed economy. It is an economy in which resources are allocated partly through the decisions of private individuals and privately owned business enterprises and partly through the decisions of the Government and state-owned enterprises. The two sectors are known as the private and public sectors, respectively. India followed the policy of mixed economy after independence. The economic policies started changing after the adoption of new economic policy in early 1990s.

**Model:** Hypothetical or a tested representation of a phenomenon

**Nation State:** A nation-state is a specific form of state, which exists to provide a sovereign territory for a particular nation, and derives its legitimacy from that function. In the ideal model of the nation-state, the population consists of the nation and only

of the nation; the state not only houses it, but protects it and its national identity. A nation state may at the same time be a federal state.

**Neoliberalism:** Perhaps most often neoliberalism refers to a political-economic philosophy that has had major implications for government policies beginning in the 1970s, and increasingly prominent since 1980, which de-emphasises or rejects government intervention in the economy, focusing instead on achieving progress and even social justice by encouraging free-market methods and fewer restrictions on business operations and economic development.

**New Economic Policy:** The New Economic Policy (NEP) is a system of economic reforms, partly market-oriented, that Vladimir Lenin instituted in the erstwhile Soviet Union in 1921 after a period of existence of war communism. War Communism had included forced requisition of grain, nationalization of all trade and industry, strict control of labor, payment in kind, and confiscation of financial capital. As a result of this program and of the ravages of the war, industrial and agricultural production declined sharply, and the population suffered severe deprivation. During then Lenin introduced the NEP in order to revive the economy. The new program signified a return to a limited capitalist system. India adopted new economic policy in 1991. The new economic policy adopted by the Government aims at improving India's competitiveness in the global market and rapid growth of exports. Another element of the new economic policy is attracting foreign direct investment and stimulating domestic investment. The new economic policy was more of market oriented and with less government controls and interventions.

**Oligarchy:** The word oligarchy is originated from the Greek words for "few" and "rule". Oligarchy is a form of government where most political power effectively rests with a small segment of society, typically the most powerful, whether by wealth, military strength, ruthlessness, or political influence. Their power is maintained by force or by the shaping of the law to restrict the people and/or remove any need to consult them or be accountable to them. Many of the monarchies established in Europe during the Middle Ages began as oligarchies, with one family eventually gaining ascendancy over others.

**Oligopolic Market:** A market structure characterized by "fewness" of sellers. An oligopoly exists when a few companies dominate an industry. Given a situation in which there are only a few sellers, a phenomenon called "oligopolistic interdependence" is expected. In an oligopolic market situation the prices are set by agreement rather than by the operation of the supply and demand mechanism. For an oligopoly to exist, the few companies do not need to control all the production or sale of a particular commodity or service. They only need to control a significant share of the total production or sales.

**Open Access Resources:** Natural resources accessible to anyone, with no restrictions on their use. Since there is no restriction of its use by the users there is a chance for over exploitation.

**Orientalism:** This is a term introduced by the Palestinian cultural critic Edward Said in his book *Orientalism* published in 1978. By orientalism he refers to the historical and ideological process whereby false images of and myths about the Eastern or "oriental" world have been constructed in various western discourses. It is the incorrect Western tendency to view all Asian cultures as a kind of homogenous whole and to place them within an artificial framework that is distinctly opposed to their own, which is also somewhat artificially conceived; i.e., all Westerners are rational and linear, all Asians are non-rational and spatial, etc.

**Paradigm:** Refers to a pattern or model; a collection of assumptions, concepts, practices, and values that constitutes a way of viewing reality, especially for an intellectual community that shares them.

**Patriarchy:** It is the social organization marked by the supremacy of the father in the clan or family; the legal dependence of wives and children on him, and the reckoning of descent and inheritance in the male line. In a social system patriarchy is understood as the male domination of ownership and control, at all levels in society, which maintains and operates the system of gender discrimination. Here system of control is justified in terms of patriarchal ideology, which means a system of ideas based on a belief in male superiority and sometimes the claim that the gender division of labour is based on biology or even based on scripture.

**Pedagogy:** It stands for the strategies, techniques, and approaches that teachers can use to facilitate learning. The literal definition tends to be – the "science" of teaching children but it is a term, which has being commonly accepted to mean the study of teaching and learning in all contexts.

**Phenomenology:** Phenomenology, a 20th-century philosophical movement dedicated to describing the structures of experience as they present themselves to consciousness, without recourse to theory, deduction, or assumptions from other disciplines such as the natural sciences.

**Policy of Autarky:** An autarky is an economy that does no trade with the outside world (engage in international trade), or an ecosystem not affected by influences from its outside, and relies entirely on its own resources (a state of self-sufficiency). In the economic meaning, it is also referred to as a "closed economy."

**Promethean:** Promethean means advancing human life through self-expression, augmented by authentic freedom, experimentality and individualism. The philosophy of prometheanism opposes repression, orthodoxy, and collectivism; instead it values the liberated and realized person.

**Purchasing Power:** The ability to purchase goods and services or the amount of goods and services that one unit of money can buy. During times of inflation, purchasing power decreases when money is held because of a decline in the value of the currency. In other words, creditors lose while borrowers gain. In economics, purchasing power refers to the amount of goods and services a given amount of money or, more generally, liquid assets can buy.

**Reaganomics:** The term Reaganomics, a portmanteau of Reagan and economics, was used to describe, and decry, the economic policies of U.S. President Ronald Reagan during the 1980s. Reagan assumed office during a period of high inflation and unemployment. His new Right policies included cutting back on government spending by privatisation, and deregulating the economy.

**Reductionist:** Reductionism in philosophy describes a number of related, contentious theories – can always be reduced to or explained by simpler or more fundamental things. This is true of objects, phenomena, explanations, theories, and meanings. The term is often used to criticize an imagined position rather than to describe a real one.

**Self-reliance:** The capacity to manage one's own affairs, make one's own judgments, and provide for oneself.

**Social Justice:** Social justice, also called as civil justice, is a concept largely based on various social contract theories. It refers to a worldview that calls for equality of consideration for all members of a society, regardless of colour, race, socio-economic class, gender, age, or sexual preference. With reference to State it refers as governments are instituted among populations for the benefit of members of those populations; those governments which fail to see to the welfare of their citizens are failing to uphold their part in the social contract and are, therefore, unjust.

**Structural Adjustment Programme:** Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) were designed in the 1980s as a response by the major international creditor agencies, the World Bank (WB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) to the growing economic crisis and balance of payments problems encountered by many developing countries subsequent to the two major oil shocks in the 1970s. Both World Bank and IMF concluded that short-term stabilisation policies, which were traditionally prescribed to address such crisis, had proved to be inadequate, ineffective and had lacked vision. There was a growing realisation at the WB and IMF that economic crisis of the type faced by majority of the developing countries in the 1980s originated from deep-rooted structural weaknesses in their economics. Consequently, this recognition influenced the Bank and Fund to design a new generation of 'stabilisation facilities and policy based loans', which together came to be known as Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). Reforms underwritten by the SAPs mainly concentrated on deregulation, decontrol and liberalisation of the economy, and they put major emphasis on market instruments as the main driving force behind the economy.

**Subsistence Economy:** A subsistence economy is an economy in which a group obtains the necessities of life through self-provisioning. In such a system wealth is not measured in any form of currency, but rather exists in the form of natural resources. Food in a subsistence economy is grown or hunted, and homes built from surrounding trees. In such a system very short surpluses generally exist, and therefore there is a reliance on renewal and reproduction within the natural environment to ensure survival.

**Symbol:** Something that represents something else by association, resemblance, or convention, especially a material object used to represent something invisible. Symbols



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often take the form of words, visual images, or gestures that are used to convey ideas and beliefs. All human cultures use symbols to express the underlying structure of their social systems, to represent ideal cultural characteristics, such as beauty, and to ensure that the culture is passed on to new generations. Symbolic relationships are learned rather than biologically or naturally determined, and each culture has its own symbols.

**Teleology:** A theoretical proposition which argues that the cause and direction of changes in phenomena are determined by a previously existing plan or purpose, as opposed to mechanism wherein they are determined according to the laws of the natural sciences. All human actions (purposive human behavior) are teleological, i.e., they are activated by the purpose of the actor.

**Trickle-down Theory:** The proponents of this theory maintain that the benefits given to the upper classes will "trickle down" to those below them on the social hierarchy, mostly as a result of the normal workings of free markets. This economic theory argues that the support of businesses that allows them to flourish will eventually benefit middle- and lower-income people, in the form of increased economic activity and reduced unemployment.

**Welfare State:** A nation in which the government undertakes large-scale action to ensure the provision of social goods and benefits. These welfare programs are usually provided at public expense with little or no cost to the recipient of the services. Policy prescriptions advanced by proponents of the welfare-state emphasise securing a minimum standard of living for all citizens where no one is denied an essential service which might be available to others; the production of social goods and services; the control of the business cycle; and the manipulation of total output to allow for social costs and revenues. Among the instruments of the modern welfare state are progressive taxes, social security, unemployment insurance, agricultural subsidies, and government-subsidized housing programs.

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