

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

LECTURE-42

Major Causes of Population Explosion

- 1. Increase in Birth Rate

One of the major causes responsible for the growth of the population is the high birth rate. During the 1891-1990 period, the birth rate declined from 45.8 per thousand in India, but it is still considered high. So, unfortunately, in India, the birth rate number has not seen a decrease inspite of the framing laws in terms of family planning, population education, campaigns, etc.

- 2. Decrease in Death Rate

In recent years, the decrease in the death rate is another factor contributing to the rapid growth of the population. In 2001, the death rate in India was about 8.5 per thousand. The death rate has seen a decrease due to advancements in the medical field. For example, Chronic diseases like typhoid, chickenpox, etc., are no longer dreaded. Even the infant mortality rate has decreased because of proper sanitation facilities, cleanliness, and better prenatal and postnatal care.

- 3. Early Marriage

Early marriage is also an essential factor for the rapid increase in population. In India, the marriage age of a girl is 18, which is very low compared to other countries, which is about 23 to 25 years. It leads to a longer span of reproductive activity and increases in children.

- 4. Religious and Social Reasons

In India, marriage is considered a compulsory social institution, and every person should marry. Every individual in a joint family takes equal responsibility and has access to an equivalent level of consumption. So, people don't hesitate to increase their family size in a joint family. In India, most people think that one male child is necessary, and in the expectation of getting a male child, they increase their family size.

- 5. Poverty

Another major cause of population explosion is poverty. In most families, children become the source of income. From a very young age, children start working for their families instead of going to school, and they become a precious asset for the family. So, every individual becomes an earning member and additional income for the family.

- 6. Standard of Living

It is seen that people with a low standard of living wish to have additional children as it will be an asset for them rather than a liability. As we know, most of India's population is uneducated, so they don't understand the importance of family planning. They are unaware that they can enjoy a better quality of life with a small family.

- 7. Illiteracy

In India, 60% of the population is either illiterate or has minimum education, which leads to minimal employment opportunities. So, due to the high illiteracy rate and belief in social customs, child marriage and preference for a male child still prevail. As a result, there is a rapid population growth rate in India.

- **Effects of Population Explosion**

1. The problem of Unemployment:

An increase in population leads to a vast army of the labour force. But, it is difficult to employ such an extensive labour working force due to a shortage of capital resources. In rural areas, disguised unemployment and in urban areas, open unemployment are fundamental features of an underdeveloped country like India.

- 2. More Pressure on Land

Overpopulation creates more pressure on land. It adversely affects the economic development of the country. On the one hand, per capita availability of land goes on diminishing and on the other, the problem of subdivision and fragmentation of holdings increases.

- 3. Environmental Degradation

Extensive use of natural resources and energy production of oil, natural gas, and coal negatively impacts the planet. An increase in population also leads to deforestation, which directly affects the environment, and it also degrades the soil's nutrition value and causes landslides and global warming.

Family welfare program

Family welfare includes not only planning of birth, but they welfare of wholes family by means of total family health care. The family welfare programme has high priority in India because its success depends upon the quality of life of all citizens.

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