

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

LECTURE-41

What is Human Population?

“Human population refers to the number of individuals in a particular area.”

The term human population simply would be the number of people thriving in a specific area which could range from a village to the world usually. Additionally, the term is used to describe the inhabitants also but in most cases, the term would mean numbers.

The population of early humans is not known to us. But it is assumed that there would have been only a few thousands of humans when they emerged several years ago.

The population exploded since the industrial revolution began and the half of the present population grew since 1950. The developing countries have the maximum population.

The migration levels in Europe and Japan have reduced the population considerably. However, the immigration of larger families at higher levels has contributed to the growth of the population in developed countries like Australia, Canada, and the United States.

Owing to the advancement in healthcare and allied services, the birth rates have climbed significantly and surpassed death rates considerably resulting in the current population explosion. For the growth of world population, another reason that could be attributed to would be in the form of women delivering more children than the earlier generations. The rise in population has contributed to concerns among biologists around the world that whether the earth's support systems would be able to bear the burden of the same.

As per the arguments of renowned biologists around the world, the rise in population around the planet has a detrimental impact on forests, cropland, freshwater, fisheries and so on at a larger scale. Another group of social scientists and economists, on the contrary, argues that the hike in population would turn as an asset in the form of human resources and create wealth. But from our observation, it has more negative impacts than positive ones on the community and ecosystem

Thus, it could be concluded that the human population has its own merits and demerits as such depending upon the perspective of the persons assessing the same.

Human Population Growth

Human population growth is the increase in the number of individuals in a particular area. Changes in public health and sanitation have led to a decrease in the death rate over the past 200 years. The invention of antibiotics and vaccines has decreased the chances of infections in humans. Urbanization and advancements in agriculture have also led to an increase in population.

Population growth is one of the major concerns of the present world as the human population is not a static factor. Rather, it is growing at a very alarming rate. In spite of the increasing world population, the resources of the earth remain constant. Thus, the ability to maintain sustainable development is becoming a major challenge to mankind today.

Factors that Influence Population Fluctuation

The fluctuations in the population in a given area are influenced by four major factors, which include the following:

- **Natality** – It is the number of births in a given period of time in a population
- **Mortality** – It is defined as the number of deaths that takes place in a population at a given period of time.
- **Immigration** – It is defined as the number of individuals which come from another population and add to the population in consideration during a period of time.
- **Emigration** – It is defined as the number of individuals from a population who leave the habitat and go to a different habitat at a given period of time.

Population explosion

Population explosion means a sudden increase in the number of individuals in a particular species. The term is used to refer to the world's human population. In India, Population explosion has become a severe matter of concern because the increase in population leads to poverty and illiteracy. In this situation, it is difficult to cope up with the economy of the country with the rapid growth of the population. The Government of India is now looking into the matter seriously, and many states have framed laws to tackle the problem of population explosion.