

POPULATION AWARENESS OF SENIOR SECONDARY CLASS STUDENTS AND THEIR REACTIONS TO THE INCLUSION OF POPULATION EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Nisha Sharma* & Dr. Neetee Mehta**

ABSTRACT

Rapid population growth is a fundamental concern of contemporary society, particularly in developing countries. One of the immediate results of rapid population growth in our country is the explosive growth of the school- age population. This often militates against improvement of the quality of education. To know whether the people are aware of this fact or not, this study has been conducted on a sample of 400 students. The sample included students of senior secondary classes. The population awareness of the sample people, their reactions to the inclusion of population education were judged with the help of suitable tests. 67.59 percent male students had moderate level of the population awareness. 82 percent of girls were found to have moderate level of population awareness. Most of the students wanted to study the subject of population education as a separate subject.

INTRODUCTION

By August, 2018 the population of the world has touched 7.6 billion mark and it is estimated that by 2030 it will cross the mark of 8 billion. By 2050 it will touch the mark of 10 billion. About 78 million people are added to the world population every year. According to an U.N. projection the world population would stabilize at about 10.2 billion by 2085.

According to US population reference bureau every minute 267 children take birth in the world whereas the number of those who die is 108 per minute. This way 159 children are added to the world population every minute. The world population touched the mark of 7 billion on 31st October 2011. It touched the mark of 7.6 billion in 2018.

The world can be divided into three categories on the basis of population growth. Since the beginning of the humanity of the year 1804 saw world population as 1 billion. After 1123 years in 1927 the population of the world was 2 billion on earth. After 47 years in 1974 world population rose to 4 billion. After a gap of 13 years in 1987 population of the world rose to 5 billion. After 12 years in 1999 world population touched 6 billion mark. Again after 12 years in 2011 the world population was 7 billion. It is estimated that after 12 years in 2023 the world population will be

8 billion. Since, the global population growth rate has finally slowed down, the world population will be 9 billion in 2042 after 19 years it will touch the mark of 10 billion after 20 years in 2062.

There are countries which have higher growth rate than the world average (Asian countries). There are countries with a zero growth rate (Luxemburg and Hungary) Asian countries account for about 60% of the total world population. Six of the ten most populous countries in this region are Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Japan and Pakistan.

India, one of the most populous countries accounts for 17.5% of the total world population with a high dependency ratio of 42%. It occupies only 2.4% (135.79) million square kms) of the world's land area. Ever since we attained independence, population has been and continues to be our most serious problem. The population of the country in the mid 2017 was 1.34 billion with an average growth rate of 1.4% and decadal (2001-2011) growth rate of 17.70%. The trend in population growth of the country has been like the following four distinct phases:-

1901-1921	Stagnant Population.
1921-1951	Steady growth.
1951-1981	Rapid high growth.
1981-2001	High growth with definite sign of slowing down.

*Research Scholar, Bhagwant University, Ajmer (Rajasthan)

**Dept. of Education, Bhagwant University, Ajmer (Rajasthan)

2001-2011 Still high growth but with signs of slowing down.

The story of population growth in India is in tune with the classical theory of demographic transition. During most of the nineteenth century, India witnessed a fluctuating but ultimately more or less a stagnant growth of population, which drifted into the twentieth century until 1921. Thereafter, the country passed through successively all the phases of demographic transition and now is widely believed to have entered the fifth phase, usually characterized by rapidly declining fertility. The crucial question is – how long will this phase extend and when will India achieve a stable population? The national population policy (NPP) 2000, as adopted by the govt. of India states that the long term objective is to achieve a stable population by 2045, at a level consistent with the requirement of sustainable economic growth, social development and environment protection. It has been assumed in the policy document that the medium term objective of bringing down the total fertility rate (TFR) to replacement level of 2 by 2020 will be achieved. It will no doubt require a Herculean effort on the part of the govt. and the people to achieve the much cherished goal of stable population.

According to the provisional result compiled quickly for the census of India at 0:00 hours of 28 August, 2018, stood at 1,356,320,297. Thus, as widely believed and expected, India became only the second country in the world after China to officially cross the one billion mark. It is certainly the most unlikely that in the history of the mankind any country other than India and China would be shaping the lives and future of over a billion people.

The rapid growth of population is one of the greatest barriers to economic growth and social well being of the nation. What would such totals- for India and the world mean in terms of the alleviation of the poverty, the status of the women and children, and the sustainability of development programmes? To what degree we are consuming today the very capital required to achieve decent standards of living for future generations?

To determine whether the world or a particular country such as India is on the path of

sustainable development one must relate future population level and future consumption patterns to their impact on the environment. Within the United States the income per capital of the top fifth population is 10 times that of the bottom fifth. Between developed and developing countries, on the basis of purchasing power parities, the ratio is approximately 7 to 1. Although these difficulties may ultimately be affected by the redistribution of income within nations primary emphasis on raising production per capita, if they are to meet the demands of their people for a better life. Economic growth must continue if the quality of the life is to be improved for billion of people across the globe. For decades ahead, no other course will be acceptable.

Every year we add an Australia in terms of human numbers. This population explosion is giving rise to a number of problems. The meager resources have to be thinned to the needs of the millions. We are not in a position to satisfy the basic needs of man such as food, housing, clothing, education, employment, health service etc. Our per capital income 1709.4\$ is among the lowest in the world. Our present food consumption of 200 calories is among the lowest in the world. There are only 18 doctors, 5 nurses, 45 hospital beds for every one lakh population. Nearly 70 percent households live in one room accommodation. And all this inspite of the background that since independence we have increased our agricultural and industrial outputs many folds. Considerable progress has been in the area of population control during the last eleven plans but still lot of work is to be done. Our target of couple protection is still to be achieved.

There seem to be three possible ways to deal with the problem:-

- a) Persuasion (with the help of mass media)
- b) Operations (family planning ways and means)
- c) Education

The government has been doing the persuasive work with the help of mass media, family planning workers and other means. In the area of sterilization I.U.D and contraception enough money has been spent. Persuasion and operation table have not been able to achieve the desired goals. Education is superior to both these

methods. It can do a lot. Realizing the negative effect of rapid population growth on development many developing countries have launched family planning programmes. The success of family planning programmes in some countries such as China has been significant in terms of reducing the rate of population growth. However, in a majority of countries, including India, family planning programs have not been so successful. We need to create an intellectual atmosphere. So that the people voluntarily take to family planning methods. Our target population should flow right from the nursery classes through the primary, middle, secondary and college level right into adulthood. Not much work has been done in the area of population education research in our country and specially in Haryana. So the investigator thought it proper to conduct a research study on the population awareness of students of Haryana and their reaction to the inclusion of population education in the school curriculum.

DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study has been delimited as follows:

1. The study has been delimited to the school students (standard IX and X) of Haryana.
2. Only the population awareness, and student's reaction to the inclusion of population education have been studied. All the students have been selected from rural and urban areas.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The broad objectives of the study are:

1. To assess the degree of population awareness of Haryana school students (standard IX and X).
2. To know the reactions towards the inclusion of population education in the school curriculum.
3. To find out the preparedness of school students for the inclusion of the population education in the school programme.
4. To understand the views of the students regarding the ways and means of introducing population education in the school system.

HYPOTHESES

In order to carry out the study with clarity and arrive at testable conclusions the hypotheses are stated in null form as follows:

1. The school students in Haryana are not aware of the fact that the population is increasing rapidly.
2. The students have negative reactions towards the inclusion of population education in the school curriculum.

SAMPLE

400, IX and X classes students from four districts- Rewari, Gurgaon, Palwal and Faridabad of Haryana.

METHOD

Descriptive survey method of research.

TOOLS OF THE STUDY

1. Population awareness test. (Self Prepared)
2. Questionnaires to judge the reactions of the students to the inclusion of the population education in the school curriculum. (Self Prepared)

Data were collected with the help of these tests. Data were analysed by using suitable statistical techniques like— mean, S.D. 't' value, percentage, graph, correlations etc.

FINDINGS

A. POPULATION AWARENESS OF STUDENTS:

Three categories of students were formed on the basis of the means and standard deviation of their population awareness scores by doing plus and minus of the SD from the mean. The categories were like the following poor population awareness- score range 46-60. Moderate population awareness – score range 61-75. High population awareness- score range 76-95.

1. Most of the students (60.74 percent) fall in moderate category of population awareness.
2. 12.20 percent students possess a very poor level of population awareness.
3. 16 percent student have exhibited high level of population awareness.
4. 60.02 percent male students have been found to have moderate level of population awareness.

5. Almost equal numbers of male students 17 percent and 15.37 percent have been placed in poor and high categories of population awareness respectively.
6. 70.69 percent girl student's possess moderate level of population awareness.
7. 5 percent girl students are in poor category of population awareness whereas 10.58 percent fall in high category. That is to say those 5 percent girls have poor awareness whereas 10 and a half percent possess a very high knowledge of population dynamics.
8. In the high category of population awareness, the boys have fared well. Their percentage (15.37) is greater than that (10.50) of the girls.
9. Majority of the students from the three districts, namely, Rewari, Palwal and Faridabad fall in moderate category.
10. In the matter of different components of population awareness, we find that in some of them significant differences have been found in male and female students.

In the area of social and economic development and values (SVD) significant differences is there. In this area female students are better than the male students. In the area of family life education (FLY) male students have shown better results. Again in the area of ecology (ECO) or environment issues male students are better than the female students. In the area of demography (D), health and hygiene and nutrition (HHN) and quality of life (QLY) no significant differences have been observed between girls and boys.

B. REACTIONS OF STUDENTS TO THE INCLUSION OF POPULATION IN THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM.

1. 92.58 percent students were of the view that something should be done to control the increasing population.
 2. Girls and boys separately also favoured this view.
 3. Most of the students are willing to learn about population education in the school.
4. Most of the students (65.74) preferred to study the subject as a separate subject. Same was the case with boys and girls separately. Even the girls are keener to study it separately.
 5. Most of the students (93.80) percent expressed the view that population education gives knowledge about the population problem.
 6. Most of the students preferred IX, X and +2 stages the most appropriate classes for the study of population education. Boys as a separate group preferred the classes IX and X whereas the girls preferred the +2 stage as the best stage for studying the subject of population education.

REFERENCES

- Abraham, P.Usha (1991), A study of awareness, attitudes and skills of secondary school students of population issues. Unpublished Ph.D (Education) Thesis Osmania University.
- Banthia, Jayant Kumar (2001), Census of India 2001 series 1-India.
- Best, John W. (1977), Research in Education Prentice Hall of India Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi.
- Gulati, Sunil (2001), Census of India 2001 series 7-Haryana, Govt. of Haryana
- NCERT, Delhi (1997) fifth SURVEY OF Education research, 1988-92. Vol. I.
- NCERT, Delhi (1997) fifth SURVEY OF Education research, 1988-92. Vol. II.
- Pandey, J.L., Saroj Yadav, P.D. JAIN (2002), National Population Education: some experiences, Indian Journal of Population Education No. 19. Dec.
- Rajasthan Patrika (2018) Hindi news paper 23.05.2018
- Sharma, Indira (2003), Attitude of P.G students towards family planning and birth control, Prachi Journal of Psycho-Cultural Dimension Vol. 19(2) October
- Tribune (2010) Hindi news paper 24.11.2010