Characteristics of population composition

- Shahroz Ullah Badrana

Population Composition

The term " Population Composition" actually refers to the characteristics of the particular group of people. The composition or characteristics of the population can be represented in many different ways. These characteristics include the distribution of the population across the number of men relative to the number of women and also across age structure of society. Indeed, Age and Sex composition of population are considered as most important aspects of the population composition. The data on the population by Age and Sex is of great importance for the health administrators and demographers for the planning of various developmental projects and initiating health programs. Basically, the classification of the Urban/Rural, sex and marital status with respect to age expose the basic characteristics of the population and also provides us with the disaggregated data for the target based groups. Actually, these characteristics create a profile of the population and also the very attributes that in real sense give population its particular character.[1]

There are many different types of population composition and it is broadly divided into three different types

- Biological Composition
- Cultural Composition
- Economic Composition[2]

Biological Composition:

The biological characteristics of the population include the Racial and ethnic composition of population, age composition of population and sex composition of population.

- Racial and Ethnic composition

Indeed, the populations of all the nations of the world are diverse with respect to race and ethnicity. The population of the country may also consist of many different races and communities. These divisions in the populations are regarded as very important socially and therefore statistics by ethnic group and race are easily available. In this world the concept of the pure races is totally impractical for the population of the earth which is essentially one of mixtures. Although, there is no hard and fast rule through which we can distinguish between the races of the world. Though, the anthropologist believes that there are three primary races exist in this worldCaucasoid, Negroids and Mongoloids. The Caucasoid (White People) are the most abundant and also widespread over the surface of the earth. They are more than half of the population of the world and this race consists of Europeans Semites, Hamites and the Indo-Iranians. The Indo-Iranians (300-400 million Population) can be found in the Northern and Eastern parts of South West Asia and also in the central parts of India. The Hamites and Semites (80 million populations) can also be found in the North-Eastern and Northern Africa. The Negroid are mostly found in the African region and the Asiatic black people are centered in Southern part of India and in some parts of South-East Asia. The Mongoloid (One Billion Population) have yellow and brown skin color centered in Central and East Asia, Indonesia and in Malaya. The blend of the American Indian, Negro and the white people has produced

a mixed population in Latin America. I would say that till now the exact number of races is not known and it is also very difficult to know the exact number.

Presently, we do not have decisive classification of the population of the world on the basis of communities and races. The physical feature that is used as to differentiate various ethnic groups and races is not a good criterion for judging the cultural traits of the people and basically these qualities of different races of the world are not functional in the perspective of nature. Likewise, we also divide the world into parts one part consist of Developed or Highly Developed nations and the other part consist of Less developed or Under-Developed Nations. The people who are living in the LDS's mostly posses pigmented skins but they are not inferior in the quality in any way. Basically, the division is only on the basis of country economic conditions not on the basis of cultural retardation of any group of the world/society. The categories that we use for these groups because they differ from nation to nation for example a Pakistan citizen or a person of Pakistani origin will be regarded as black or dark colored and will be considered as Asian or white in the United States of America. That's why at the international level the comparison of these Racial and Ethnic groups is totally vague and that's why this component of the population structure is regarded as of less importance as compared to the others.

- Age Composition of Population

Conceivably, the most fundamental among the characteristics of population is the age composition of Population. Commonly, demographers use the population pyramids in order to explain the age distribution of the

population. A population pyramid is described as a bar chat in which the length of each of the horizontal bar tell us about the exact number of people in that particular age group. This composition includes the persons of various ages. Actually, the age composition is very important for understanding the concept of the Mortality and fertility of a society. The age differences between the different age groups may also create economic and social differences. The age composition of population is also commonly known as age structure or age distribution. I would say that one could not even proceed further in the study of the population growth without understanding the age structure of the population. The age affects all the aspects of any individual life like its community life, economic activities and the social attitudes. The age structure of population greatly influences the Socio-Economic life of the nation. The data on the age is very useful for those who are mainly responsible for different type of welfare activities. We also require the age data for various numbers of economic and social activities of life including marriage, employment and retirement. The age structure of the population also helps us to know about the percentage of the Labor force in the population and on the other hand it is also very useful in finding out the dependency load/ration. The production and consumption is also dependent upon the data of age structure. If we want to understand and predict the future growth rate of the population then for this purpose we have to understand the age structure of the population. So, on the basis of the age structure we can tell that whether the country has regressive or progressive type of population. The problem with the data of age structure is that most of the time the data which is available is not authentic and for the geographers it is very difficult to map the age statistics. Not all the countries

conduct regularly the censuses so that's why in such countries accurate and up-to date data regarding the population is not available. Basically, the age structure of the population is determined by the three important factorsFertility, Mortality and Migration. The fertility rate tells us about the population percentage in each of the age group. The countries with the high fertility rates have large proportion of their population the group of young people (0-15 years). In less developed states the life expectancy rate is also very low and in the old age group we have extremely small population and the population is heavily influenced by the young age group. Whereas, on the other hand the developed countries are experiencing low fertility rates have small number of people in the old age group. Migration is also sex and age selective. In general, it is said that the working age group (15-45 years) are much mobile as compared to the people in young and old age group. People keep on migrating from one place to another the age structure of population of any country changes with respect to time. The natural calamities also influenced the age structure and sometimes cause drastic changes in it. The data available on the age groups can also be analyzed by the age pyramids and the age indices.[3]

- Sex Composition of Population

All the communities of the world have different sex composition of male and female. The population geographers show keen interest in the sex composition. The sex ratio of male and female is a key factor behind the socio-economic condition of an area. This characteristic of the population composition is widely used at the regional level by the geographers. The composition has a deep impact on the demographic structure of the region

and also an important feature of a countryside area. We can determine the sex ratio from three basic factors

- Sex Ratio at Births
- Sex Ratio at Deaths
- Sex Ratio due to Migration

Sex Ratiois defined as the number of females per thousand males and number of males per thousand females. Sex ratio may be different in different regions just as in Pakistan sex ratio is High (Women's are more). ThePrimary Sex Ratiois described as the sex ratio at the time of just conception, Secondary Sex Ratiois calculated at the time of the birth and theTertiary Sex Ratiois calculated at the time of enumeration. The balance between the male and female is very important aspect of the population composition and structure. The sex ratio is greatly influenced by the birth, death and the migration rate. Other than these the natural disasters like war, famine and earthquake. The sex ratio is also dependent upon the status of the women in the society and the enumeration of both sexes. Physically and biologically females are much stronger than the males that's why in the life females live longer than males. If we talk globally, the mortality rate of males is higher than the mortality rate of females. Basically the infant mortality rate of males is higher than the females but the sex ratio became balanced at the age of 4. After the age of 4 again the imbalance started at reaching at the age of 95 we have 1000 males per 2000 females. So I would say that in the less developed countries the female mortality rate is higher than the male mortality rate as compared to the developed countries. It is a natural fact that males are born more as compared to the females but for

sure that does not mean that the natural sex ratio is same across the globe. As we know that Pakistan is a Muslim country and we have high male birth rate as compared to the females because the status of the females is very low in here. Then if we talk about the migration factor then it is more sex selective naturally. It is also a fact that the long distances migrations involves males whereas the short distances migration involves females. Marriages play very important role in bringing changes in the sex ratio because after marriages females should have to go to their new homes. Other then these particular factors the sex ratio is also get influenced by many other situations and conditions. This includes famine, war and the natural calamities. Here, in the end I just want to mention the WW1 & WW2 that those countries that have been the part of those wars have more proportion of females as compared to the males.[4]

Cultural Characteristics of Population

- Religious Composition

Religion is a very important feature of the population and play very pivotal role in the life of every human being. As always the religion of the population acts as a motivating force for them. In the past many wars have been fought on religious basis in Europe and Israel. Now days the religious force or religious impact is reduced but still I can say that the religious force is very significant force. If we just take the example of the partition of the Sub-Continent into two newly states India and Pakistan that partition was also based on religious basis. Muslims got the separate homeland where Muslims live according to the teachings of Islam. I should say that the religion has great contribution in the well being and welfare of the human beings. All the

Religions of the world have left certain marks on the customs, Food habits, literature and the architecture. The imprint left by the religions is still stronger in those states where the religion has been combined with the state power. In the past the religion acts as unifying as well as troublesome. In the war of hatred the Nazis of Germany persecuted Six million Jews just on the base of the religion. According to the geographers it is very difficult to map the religion and the world pattern of religion is also very difficult to analyze.

The Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Buddhism are the world greatest religion so the Christianity is dominant religion in the western hemisphere and in the European countries. Buddhism is dominant in the East Asia, Hinduism in the South Asia. In the world we have approximately 320, 000, 000 Muslims 380, 000, 000 Hindus and 660, 000, 000 Buddhist.

- Linguistic Composition

Language has a very strong relation with the nationality and we can say that the language is also part of ethnicity. Presently, thousand of different languages are spoken across the world. A single language in a state reflects the unity and solidity. It also strengthens the concept of patriotism and nationalism. If we talk about our country we are also linguistically divided into different linguistic portions. Mostly, the developed countries have the have internal linguistic homogeneity. I would say that the national language of the powerful nations with large colonial influence became the international languages. The less developed states are more linguistically diverse and that diversity is more found in the some parts of Asia and Africa. I believe that many different languages in the country create language diversity in unity which may be serving as bottle neck in the development of the country.

- Educational Composition

Among the other characteristics of the population composition education is the most important one which is also regarded as the backbone of the progress of any state. Basically, Education gives us the power to distinguish between the good and Bad. The more we will invest in the sector of the education the more economic growth will be better. The more a nation will be literate the more it will play pivotal role in the national stream of progress. By the literacy rate we can easily measure the educational status of any person. In the third world states the level of education is very low as compared to the educational level in the Developed states that's why many students are moving to the developed states for enjoying better quality educational facilities. Education play important role in shaping down the society in different number of ways. We need to spent more and more in educational sector and the LDC develop slowly due to not spending much in the educational sector. We need to bring reforms in the educational system of the developing countries only in that case it will contribute ion the development of the country.[5]

Bibliography

Books

- DR Chandra, R. C. Geography of population 2009. 8 [th] edition. Kalyani Publishers, New Delhi India.
- Prof Qazi, S. A, Navid Shabir Qazi. Population Geography. APH Publishers. New Delhi India.

- Bergman, Edward. F, Renwick, William. H. Introduction to Geography: People, Places and Environment. 3 rd Edition. India. Pearson education, India ISBN 0131445456

URL's

- Teitelbaum, Michael S. Encyclopedia Britannica. Population. Last Updated on 6 April, 2013. Data Assessed on 23 March, 2014.
- Gjerso, F. The civilizing Mission. Demographic composition and economic development. Published on 6 January, 2011. Assessed on 23 March, 2014.
- Population reference Bureau. Age and sex composition. Sixth edition. Published on 4 April, 2011. Assessed on 23 March, 2013.
- Population Composition: Trends and Environmental implications. Accessed on 23 March, 2014.
- Population Composition. Assessed on 23 March, 2014.
- Population distribution and Composition. Assessed on 23 March, 2014.
- Riyaza, Fathmath. Age and Sex composition of Population. Assessed on 23 March, 2013.

[1]Population Composition. Assessed on 23 March, 2014.

[2]Prof Qazi, S. A, Navid Shabir Qazi. Population Geography. APH Publishers. New Delhi India.

[3]Population reference Bureau. Age and sex composition. Sixth edition. Published on 4 April, 2011. Assessed on 23 March, 2013.

[4]Riyaza, Fathmath. Age and Sex composition of Population. Assessed on 23 March, 2013.

[5]Prof Qazi, S. A, Navid Shabir Qazi. Population Geography. APH Publishers. New Delhi India.