

A Study of Social Exclusion towards Demographic Scopes in India

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ABSTRACT

The demographic factors not only influence the nature and quality of all factors of production, but also determine the kind of the economic activity. The population growth and distribution have attracted increasing attention from geographers and planners in India during the past three decades. In the present study an attempt has been made to know demographic dimension and human resource spatially to examine the pattern of population growth in Indian district. Such becomes necessary to know in qualitative and quantitative terms the evolution of demographic characteristics of Indian district. The unevenly distributed population needs proper utilization of existing resources through spatial planning in relation with the economic development of the region. Such planning is aimed at bringing a rise in the standard of living of the population of the region. Population is one of the prime resource, which plays an important role in determining the economy and an)' country, region or unit of area. As technology advances man's ability to expand as well as to create the new resources which will increase the population dynamics and also after the relation of man to the resource. Therefore, culture, society and technology plan a important role in the overall development of population. There are regional differences in endowment of natural resources, one region may produce or may be prominent in having large amount of biotic resources and the other may be rich in mineral or agricultural resources. So no one region on the earth surface is quite equal to another in satisfying human wants. Nature provides basic materials, which man utilizes and upon which man develops. So there is a close relation between the natural resources and man.

1. Introduction

An effort has been made in this chapter to identify the major dimensions of social exclusion, despite the fact that they are reinforce able and interrelated with each other. Four important dimensions of social exclusion have been identified for the present analysis. The degree of social exclusion has been estimated in the domain of poverty, labour market, (employment and unemployment), health and education in India. The data on poverty have collected from the estimates of Planning Commission. An attempt has been made to analyse the enormity of poverty among social groups in India and identify the states which are persistently having higher incidence of poverty. Due to poverty, the members of SCs/STs were not able to send their children for schools and hence the rate of literacy is found to be quite less as compared to others among whom poverty is relatively found to be less. The members of SCs/STs with lower educational status are less likely to get better job options; most of them involve in lowly paid casual activities. This will further reduce income and affect the health status of them.

2. Development studies in geography:

Development is a process of overall growth and improvement of person, place or thing. It is often taken interchangeably with growth but the latter may go negative in absence of any institutional support or agency with some catalysm. Brookfield (1975) takes this stance when he defines development as "the whole process of change brought about by the creation and expansion of an interdependent world system". According to Todaro "Development is not purely an economic phenomenon but rather a multi-dimensional process

involving reorganization and reorientation of entire economic and social system." Development is process of improving the quality of all human lives with three equally important aspects. These are:

- Raising peoples' living levels, i.e. incomes and consumption, levels of food, medical services, education through relevant growth processes,
- Creating conditions conducive to the growth of peoples' self-esteem through the establishment of social, political and economic systems and institutions which promote human dignity and respect.
- Increasing peoples' freedom to choose by enlarging the range of their choice variables, e.g. varieties of goods and services.

3. Human–environment geography:

Well-established topical and thematic nodes of research and understanding are characteristic of human–environment geography. These core areas tend to cluster around nine nodes:

- (i) human–environment interactions in hazards, risk, vulnerability, and resilience;
- (ii) land use, land systems, land change, and biodiversity;
- (iii) social-ecological and coupled human– environment systems;
- (iv) Political ecology, environmental governance, and human–environment relations;
- (v) human–environment relations in livelihoods and agricultural landscapes;
- (vi) Resource political economy, management, and politics;

- (vii) Food, health, and bodies in relation to the environment;
- (viii) Environmental landscape history and ideas; and
- (ix) Knowledge concepts in environmental management and policy.

Each node is distinct yet related and often intersecting significantly, as described in the examples mentioned below and illustrated. In addition, the core areas can be loosely grouped into a pair of general thematic areas within human–environment geography, namely “human–environment interactions” and “nature–society relations.” Each individual node of human–environment geography is differentially situated with respect to this pair of thematic areas, and tends to reflect distinct and differentiated intellectual locations with regard to methodological and conceptual domains in human geography, physical geography, and GI Science. As discussed below, for example, the general theme of human–environment interactions tends to ally most fully with environmental hazards, risk, vulnerability, and resilience and, also, to the area of land use, land systems, and land change. In general, it ties to physical and economic geography. On the other hand, the general theme of nature–society relations is associated most closely with political ecology, with defining connections to human geography.

Human–environment relations in hazards, risks, vulnerability, and resilience:

One prominent core of human–environment geography is comprised of the studies of environmental hazards, risks, vulnerability, and resilience. Environmental hazards and risks are significant themes that have continued to evolve in the context of accelerated global biogeophysical and socioeconomic changes and their human–environment interactions manifest in response to such disruptive environmental events as drought and floods as well as price shocks and the collapse of institutions. Vulnerability and resilience have become increasingly widespread concepts incorporating human–environment interactions. For example, combined social and environmental dynamics of vulnerability have become a cornerstone recognized within human–environment geography as well as geography in general. Such works tend to establish a view of vulnerability, hazards, and risks as processes involving the behaviors and multilayered networks of social actors and institutions. At the same time, environmental shocks, such as climate-driven effects, can lead to the utilization of adaptive capacities whereby the institutional capabilities mobilized in human–environment interactions can result in significant socioeconomic benefit, such as was the case among certain forest-dwelling smallholder land users in Central America in the wake of Hurricane Mitch in 1998. Equally important, the social conditions and power dynamics underlying vulnerability lead to a prevalent use of political ecology, with attention to such issues as social “winners and losers” in these processes and spatial patterns.

Social-ecological and coupled human–environment systems:

The frameworks of social-ecological systems (SES) and coupled human–environment systems are conceptual cornerstones in interdisciplinary human–environment studies

that connect a thriving interdisciplinary domain to a focus within geography. SES is focused on human–social systems and the management and governance of resources. It owes much to the contributions of Nobel Prize winner Elinor Ostrom and to the legacy of earlier works examining the “tragedy of the commons” not as a demographically and culturally driven fait accompli but rather through social institutional processes. The SES framework often focuses also on interactions across the realms of humans and nonhumans. One chief SES contribution in human–environment geography is the development of ideas and examples of resilience, vulnerability, and adaptive capacity. These are being applied, for example, to the analysis of biodiversity in agro ecosystems undergoing intensification and livelihood diversification. The framework of coupled human–environment systems, also termed coupled natural–human systems (CNHS), is built upon the defining idea of coupled drivers emanating from human–social factors and feedbacks from natural systems. The coupled system CNHS perspective was initially proposed by Liu and others in the early 2000s. In human–environment geography the CNHS framework has been applied principally to the use and management of water resources and forests.

Political ecology and human–environment relations:

Political ecology is a burgeoning field covering many areas that include human–environment relations and interactions. It is a significant albeit minor portion of political ecology that undertakes the integration of environmental and ecological analysis. At the same time, the major share of political ecology is focused on nature–society relations, especially social power relations in resource conflict and coordination, environmental representations, and the roles of multiple environmental knowledge systems. One productive subset of political ecology centered on human–environment interactions is the analysis of global climate change in relation to policy initiatives and political issues associated with sustainability, globalization, and neoliberal management. This work combines a perspective on human–environment interactions and the biogeophysical dynamics of climate change in order to better understand multicolor governance amid dominant political economic regimes, in particular neoliberal globalization. Another noteworthy subset is concerned with the multistage political and environmental dynamics of national and international governance along with the community and user-based management of fisheries, marine organisms, and forest and range resources. Technological change in these resource systems is often fundamental to the issues of environmental governance and to the forms of social and political coordination and contestation that arise.

Human–environment relations: food, health, and bodies:

The bodies, health, and nourishment of humans and nonhuman organisms are seen increasingly as being embedded in the matrix of resources and the environment created through human societies. It is an important new topical and thematic area in human–environment geography. Much of the expanding interest in this area is designed to treat issues of health, disease, and the body related to environmental interactions. It is frequently centered on the role of agri-food and fisheries systems that integrate the consumption choices of individuals, communities, and societies together with the

transportation networks and agro-ecologies of production systems. The vast majority of consumption, transformation, and production occur through the global corporate, industrial food system. At the same time, growing interest surrounds whether and how the dominant food system is contested and challenged through alternative and local food networks. For example, alternative and local food networks may demonstrate “embeddedness” in which cultural practices and links to ecological landscapes (e.g., conservation agriculture) are considered as simultaneously market-based and potentially involving dimensions that extend beyond economic transactions per se, such as social trust and ethics of care and responsibility. Hybrid food systems, such as those of peri-urban and urban areas, are also central to this area of human–environment study. The new direction in human–environment geography described here is also being amplified through new works on the political ecology of health and wellbeing. It includes potential new human–environment insights on bodies in health and disease dynamics linked to the multifaceted role of genetics that is subject to major increases of information and scrutiny. Technological as well as theoretical advances in genetics now highlight the powerful influence of so-called epigenetic effects that result in humans and other organisms being thoroughly embedded in environments in far more extensive and previously unanticipated ways.

4. New trends in human–environment geography:

The accelerating influx of new scientific findings, ideas, and conceptual and theoretical orientations has become a defining characteristic of human–environment geography. Most notable is the increasing rate and scope of anthropogenic environmental change and transformation that now lead human–environment geography, together with other fields, to focus at the intersections of socially vital issues. These topics include the influence and impacts of global climate change on such human–environment systems as water resources, energy, food, health, biodiversity, land systems, and the roles of neoliberal globalization, urbanization, and migration. Framing issues at scales that encompass the global level has become de rigueur in the research design and analysis of human–environment interactions. Urbanization is also an increasingly predominant theme. For example, new human–environment geography is now focused more extensively on urbanization related to climate change and also global changes of land systems in a rapidly urbanizing world. Long-distance interactions, referred to as telecoupling, are increasingly found to link global land and resource use to urbanization impacts and transformations. The powerful influence of these forces of urbanization and industrial expansion has contributed to the important role of cities as sites of much human–environment geography. A second nexus of new intersecting issues is concerned with agri-food systems. This expanded direction in human–environment geography stems in large part from the growing recognition and policy prioritization of the importance of food quality and ecologically sustainable intensification. Major global fora and policy initiatives are being focused on agri-food systems through such high-profile human–environment formulations as sustainable intensification (SI) and ecological intensification (EI) that seek to increase food security while not incurring damage to the environment. Human–environment geography is taking a significant role in

addressing these issues through the analysis of converging concerns. One example is the intersecting focus on land systems that, as described above, uses existing methodological designs, tools, and conceptual frameworks to examine land use, its spatial and social organization, and the analysis of land cover and change. Until recently much of the work on land systems dealt principally with deforestation in tropical lowland and temperature areas of tree cover with insights linked to potential biodiversity impacts and climate impacts through influences on carbon stocks and sequestration. Agri-food and environmental transformations are also increasingly recognized as integral, often in complex ways, to the human–environment geographies of health and disease.

5. Different dimensions of social exclusion in India:

It is evident that several theoretical frameworks have been developed suiting to their socio-economic and political environment. Based on the literature and the data available in India, the following analytical framework has been developed (Figure 1).

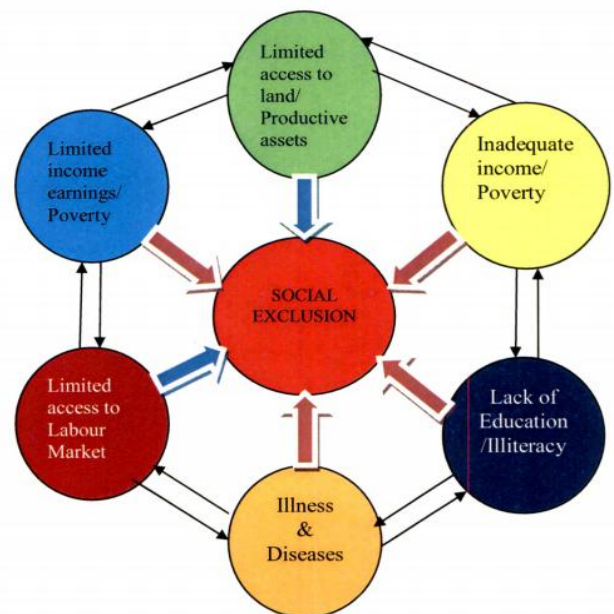


Figure 1 Social Exclusion Trap in India

The above framework indicate that prevalence of social exclusion in India among SCs, STs and Others can be illustrated through exclusion in access to land, adequate income, access to education, access to health care services, limited access to labour market and income earning opportunities.

6. Poverty and social exclusion:

1. All-India Scenario

Poverty is one of the key factors causing social exclusion, state of being away from or deprived of mainstream development in different domains of life. It has been argued that the incidence of poverty is the sole source of social exclusion in the domain of education, labour market, in accessing resources like land and health. Therefore, in an endeavour towards inclusive growth, alleviation of poverty and unemployment through education has always been the key objective of the development paradigm since the inception of

planning era in India. Nevertheless, a special attention was accorded since the 1970s, especially when the technocratic economic growth model based on “trickle down hypothesis” proved to be limited success in percolating down the benefits of economic growth and improve the socio-economic well-being of the weaker sections of the society and thereby reducing social exclusion, especially in rural areas. It was realized the fact that the growth alone was not enough to reduce the poverty that persisted for a long but it should be supplemented with the State-managed distributive and rural development programmes. Since then several asset-creating and employment generating programmes were launched with a view to address the implicit problem of social exclusion in the domain of poverty.

The data provided in Table 1 indicate that although the proportion of people in poverty, by and large, declined constantly from 54.9 per cent to 27.5 per cent at the all-India level as per the Uniform Recall Period (URP); from 56.4 per cent to 28.3 per cent in rural and from 49 per cent to 25.7 per cent in urban areas during 1973-74 to 2004-05, India still has the world’s largest number of poor, estimating at 301.7 million, of which 220.9 million, accounting for 73 per cent of the total poor live in rural areas. Social exclusion in the form of poverty is quite significant in rural areas. It can be noted that there has been a gradual inclusion of the people in meeting their basic needs of the life.

Table 1 Incidence of Poverty (URP) in India: 1973-74 to 2004-05

Particulars	Rural	Urban	All
Number of poor (million)			
1973-74	261.3	60.0	321.3
1977-78	264.3	64.6	328.9
1983	252.0	70.9	322.9
1987-88	231.9	75.2	307.1
1993-94	244.0	76.3	320.3
2004-05	220.9	80.8	301.7
People in Poverty (%)			
1973-74	56.4	49.0	54.9
1977-78	53.1	45.2	51.3
1983	45.7	40.8	44.5
1987-88	39.1	38.2	38.9
1993-94	37.3	32.4	36.0
2004-05	28.3	25.7	27.5

In spite of methodological controversy over the extent of poverty decline in the year 2004-05, the proportion of people living below the poverty line has come down, as compared to the earlier estimates. The decline in the incidence of poverty was found to be faster in rural than in urban areas. The decline in poverty in rural areas in the 1980s had been mainly attributed to a faster growth of agriculture, followed by infrastructure and human resource development, particularly female literacy (WB, 1997; WB, 2000). Of late, it has been argued that the decline in poverty, especially in rural is largely ascribed to the occupational diversification in favour of the rural non-agricultural sector. The chronic poverty among the socially disadvantaged and economically marginalised sections of the society (SCs/STs) has received a greater attention of researchers, policy makers and development practitioners in view of our endeavour towards achieving one of the Millennium Development Goals, set at the UN General Assembly in 2000, that “halving” the incidence of poverty by 2015 (WB, 2001).

The data provided in Figure 2 indicate that the incidence of poverty observed at aggregate level is not uniform across social groups such as SCs, STs and Others. Historically speaking, the members of SC households were denied access to education, health, common property resources, formal credit, etc., for more than a century while that of Others were able to access. They were socially excluded, marginalised and economically disadvantaged. Similarly, most of the members of STs were geographically segregated unable to access basic needs of the life. The incidence of poverty is not only higher but also chronic among them, persisting for more than five decades of developmental struggle.

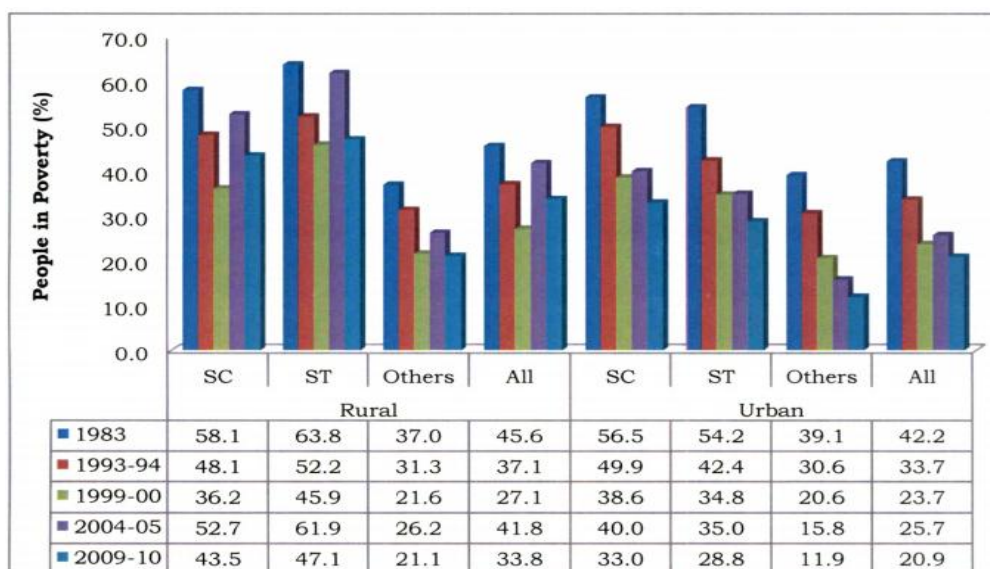


Figure 2 Proportions of People in Poverty among Social Groups in India

The incidence of poverty among STs tended to be higher in rural than in urban areas, whereas in respect of SCs, it tended to be lower in rural than in urban areas. This indicates that the social exclusion in the domain of poverty was higher in the case of STs in rural and SCs in urban areas. The data also reveal that the incidence of poverty registered a declining trend since the 1970s in varying degrees across social groups in rural areas. It has been observed that the decline in poverty was faster among non-SCs/STs as compared to SCs/STs, both in rural and urban areas during the period under study. A greater decline took place in the incidence of poverty among SCs/STs in rural vis-a-ins urban areas in the recent years.

Further, the decline in poverty among SCs was found to be much higher than that of STs and Others both in rural and urban areas, more so in rural areas. Nevertheless, the incidence of poverty continued to quite significant in respect of SCs/STs as compared to others in rural and urban areas. This indicates that in spite of several programmes both developmental and constitutional, the social exclusion has been concentrated in the case of SCs and STs in India. The data provided indicate that exclusion in the domain of meeting their basic needs of life captured through income poverty in rural India quite higher among the members of STs followed by SCs as compared to that of others.

7. Geography - problem solving for societal concerns

Geographers are called upon in situations where spatially defined phenomena have to be dealt with. They are asked to study phenomena that have a specific location, occur in a specific area and directly or indirectly induce spatial effects, and that have underlying regularities. To put it simply, geographers analyze spatial processes, functional and structural patterns, as well as investigate the spatial and temporal dynamics thereof, presenting the results in analog and digital maps. Due to the diversity of geographical problems, it is difficult to foresee in which field students of geography will eventually work. Consequently, aspiring geographers have to acquire a broadly based problem solving competence, as well as master a series of key qualifications. In his article «Geographische Problemlösungen für die Praxis (Geographie Solutions in Practice), T Mosimann (1996:197 ff.) listed the following key qualifications (Fig. 3):

- The ability to recognize complex interrelationships of the human-environmental system

- The ability to analyze landscape structures and landscape ecological processes in situ and to present them appropriately
- The mastery of relevant qualitative and quantitative methods the ability to combine and adapt methods, as well as develop new methods
- The ability to process and present spatially referenced data by means of analogous and digital maps and models
- The ability to mobilize expert knowledge, as well as lead and moderate teams of experts.

Although these qualifications do appear to be rather general, they receive an increasing relevance as a result of their relationship to spatial or geographical fields of investigation. The broad spectrum of qualifications that geographers acquire during their studies ensures that they have a solid basis with which to cope with the unforeseeable expectations on their future profession. Further, they have an advantage over competitors in the field. Geographers can be employed for a multitude of tasks because:

- They have a broad spectrum of qualifications and geographical problem solving competencies
- They are, in particular, trained to offer an integrative perspective of the world today, taking both the natural and social sciences into consideration. It is not without reason that landscape ecological and human-ecological approaches have proven to be particularly suitable theoretical foundations for the broad range of working methods of geographers.

The qualifications of geographers allow them to give expert advice on the ecological, social and economic compatibility of current spatial developments. Thus, the classical fields of professional geographers can be summarized as environmental and social monitoring. Social or environmental monitoring in terms of geography is the tracking down, and even more so, the permanent recording and documentation of current developments in the social, economic and ecological environment, irrelevant of whether these pertain to real or simulated situations. Social and environmental monitoring allow for the continuous registration and recording of political, administrative, economic and demographic changes and developments in landscape ecosystems, the results of which are included in long-term investigations.

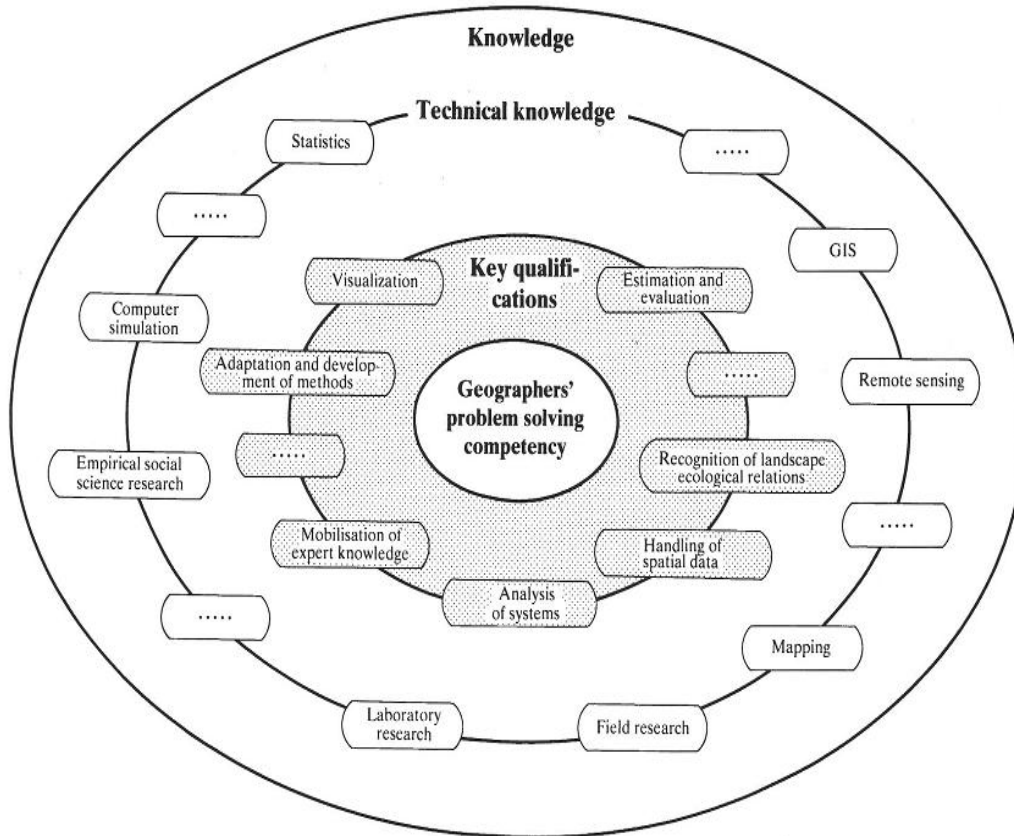


Fig. 3: Problem solving competence of geographers

These investigations serve as a basis for assessment and decision-making in planning and structural policy, in environmental, economic and social policy. The «longitudinal sections» drawn of the current social and economic Status, as well as of the environmental space serve on the one hand as a comparative gauge for future development, and on the other as a Standard for the utilization and further development of existing opportunities.

8. Conclusion

Population problem is one the basic problems of the society. Which gives rise to many other problems leading to social disorganization and disequilibria? Demographic studies can aid in the process of evolving better relations. There are regional differences in endowment of natural resources, one region may produce or may be prominent in having large amount of biotic resources and the other may be rich in mineral

or agricultural resources. So no one region on the earth surface is quite equal to another in satisfying human wants. Nature provides basic materials, which man utilizes and upon which man develops. So there is a close relation between the natural resources and man. The unevenly distributed population needs proper utilization of existing resources through spatial planning in relation with the economic development of the region. Such planning is aimed at bringing a rise in the standard of living of the population of the region. Population is one of the prime resource, which plays an important role in determining the economy and an} country, region or unit of area. As technology advances man's ability to expand as well as to create the new resources which will increase the population dynamics and also after the relation of man to the resource. Therefore, culture, society and technology plan a important role in the overall development of population.

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