# SOCIO-ECONOMIC
## ISSUES, REFORMS, CHALLENGES & DEVELOPMENT

**For Civil Services General Studies Prelims & Mains Examinations**

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# SOCIO-ECONOMIC
## ISSUES, REFORMS, CHALLENGES & DEVELOPMENT

For Civil Services Preliminary & Main Examinations

➔ This book covers all socio-economic issues, reforms, challenges & development in a systematic and comprehensive manner.

➔ In General Studies, although questions of about 50 marks in the Prelims and 150 marks in the Mains examination of Union Public Service Commission and State Public Service Commissions are asked from this section, there is no specific or dedicated book on this subject.

N.N. Ojha

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Chronicle Editorial Team

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## Socio-Economic Development

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# 01 CHAPTER
# An Introduction to Socio-Economic Development

Socio-economic development refers to the improvement of social and economic conditions of a society or a region over time. It encompasses a range of factors, including economic growth, poverty reduction, access to education and healthcare, gender equality, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability.

Socioeconomic development is essential for achieving overall human development and improving the quality of life of individuals.

Socioeconomic development is often measured using various indicators such as the -

- Human Development Index (HDI),
- Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita,
- Poverty Rate,
- Literacy Rate,
- Life Expectancy, and
- Infant Mortality Rate.

❑ These indicators help in assessing the progress made in different aspects of development and identifying areas that need further attention and intervention.

**Stakeholders**

❑ Socio-economic development is a complex and multifaceted process that requires the involvement of various stakeholders, including government, civil society, private sector, and international organizations.

❑ It involves policies and interventions that promote economic growth, improve access to basic services, empower marginalized communities, and protect the environment.

**Recent Approach to Socioeconomic Development**

❑ In recent years, there has been increasing recognition of the importance of sustainable socioeconomic development, which takes into account the long-term social, economic, and environmental impacts of development.

❑ This approach emphasizes the need to balance economic growth with social inclusion and environmental sustainability, and to ensure that development benefits all members of society.

Therefore, socio-economic development is a crucial aspect of human development and is essential for creating a more equitable, just, and sustainable world.

By promoting economic growth, reducing poverty, and improving access to basic services, it can help to improve the quality of life of individuals and communities and contribute to the overall well-being of society.

## Evolution of 'Concept of Development'

Economic Growth and Economic Development need not mean the same thing. Strategies and policies aimed at greater economic growth may produce greater national income in a country without improving the average living standards. That means growth does not take care of distribution in society and glaring inequality can accompany the period of high economic growth.

On the other hand, economic development is connected with improvement of living conditions of people and largely takes care of the issue of inclusion, illiteracy, poor health and inequality in society.

Therefore, growth is quantitative while development is "quantitative as well as qualitative" in nature.

❑ For example, in oil-producing Middle Eastern countries - a surge in oil prices boosted their national income without much benefit to poorer citizens.

❑ So, they experienced economic growth without developing the life of people at large. Conversely, people-oriented programmes and policies can improve health, education, living standards, and other quality-of-life measures with lesser emphasis on monetary growth. This occurred in the 30 years of welfare oriented governance in Kerala, India.

❑ Therefore, the purpose of development is to raise the level of well-being and quality of life of the population. It accompanies the expansion of local regional income and employment opportunities, without damaging the resources of the environment.

❑ The traditional concept of viewing economic development as synonymous with economic growth was based on what came to be known as the 'trickle-down strategy', which implies that the effects of rising incomes and output would ultimately trickle down to the poor so that they would benefit poor as well as the rich.

❑ The modern economists reject view of economic growth and stress the need for strategies designed to meet the needs of the poor directly.

# 02 Human Development

CHAPTER

Human development is a process of enlarging the range of people's choices, increasing their opportunities for education, health care, income and empowerment and covering the full range of human choices from a sound physical environment to economic, social and political freedom.

Growth in GDP will ultimately lead to human development was perceived earlier. But, this method of development has not been able to address the issues of social injustice, regional imbalances and environmental degradation. On the contrary, it is being widely considered as the prime cause of the social distributive injustices, deterioration in the quality of life and human development, ecological crisis and social unrest.

Thus, it was thought that overall economic development should not be seen as true Human Development. In the 1970s and 80s development debate considered using alternative focuses to go beyond GDP, including putting greater emphasis on employment, followed by redistribution with growth, and then whether people had their basic needs met. These ideas helped pave the way for new concept of human development.

In 1990, the first Human Development Report introduced human development as a new approach for advancing human wellbeing. Human development is about expanding the richness of human life, rather than simply the richness of the economy in which human beings live. It is an approach that is focussed more on people and their opportunities and choices. This report was the most systematic effort to explain human development.

## Concept of Human Development

The concept of human development was introduced by Dr. Mahbub-ul-Haq. He described human development as development that enlarges people's choices and improves their lives. People are central to all development under this concept. These choices are not fixed but keep on changing.

❑ The basic goal of development is to create conditions where people can live meaningful lives. A meaningful life is not just a long one. It must be a life with some purpose. This means that people must be healthy, be able to develop their talents, participate in society and be free to achieve their goals.

❑ Leading a long and healthy life, being able to gain knowledge and having enough means to be able to live a decent life are the most important aspects of human development. Therefore, access to resources, health and education are the key areas in human development.

❑ In short, human development is the process of enlarging people's freedoms and access of opportunities. Human development is about the real freedom ordinary people have to decide who to be, what to do, and how to live.

### People

❑ Human development focusses on improving the lives of people rather than assuming that economic growth will lead, automatically, to greater wellbeing for all.

❑ Income growth is seen as a means to development, rather than an end in itself.

### Opportunities

❑ Human development is about giving people more freedom to live lives they value. In effect, this means developing people's abilities and giving them a chance to use them.

❑ For example, educating a girl would build her skills, but it is of little use if she is denied access to jobs, or does not have the right skills for the local labour market.

### Choice

❑ Human development is a process of enlarging people's choices. The most critical ones are to lead a long and healthy life, to be educated and to enjoy a decent standard of living. Additional choices include political freedom, guaranteed human rights and self-respect.

❑ No one can guarantee human happiness, and the choices people make are their own concern. The process of human development should at least create an environment for people, individually and collectively, to develop to their full potential and to have a reasonable chance of leading productive and creative lives that they value.

❑ In this way the basic objective of human development is to create an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives.

# Sustainable Development

Sustainable development allows us to preserve the environment, protect biodiversity, mitigate climate change, eradicate poverty, promote social inclusivity, and foster long-term economic growth. The earth has enough resources to meet our present and future needs for development if we use them economically.

The concept of development is dynamic and has evolved during the second half of twentieth century. In the post-World War II era, the concept of development was synonymous to economic growth which is measured in terms of temporal increase in gross national product (GNP) and per capita income/per capita consumption.

But, even the countries having high economic growth experienced speedy rise in poverty because of its unequal distribution. So, in 1970s, the phrases such as redistribution with growth and growth and equity were incorporated in the definition of development.

❑ While dealing with the questions related to redistribution and equity, it was realised that the concept of development cannot be restricted to the economic sphere alone. It also includes the issues such as improving the well-being and living standard of people, availing of the health, education and equality of opportunity and ensuring political and civil rights.

❑ By 1980s, development emerged as a concept encapsulating widespread improvement in social as well as material wellbeing of all in a society.

❑ The notion of sustainable development emerged in the wake of general rise in the awareness of environmental issues in the late 1960s in Western World. It reflected the concern of people about undesirable effects of industrial development on the environment.

❑ The publication of 'The Population Bomb' by Ehrlich in 1968 and 'The Limits to Growth' by Meadows and others in 1972 further raised the level of fear among environmentalists in particular and people in general. This sets the scenario for the emergence of new models of development under a broad phrase 'sustainable development.

❑ In 1987, the Brundtland Commission published its report, "*Our Common Future*", in an effort to link the issues of economic development with environmental stability. In doing so, this report provided the often cited definition of Sustainable Development as "*Development that meets the needs of the present*

*without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*" (United Nations General Assembly, 1987).

Thus, the concept of development has now been given new interpretation of sustainable development which aims to maintain economic advancement and progress while protecting the long-term value of the environment. It also provides a framework for the integration of environment policies with development strategies.

## Concept of Sustainable Development

The definition of the concept of sustainable development put forward in the report titled Our Common Future (1987) is: "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

**It contains within it two key concepts:**

**(i) Concept of Needs**: The concept of "needs", in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and

**(ii) Idea of Limitations**: The idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organisation on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs.

In this light, the overall goal of sustainable development (SD) is the long-term stability of the economy and environment; this is only achievable through the integration and acknowledgement of economic, environmental, and social concerns throughout the decision making process.

## Pillars of Sustainable Development

The three pillars of sustainable development are:
(i)   economic growth,
(ii)  environmental stewardship, and
(iii) social inclusion

They are spread across all sectors of development, from cities facing rapid urbanization to agriculture, infrastructure, energy, water availability and transportation.

# 04 CHAPTER

# Inclusive Growth

Reducing poverty, improving the quality of life, and ensuring that all parts of the society benefiting from the economic growth of the country is the primary motive of an inclusive growth plan. It is about supporting communities, drawing on innovative finance and partnerships to mitigate unequal access and affordability among underserved populations.

Inclusive growth implies participation in the process of growth and also sharing of benefit from growth. Thus inclusive growth is both an outcome and a process.

On the one hand, it ensures that everyone can participate in the growth process, both in terms of decision-making for organizing the growth progression as well as in participating in the growth itself.

On the other hand, it makes sure that everyone shares equitably the benefits of growth.

In fact, participation without benefit sharing will make growth unjust and sharing benefits without participation will make it a welfare outcome.

In view of the above, inclusive growth can be observed from long-term perspective as the focus is on productive employment rather than on direct income redistribution, as a means of increasing income for excluded groups.

❑ Under the absolute definition, growth is considered to be pro-poor as long as poor benefit in absolute terms, as reflected in some agreed measure of poverty.

❑ In contrast, in the relative definition, growth is pro-poor if and only if the incomes of poor people grow faster than those of the population as a whole, i.e., inequality declines. However, while absolute pro-poor growth can be the result of direct income redistribution schemes, for growth to be inclusive, productivity must be improved and new employment opportunities created, so that the excluded section forms part of the growth process.

❑ In short, inclusive growth is about raising the pace of growth and enlarging the size of the economy, while leveling the playing field for investment and increasing productive employment opportunities

❑ The concept of inclusive growth has gained wide importance in several countries including India.

❑ The Approach Paper of the Eleventh Five Year Plan provides "an opportunity to restructure policies to achieve a new vision based on faster, more broad-based and inclusive growth. It is designed to reduce poverty and focus on bringing the various divides that continue to fragment our society"

❑ Government has thereby restructured various programme like National Rural Livelihood Mission, National Urban Livelihood Mission and Mahatma Gandhi Employment Guarantee Act to make growth more inclusive.

## Concept of Inclusive Growth

**The definition of inclusiveness involves four basic attributes:**

(i) **Opportunity:** Is the economy generating more and varied ways for people to earn a living and increase their incomes over time?

(ii) **Capability:** Is the economy providing the means for people to create or enhance their capabilities in order to exploit available opportunities?

(iii) **Access:** Is the economy providing the means to bring opportunities and capabilities together?

(iv) **Security:** Is the economy providing the means for people to protect themselves against a temporary or permanent loss of livelihood?

In this light, 'inclusive growth' is defined as a process, in which, economic growth, measured by a sustained expansion in GDP, contributes to an enlargement of the scale and scope of all four basic attributes cited above.

Therefore, inclusive growth, by its very definition, implies an equitable allocation of resources with benefits accruing to every section of society, which is a utopian concept.

## Dimensions of Inclusive Growth

Inclusive growth is not about raising the income level of poor, but also improving education and health status of all, particularly marginalized section.

### Social Inclusion

❑ Social inclusion is more than the reduction of poverty and inequality.

# 05 CHAPTER

# Social Security

S ocial security in India refers to a range of welfare measures and programs designed to provide economic security and support to vulnerable and disadvantaged sections of society. These measures are aimed at protecting individuals and families from economic hardships and ensuring a basic standard of living.

The social security system in India is primarily managed and administered by the government through various schemes and programs. These include pension schemes, health insurance, disability benefits, maternity benefits, and others. The government also provides subsidies and support to various industries and sectors to promote employment and economic growth.

The social security system in India has evolved over time, with new programs and initiatives being introduced to meet the changing needs of the population. Despite the government's efforts, however, there are still many challenges and gaps in the system, particularly for marginalized and vulnerable communities.

Overall, social security is an important aspect of the Indian welfare state, and efforts to strengthen and expand these programs are crucial for promoting social and economic development, reducing poverty, and improving the quality of life for all citizens.

## Concept of Social Security

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) defines social security broadly as "protection that a society provides to individuals and households to ensure access to health care and to guarantee income security, particularly in cases of old age, unemployment, sickness, invalidity, work injury, maternity or loss of a breadwinner.

❑ In the Indian context, social security is a comprehensive approach designed to prevent deprivation, assure the individual of a basic minimum income for himself and his dependents and to protect the individual from any uncertainties.

❑ The State bears the primary responsibility for developing appropriate system for providing protection and assistance to its workforce.

❑ Social security is increasingly viewed as an integral part of the development process. It helps to create a more positive attitude to the challenge of globalization and the consequent structural and technological changes.

## Need for Social Security

Social security protects people against a variety of risks to ensure them a basic flow of income in old age or other adversities of life. It also aims to enable many people who have struggled all their lives to have a decent standard of comfort and dignity, when they retire.

❑ **Basic Human Right**: The underlying philosophy of social security is to ensure a minimum level of material living to the needy or helpless ones of the society by the State.

❑ **Threat of Cyclic Unemployment**: The workers have been subjected to periodic unemployment due to cyclical fluctuations in business, sickness, industrial accidents and old age. In fact, there is nothing more disconcerting to worker and his/her family than unemployment.

❑ **Security Against Adverse Situation**: Similarly, while sickness suspends earning capacity of a worker temporarily, industrial accidents may disable him/her partially or even permanently, and old age may put a stop to his/her ability to earn and support himself/herself and the family.

❑ **Holistic Development:** The need for social security is realised not only to afford the needy workers' protection against the adversities of life, but also for the overall development of the State.

❑ **Stable Labour Force**: Lack of social security impedes production and prevents the formation of a stable and efficient labour force. Social security is, therefore, not a burden, but a wise investment in the long run.

## Objectives of Social Security

The objective of social security is to provide individuals and families with protection and support against social risks and economic vulnerabilities throughout their lives.

**The primary goals and objectives of social security programs are as follows:**

❑ **Income Protection**: Social security aims to ensure a basic level of income security for individuals and

# 06 CHAPTER

# Financial Inclusion

Financial inclusion may be defined as the process of ensuring access to financial services and timely and adequate credit where needed by vulnerable groups such as weaker sections and low income groups at an affordable cost (Dr. C. Rangarajan).

Financial inclusion, broadly defined, refers to universal access to a wide range of financial services at a reasonable cost. These include not only banking products but also other financial services such as insurance and equity products. (Dr. Raghuram G. Rajan)

The concept of financial inclusion was formally adopted by the Reserve Bank of India in the year 2005 by releasing the Annual Policy Statement. Later, the concept started to spread in every part of the nation.

It was chiefly introduced to touch every corner of the country without ignoring any remote area. The concept addressed the absence of a formal financial system and banking system for catering to the monetary requirements of the poor people.

The Indian government initiated the 'Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana' with the sole purpose of motivating and encouraging poor individuals to open bank accounts.

## Concept of Financial Inclusion

Financial inclusion is the process of ensuring access to appropriate financial products and services needed by all sections of the society in general and vulnerable groups such as weaker sections and low income groups in particular.

❑ These include not only banking products but also other financial services such as insurance and equity products.

❑ The essence of financial inclusion is to ensure delivery of financial services which include - bank accounts for savings and transactional purposes, low cost credit for productive, personal and other purposes, financial advisory services, insurance facilities (life and non-life), etc.
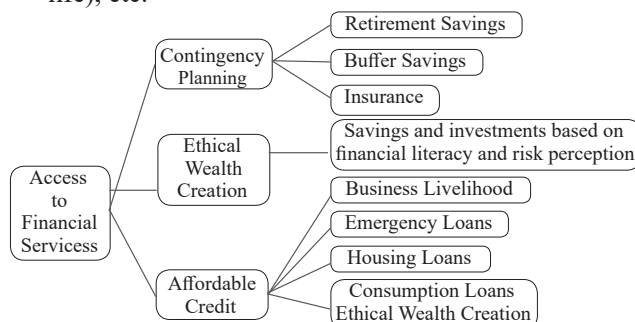


**Fig:** Household Access to Financial Services

❑ It broadens the resource base of the financial system by developing a culture of savings among large segment of rural population and plays its own role in the process of economic development.

❑ Further, by bringing low income groups within the perimeter of formal banking sector, financial inclusion protects their financial wealth and other resources in exigent circumstances. Financial inclusion also mitigates the exploitation of vulnerable sections by the usurious money lenders by facilitating easy access to formal credit.

## Five A's of Financial Inclusion
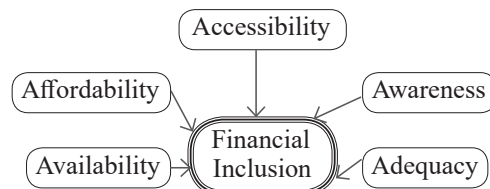


(i) **Availability:** It implies that financial inclusion means making all types of financial services available to all individuals irrespective of income and size of credit.

(ii) **Affordable:** The second factor implies availability of such services at an "affordable" cost.

(iii) **Accessible:** The third factor implies that services like credit, insurance, savings etc. should not just be made available with the banks but should also be "accessible" for people staying in even remotest corner of the country. In this light, numerous bank branches were set up by public sector banks in rural areas.

(iv) **Awareness:** It implies that merely making products and services available and accessible at lower cost is not sufficient rather there is a need to create "awareness" about it. For this numerous campaigns were organized in villages, different advertisements were rolled out highlighting the importance of savings and insurance and

# Poverty

When we think about poverty, what comes to our minds? It's probably an image of a person who doesn't have enough (good) food to eat, lives in a dilapidated condition and having poor health condition. In this light, poverty is a state or condition in which a person or community lacks the financial resources and essentials for a minimum standard of living.

Poverty means that the income level from employment is so low that basic human needs can't be met. Poverty-stricken people and families might go without proper housing, clean water, healthy food, and medical attention.

- Poverty is about not having enough money to meet basic needs including food, clothing and shelter. However, poverty is more, much more than just not having enough money.

- The World Bank describes poverty in this way: "Poverty is hunger. Poverty is lack of shelter. Poverty is being sick and not being able to see a doctor. Poverty is not having access to school and not knowing how to read. Poverty is not having a job, is fear for the future, living one day at a time."

- Poverty has many faces, changing from place to place and across time, and has been described in many ways. Most often, poverty is a situation people want to escape. So poverty is a call to action -- for the poor and the wealthy alike -- a call to change the world so that many more may have enough to eat, adequate shelter, access to education and health, protection from violence, and a voice in what happens in their communities.

- In addition to a lack of money, poverty is about not being able to participate in recreational activities; not being able to send children on a day trip with their schoolmates or to a birthday party; not being able to pay for medications for an illness. These are all costs of being poor. Those people who are barely able to pay for food and shelter simply can't consider these other expenses.

- When people are excluded within a society, when they are not well educated and when they have a higher incidence of illness, there are negative consequences for society. We all pay the price for poverty. The increased cost on the health system, the justice system and other systems that provide support to those living in poverty has an impact on our economy.

## Concept of Poverty

Poverty goes beyond lack of income. It is multidimensional, encompassing economic, social and governance perspectives.

- **Economically,** the poor are not only deprived of income and resources, but of opportunities. Markets and jobs are often difficult to access, because of low capabilities and geographical and social exclusion.

- **Limited education** affects their ability to get jobs and to access information that could improve the quality of their lives.

- **Poor health**, due to inadequate nutrition and health services, further limits their prospects for work and hampers them from realising their mental and physical potential. This fragile position is exacerbated by insecurity.

- **Decision-Making** - Living in marginal conditions with no resources to fall back on, shocks become hard or impossible to offset. The situation is made worse by the structure of societies and institutions that tend to exclude the poor from participating in decision-making that affects social and economic development.

## Perspectives or Approaches on Poverty

Poverty can be defined in very precise technical terms that facilitate its measurement. Poverty can also be characterized in a more multidimensional – yet less precise – manner that helps see poverty in relation to its causes, its context, its consequences and the ways it is related to phenomena that can be influenced. Therefore, scholars adopt different approaches and perspectives to deal with the study of poverty.

There is a broad agreement that poverty occurs when someone experiences a fundamental deprivation – a lack of some basic thing or things essential for human well-being. Until the 1990s, poverty was considered mainly in "material" terms – as low income or low levels of material wealth.

# 08 CHAPTER

# Inequality

Distribution of income in a country has always been an important topic of debate in all the nations. Economic growth in a country indicates country's development but this is not a sufficient indicator of development. If the economic growth distributes the income in a country more unequally, then there is a role of the government to try and mend it in a manner that the distribution is more equal than unequal.

## Concept of Inequality

Inequality is all about the distribution of power and resources, the rights people can exercise, and the opportunities they can access. Some amount of inequality is inevitable. But inequality is problematic when it prevents people from living decent lives and fulfilling their rights. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, wealth inequality has escalated further distorting power dynamics and impeding progress on reducing poverty in all its forms.

The Cambridge dictionary describes inequality as "the unfair situation in society when some people have more opportunities than other people". The United Nations describes it even more simply as "the state of not being equal, especially in status, rights and opportunities".

**Inequality can be classified into two categories:**

(i) Economic inequality; and
(ii) Social inequality.

Both these categories are deeply intertwined and inequality in one often affects the inequality in the other.

## Economic Inequality

Economic inequality is measured in two forms:
(i) income inequality, and
(ii) wealth inequality.

Income inequality is the inequality in and disparity in the incomes commanded by the top percentile of the population in comparison to the bottom percentiles, while wealth inequality measures look to do the same but by calculating disparities in wealth instead of income.

❑ **Income:** Income is not just the money received through pay, but all the money received from employment (wages, salaries, bonuses etc.), investments, such as interest on savings accounts and dividends from shares of stock, savings, state benefits, pensions (state, personal, company) and rent.

❑ **Wealth:** Wealth refers to the total amount of assets of an individual or household. This may include financial assets, such as bonds and stocks, property and private pension rights. Wealth inequality, therefore, refers to the unequal distribution of assets in a group of people.

## Social Inequality

❑ Social inequality occurs when resources in a given society are distributed unevenly, typically through norms of allocation, that engender specific patterns along lines of socially defined categories of persons.

❑ It is the differentiation preference of access to social goods in society brought about by power, religion, kinship, prestige, race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, and class.

❑ In India, one of the most distinctive forms of social inequity comes within the spheres of gender and caste, where, people coming from the marginalized sections of these social categories, are directly impacted in terms of their opportunities, access to essential utilities, and their potential as a whole.

## Measurement of Inequality

An inequality measure is often a function that ascribes a value to a specific distribution of income in a way that allows direct and objective comparisons across different distributions.

To do this, inequality measures should have certain properties and behave in a certain way given certain events. For example, moving $1 from a richer person to a poorer person should lead to a lower level of inequality.

❑ Measuring Inequality is about assessing income distribution and accumulation from the poorest to the richest.

❑ No single measure can satisfy all properties though, so the choice of one measure over others involves trade-offs.

❑ If the result is too skewed it means that the distribution of resources have not been even and crony capitalism is at fore.

# Hunger & Malnutrition

Good health benefits not only the individual, but the nation as well. In many countries across the globe, the path to quality health for large proportions of their population is fraught with difficulties.

In poor economies, people suffer from various health-related ailments, irrespective of their income level.

Though efforts are being made by State and non-State actors to address these health problems, many countries continue to lag in meeting their goals and targets.

But there are some alarming revelation about the incidence of hunger and malnutrition, according to the recent Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) report "The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI), 2021".

Welthungerhilfe, one of the largest private aided organisations in Germany, estimates that in every ten seconds, a child dies from the effects of hunger. 815 million people do not have enough to eat, 2 billion suffer from malnutrition, but there is enough food, knowledge and resources for all.

## Basics of Hunger & Malnutrition

"*Hunger defines a short-term physical discomfort as a result of chronic food shortage, or in severe cases, a life-threatening lack of food*".

**– National Research Council, 2006**

Hunger is a condition in which a person, for a sustained period, is unable to eat sufficient food to meet basic nutritional needs. So in the field of hunger relief, the term hunger is used in a sense that goes beyond the common desire for food that all humans experience. When specialists talk about hunger, they differentiate between three types: acute, chronic and hidden hunger.

(i) **Acute hunger** (famine) designates undernourishment over a definable period. It is the most extreme form of hunger and arises frequently in connection with crises like droughts due to El Nino, wars and disasters. It often affects people who are already suffering from chronic hunger.

(ii) **Chronic hunger** designates a state of long-term undernourishment. The body absorbs less food than it needs. Although the media mostly report on acute hunger crises, globally, chronic hunger is by far the most widespread. It usually arises in connection with poverty. Chronically hungry people do not have sufficient money for healthy nutrition, clean water or health care.

(iii) **Hidden hunger** is a form of chronic hunger. Due to an unbalanced diet, important nutrients are lacking, such as iron, iodine, zinc or vitamin A.

● At first glance, the consequences are not necessarily very visible, but over the long-term these nutrient deficiencies lead to serious diseases. In particular, children are unable to develop correctly, neither mentally nor physically. The risk of death is high.

● Hidden hunger not only harms individuals, but can inhibit the overall development of an affected region, as the efficiency and health of people decreases.

Some other associated concepts include:

❑ **Malnutrition**: Under-nutrition and malnutrition are the outcomes of hunger. Malnutrition is all-inclusive term that represents all manifestations of poor nutrition. It can mean any or all forms of under-nutrition, over-nutrition, overweight, and obesity.

❑ **Under-nutrition**: Refers to any form of nutritional deficiency, particularly those that manifest in maternal underweight, child stunting, child wasting, or micronutrient deficiencies. It does not include reference to overweight and obesity.

❑ **Over-nutrition**: It is a form of malnutrition in which the intake of nutrients is oversupplied. The amount of nutrients exceeds the amount required for normal growth, development, and metabolism.

# Food Security

Food security means availability, accessibility and affordability of food to all people at all times which should be sustainable over a considerable period of time. The poor households are more vulnerable to food insecurity whenever there is a problem of production or distribution of food crops. Food security depends on the Public Distribution System (PDS) and government vigilance and action at times, when this security is threatened.

## Concept of Food Security

In 1960, the concept of food security started as a part of larger developmental strategy of countries. As a concept, it evolved in 1970s and was widely recognised as an assurance of availability, at all times, of adequate supply of basic foodstuffs. (UN, 1975).

❑ Amartya Sen added a new dimension to food security and emphasized the "access" to food through what he called 'entitlements' — a combination of what one can produce, exchange in the market along with state or other socially provided supplies. Accordingly, there has been a substantial shift in the understanding of food security.

❑ The 1995 World Food Summit declared, "Food security at the individual, household, regional, national and global levels exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life" (FAO, 1996). The declaration further recognises that "poverty eradication is essential to improve access to food".

❑ The concept of food security has undergone considerable changes in recent years. Food availability and stability were considered good measures of food security till the seventies and the achievement of self-sufficiency was accorded high priority in the food policies of developing countries.

| | |
|---|---|
| 1960' | Food for Development |
| 1970' | Food Assurance |
| 1980' | Broadened Food Security |
| 1990' | Freedom from Hunger and Malnutrition |
| 2000' | Food and Nutrition for Poverty Reduction and Development |
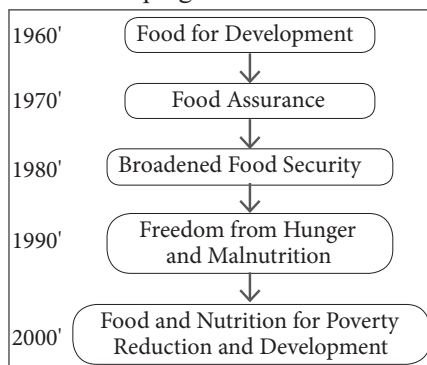
**Fig:** Evolution of the Concept of Food and Nutritional Security

## Food Insecurity

❑ On the other hand lends itself more readily to measurement and analysis. The FAO also provide the definition of food insecurity as: "A situation that exists when people lack secure access to sufficient amounts of safe and nutritious food for normal growth and development and an active and healthy life."

❑ Although a large section of people suffer from food and nutrition insecurity in India, the worst affected groups are landless people with little or no land to depend upon, traditional artisans, traditional service providers, petty self-employed workers and destitutes including beggars.

❑ In the urban areas, the food insecure families are those whose working members are generally employed in ill-paid occupations and casual labour market. These workers are largely engaged in seasonal activities and are paid very low wages that just ensure bare survival.

## Framework & Pillars of Food Security

Presently, two common definitions of food security come from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

1. **As per FAO:** Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

   ● Household means access by all members, at all times, to enough food for an active, healthy life. Simultaneously, it includes, at a minimum, the ready availability of nutritionally adequate and safe food.

2. **As per USDA:** An assured ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways (that is, without resorting to emergency food supplies, scavenging, stealing, or other coping strategies).

# 11 CHAPTER

# Healthcare in India

Healthcare services in India are public or private sector-driven, and the focus is on reducing mortality and morbidity associated with various communicable and non-communicable diseases. There are disparities and challenges associated with equitable, accessible, and affordable healthcare services geographically across India. The National Health Policies over the years have served well in strategizing the approach towards a more inclusive healthcare system in the country and aim at achieving a Universal Health Coverage (UHC) for all its citizens.

India's health sector has been shaped by its federal structure and the federal–state divisions of responsibilities and financing. The states are responsible for organizing and delivering health services to their residents.

The central government is responsible for international health treaties, medical education, and prevention of food adulteration, quality control in drug manufacturing, national disease control, and family planning programmes. It also sets national health policy including the regulatory framework and supports the states.

Health systems and polices have a critical role in determining the manner in which health services are delivered, utilized and affect health outcomes. 'Health' being a state subject, despite the issuance of the guidelines by the central government, the final prerogative on implementation of the initiatives on newborn care lies with the states.

## What is Health?

In 1948, the 'World Health Organization (WHO) put health as:

 "*Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.*"

In 1986, the WHO further clarified that health is:

"*A resource for everyday life is not the objective of living. Health is a positive concept emphasizing social and personal resources, as well as physical capacities.*"

This means that health is a resource to support an individual's function in wider society. A healthy lifestyle provides the means to lead a full life.

❑ The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, and economic or social condition. Healthy development of the child is of basic importance; the ability to live harmoniously in a changing total environment is essential to such development.

❑ The health of all peoples is fundamental to the attainment of peace and security and is dependent on the fullest co-operation of individuals and States.

❑ The achievement of any State in the promotion and protection of health is of value to all. Unequal development in different countries in the promotion of health and control of diseases, especially communicable diseases, is a common danger.

❑ The extension to all peoples of the benefits of medical, psychological and related knowledge is essential to the fullest attainment of health.

❑ Informed opinion and active co-operation on the part of the public are of the utmost importance in the improvement of the health of the people. Governments have a responsibility for the health of their peoples which can be fulfilled only by the provision of adequate health and social measures.

❑ More recently, researchers have defined health as the ability of a body to adapt to new threats and infirmities.

❑ They base this on the idea that modern science has dramatically increased human awareness of diseases and how they work in the last few decades.

## Factors for Good Health

Health depends on a wide range of factors. A person is born with a range of genes, and in some people, an unusual genetic pattern can lead to a less-than-optimum level of health. Access to healthcare also plays a role, but the WHO suggests that the following factors may have a bigger impact on health which can be summarized as:

❑ **Social and Economic Environment**: Including how wealthy a family or community is.

❑ **Physical Environment**: Including parasites that exist in an area, or pollution levels.

❑ **Person's Characteristics and Behaviours**: Including the genes that a person is born with and their lifestyle choices.

# 12 CHAPTER

# Education in India

India has had a long and illustrious history of holistic education. The aim of education in ancient India was not just the acquisition of knowledge as preparation for life in this world or for life beyond schooling, but for complete realisation and liberation of the self.

According to Swami Vivekananda, "Education is not the amount of information that we put into your brain and runs riot there, undigested, all your life. We must have life-building, man-making, character-making assimilation of ideas. If you have assimilated five ideas and made them your life and character, you have more education than any man who has got by heart a whole library. If education is identical with information, the libraries are the greatest sages of the world and encyclopedia are the greatest Rishis."

In the same light, Martin Luther King Jr. said, "The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character is the goal of true education."

The Indian education system produced scholars like Charaka and Susruta, Aryabhata, Bhaskaracharya, Chanakya, Patanjali and Panini, and numerous others. They made seminal contributions to world knowledge in diverse fields such as mathematics, astronomy, metallurgy, medical science and surgery, civil engineering and architecture, shipbuilding and navigation, yoga, fine arts, chess, and more.

Education in India was enriched through the mixing of cultures that arose from the very first invasions, till the arrival of the British. The country has absorbed many of these influences and blended them into a unique culture of its own.

## Development of Education in India

Education in India has an ancient tradition that dates back to the Vedic Period (1500 to 500 BC). By the time European colonialists arrived, education mostly took place in traditional Hindu village schools called gurukuls, or in Muslim elementary and secondary schools called maktabs and madrasas.

❑ The British colonialists then imposed an education system based on the British system and introduced English as a language of instruction. The first institutions of higher learning in a Western sense to emerge in British India were the University of Calcutta, the University of Bombay, and the University of Madras, all founded in 1857 based on the model of British universities.

❑ The British, sought to spread European science and literature and develop a loyal English-speaking workforce, recruited mainly from India's upper classes, to administer its colony. They established education departments in the colony's provinces and discriminately disbursed funds in favour of English language schools teaching British curricula.

| Educational Reforms in India during British Rule | |
|---|---|
| Charter Act of 1813 | • 1 lakh rupees were to be spent by the company for the promotion of education in India.<br>• Controversies between Anglicist and Orientalist. |
| Charter Act of 1833 | • Education grant was increased to 10 lakh and it heightened further the rift between Orientalist and Anglicist. |
| Lord Macaulay's Minute of 1835 | • Amidst Orientalist-Anglicist controversy, Macaulay supported the latter view and declared English language as the sole medium of education.<br>• It proposed Downward Filtration Theory, which means teaching a few upper- and middle-class people would produce interpreters which would eventually penetrate to the masses.<br>• However, this theory failed miserably as envisaged by the British but has helped in growth of modern intelligentsia who shaped the struggle for independence. |
| Wood's Dispatch, 1854 | • This was also known as "Magna Carta of English Education in India".<br>• It rejected 'downward filtration theory' and recommended English for higher studies and vernaculars at school level. |
| Hunter Education Commission, 1882-83 | • It emphasized on state's role in improving education and advocated for transfer of control to local bodies (district and municipal boards). |

# 13 CHAPTER

# Employment in India

Employment refers to the state of being engaged in a job or profession in exchange for compensation. It is a vital aspect of the economy and plays a crucial role in the development and progress of society. Employment provides individuals with the means to earn a living, support themselves and their families, and achieve financial stability.

Employment opportunities can be found in various sectors, such as manufacturing, healthcare, finance, education, and technology. The nature of employment can also vary from full-time, part-time, contract, temporary, or freelance work.

Employment of workers involves several attributes like nature of job, job security, social security, etc., where government plays important role in regulation and its development.

Overall, employment is a crucial component of modern society, providing individuals with financial stability and opportunities for personal and professional growth, while also supporting the growth and success of businesses and the economy.

## Concepts of Employment

### Employment

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) defines 'employment' as all those of working age population who, during a short reference period, were engaged in any activity to produce goods or provide services for pay or profit.

**They comprise:**

❑ Employed persons "at work", i.e. who worked in a job for at least one hour;

❑ Employed persons "not at work" due to temporary absence from a job, or to working-time arrangements (such as shift work, flexi time and compensatory leave for overtime).

By employment is meant an engagement of a person in some occupation, business, trade or profession, etc.

**The notion of employment can be explained by taking three established facts:**

(i) Working hours per day

(ii) Wage rate

(iii) A man's state of health

The definition thus includes both, self- and wage employed beneficiaries.

## Structure of Employment

**The structure of employment can be examined by dividing it as follows:**

❑ Organised and Unorganised employment.

❑ Rural and Urban employment.

### A. Organised and Unorganised Sectors of Employment

### Organised Sector

❑ It is a sector that is registered with the government. In this sector, people get assured work, and the employment terms are fixed and regular.

❑ The sector is regulated and taxed by the government.

❑ There are some benefits provided to the employees working under organised sector like they get the advantage of job security, add-on benefits are provided like various allowances and perquisites. They get a fixed monthly payment, working hours and hike on salary at regular intervals.

### Unorganised Sector

❑ Unorganised Sector is not registered with the government and whose terms of employment are not fixed and regular.

❑ In this sector, no government rules and regulations are followed, hence taxes are not levied. Entry to such sector is quite easy as it does not require any affiliation or registration. This sector includes those small size enterprises, workshops where there are low skill and unproductive employment.

### Differences

❑ Organised sector is a sector where the employment terms are fixed and regular, and the employees get assured work. Unorganised sector is one where the employment terms are not fixed and regular, as well as the enterprises are not registered with the government.

# 14 Universal Basic Income (UBI)

The idea of a Universal Basic Income (UBI) gained currency in the mainstream discourse in India with the publication of the flagship Economic Survey 2016-17. It has advocated the concept of Universal Basic Income as an alternative to the various social welfare schemes in an effort to reduce poverty.

A UBI, or the idea of a cash-based safety net, assumes urgency in view of India's poor response to traditional and targeted programmes.

❑ India's record of targeting welfare programmes to the poor has been suspected by numerous scholars. Targeting has been both: inefficient and inequitable. Further, the UBI is based on the principles of universality, unconditionality and agency.

❑ Finland, for instance, has just launched its UBI pilot as part of a reform to its existing welfare system, while India is considering the idea of using a UBI to address poverty reduction challenges.

❑ The impacts of UBI will not be seen for years after its implementation, yet it may be worth experimenting with, given the observed positive outcomes of previous UBI practices on a selection of socio-economic indicators.

## Concept of UBI

A Universal Basic Income (UBI) is a regular fixed cash transfer payment provided by the government – or another institution in the public sphere – to every citizen or resident, regardless of whether he or she is rich or poor and/or wishing to be engaged in paid employment.

**The idea of a basic income is founded on the three following characteristics:**

(i) **Universality:** A basic income should be open to all population (however, some basic income proponents advise to start in a specific domain and then "universalise" gradually over time).

(ii) **Individuality:** A basic income should be designed to cater to individuals, not households, since it is considered a truly individual right.

(iii) **Un-conditionality:** A basic income should be unconditional (or it should employ conditions that do not violate inclusiveness).

❑ In this light, Universal Basic Income is a radical and compelling paradigm shift in thinking about both social justice and a productive economy.

❑ It is a model for providing all citizens of a country or other geographic area with a given sum of money, regardless of their income, resources or employment status.

❑ The purpose of the UBI is to prevent or reduce poverty and increase equality among citizens.

## Arguments in Favour of UBI

❑ **Reduction of Poverty and Vulnerability:** Poverty and vulnerability will be reduced in one fell swoop.

❑ **Choice:** A UBI treats beneficiaries as agents and entrusts citizens with the responsibility of using welfare spending as they see best; this may not be the case with in-kind transfers.

❑ **Better Targeting of Poor**: As all individuals are targeted, exclusion error (poor being left out) is zero though inclusion error (rich gaining access to the scheme) is 60 percent.

❑ **Insurance against Shocks:** This income floor will provide a safety net against health, income and other shocks.

❑ **Improvement in Financial Inclusion**: Payment – transfers will encourage greater usage of bank accounts, leading to higher profits for banking correspondents (BC) and an endogenous improvement in financial inclusion. Credit – increased income will release the constraints on access to credit for those with low income levels.

❑ **Psychological Benefits**: A guaranteed income will reduce the pressures of finding a basic living on a daily basis.

❑ **Administrative Efficiency**: A UBI in place of a plethora of separate government schemes will reduce the administrative burden on the state.

❑ **Saving of Leakages**: India has depended on subsidies and transfer payments to help the poor. More than 950 programmes sponsored by the central government account for five per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) by budget allocation. Most of these programmes are small, fragmented and plagued by administrative leakages.

# 15
CHAPTER

# Child & Adolescent in India

Children are a vulnerable group due to their age, dependency, and limited ability to protect themselves. Some key vulnerabilities that children commonly face are physical and emotional abuse, neglect and abandonment, exploitation and trafficking, lack of education, health and malnutrition, armed conflicts and displacement, child marriage, etc.

Despite of having impressive economic growth and development in last few decades, children have not benefited equitably from it in India. The lives of underprivileged children in contemporary India are struggles for survival revolving around hunger, ill health, lack of education, protection, shelter, and so on.

❑ Children continue to be malnourished; exploited while at work (instead of being in school); trafficked far away from their home, kith, and kin to unknown lands; and subject to abuse, violence, and discrimination concerning gender, caste, community, and class.
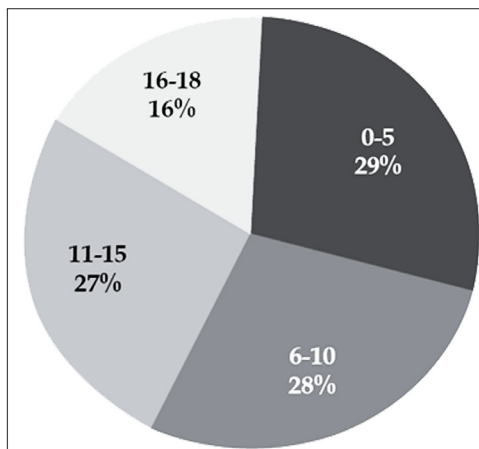


**Fig:** Age-wise Distribution of Children

## Definition of a Child

❑ **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child:** The 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines a child as an individual who has not attained the age of 18 years.

❑ **National Policy of Children, 2013**: It defines a child as any person below the age of eighteen years. Accordingly, India has a large population of children, estimated to be roughly thirty-nine per cent of the total population (1.21 billion), according to the 2011 Census of India.

## Child under Different Laws in India

In India, different laws define the words 'child' and 'minor' differently:

❑ **The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986** – a child is defined as a person who has not completed 14 years of age.

❑ **The Plantation Labour Act, 1951** has separate definitions for child, adolescent and adult. According to it 'child' means a person who has not completed his fourteenth year. 'Adolescent' means a person who has completed his fourteenth year but has not completed his eighteenth year where as 'adult' means a person who has completed his eighteenth year.

❑ **The Motor Transport Workers Act, 1961,** and the **Beedi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1966,** both define a child as a person who has not completed 14 years of age.

❑ **Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006:** Matrimonial laws such as **Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006** add to the confusion. It states that a male cannot attain majority until he is 21 years of age and the corresponding age for a female is 18.

## Status of Children in India

Children in India constitute a significant portion of the population and represent a diverse group with varying socioeconomic backgrounds, cultural identities, and access to opportunities.

**Some Key Aspects about Children in India**

❑ **Population**: India has one of the largest populations of children in the world. As of 2021, approximately 39% of India's population consists of children below the age of 18, making it essential to focus on their well-being and development.

❑ **Education**: Access to quality education remains a crucial concern for children in India. While efforts have been made to improve enrollment rates, challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, teacher shortages,

# 16 CHAPTER

# Women in India

Women in India, despite constituting nearly half of the population, often face vulnerabilities and disadvantages that stem from deep-rooted social, cultural, and economic factors. Women in India are vulnerable to gender-based violence, discrimination and gender inequality, child marriage, limited educational opportunities, health and reproductive rights, economic disadvantages, etc.

## Status of Women in India

### Ancient Times

Womanhood has been revered in the ancient Indian culture as a manifestation of divine qualities. The ancient saints in India believed that the seeds of divinity grow and blossom in a truly cultured society where women are given due respect and equal opportunities to rise and have dignity.

❑ The status of women in India has been subjected to many momentous changes over the past few millennia from *enjoying equal status with men* in ancient time to degraded low position in medieval period and the promotion of equal rights by many reformers, the history of women in India is eventful.

❑ The historical background of Indian society reveals that in very early stages, women were regarded like mother goddess (Shakti, a symbol of life with immense capacity of tolerance and sacrifice and they had a respectful place in society). During Vedic times women enjoyed equal status with men in all spheres of life. They got educated like men and were allowed to take decision about their life and were free from social constraints. During that period, husband and wife were called 'Dampati' (partners).

❑ It was indicative of the society in which relations between the sexes were based on reciprocity and autonomy in their respective spheres of activity. The participation of women in productive activities was the source of freedom and better status of women in vedic age. They were also familiar with social and political life and allowed to play a significant role in all matters. Girls were free to choose their own husbands and were normally married after puberty.

❑ In the later vedic period the status of women began to decline. We find evidences in 'Manusmriti' and other religious texts which curtailed women's freedom and rights. Manusmriti prescribed duties and obligations of a woman. For Manu, woman was a perpetual minor and had to lead whole of her life under the guardianship of the father, the husband, or the son.

❑ Women were considered to be impure and thus could not attend spiritual functions i.e., their religious rights and privileges were curtailed. There was gradual decline in female literacy. The involvement of women in political activities declined and their representation in the Sabha too became negligible. She was viewed solely as mother and wife and never as a woman or a person.

❑ Practices like giving away of daughters in marriage and the importance attached to sons strengthened the patriarchal social structure. A woman in this period was treated as property and an object of enjoyment.

❑ The first documented instance of sati in India is believed to have occurred in the 4th century CE, during the reign of the Gupta Empire.

❑ Remarriage was not allowed for high caste widows. But the men were not subjected to such restrictions.

❑ Although protest movements within the Hindu fold, like Buddhism, Jainism contributed to some improvement in the status of women, particularly in regard to religious activities, yet, they continued to regard women primarily as mothers and wives, and inferior to men in society.

### Medieval Times

During the medieval period after invasion of Mughals, the position of women further deteriorated. Society encouraged child marriages and banned widows' remarriage. Education was denied to majority of women.

❑ They were excluded from public gathering or any intellectual deliberation. Sati pratha, polygamy and Parda (veil) became part and parcel of social life in India.

❑ Restrictions on rights and privileges of women were imposed. In the eighteenth century, the position of women became miserable. They were considered inferior to men and were to be ill-treated.

# 17 CHAPTER

# Senior Citizens

Senior citizens also referred to as elderly or older persons represent a significant demographic group in India. The term generally applies to individuals aged 60 years and above, although the government defines senior citizens as those aged 60 years and above for benefits and entitlements.

Elderly or old age consists of ages nearing or surpassing the average life span of human beings. The boundary of old age cannot be defined exactly because it does not have the same meaning in all societies.

❑ Government of India has adopted 'National Policy on Older Persons, 2011' which defines 'senior citizen' or 'elderly' as a person who is of age 60 years or above.

❑ According to Population Census 2011, there are nearly 104 million elderly persons in India. The population has increased from 5.5% in 1951 to 8.6% in 2011 and it is projected that there may be a rise up to 19% by 2050.

❑ The proportion of older people is much higher in more developed States compared to less developed States.

❑ Kerala leads the States with over 12% of older people, closely followed by Goa and Tamil Nadu. North-Eastern States and A&N Islands have much lower proportion of older people.

## India's Changing Population Landscape

India is currently experiencing a demographic dividend. This period is characterised by a minor total dependency ratio (ratio of dependents to the working -age population, including a child and aged persons). However, as demographic dividend will diminish there will be a rise in old age dependency ratio.

During the 1950s in India, both the birth and death rates declined over seven decades. The birth and death rates per thousand population were 43.6 and 26.4 respectively, during 1950- 55, and 18 and 7.2 respectively during 2015-20. The decline in birth rate and death rate varied at different rates over the decades, which can be seen from Figure.



**Demographic Transition in India**

— Annual Rate  — Crude death rate  — Crude birth rate

(y-axis: per thousand population; values −10, 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80)

(x-axis: 1950-1955, 1955-1960, 1960-1965, 1965-1970, 1970-1975, 1975-1980, 1980-1985, 1985-1990, 1990-1995, 1995-2000, 2000-2005, 2005-2010, 2010-2015, 2015-2020, 2020-2025, 2025-2030, 2030-2035, 2035-2040, 2040-2045, 2045-2050)
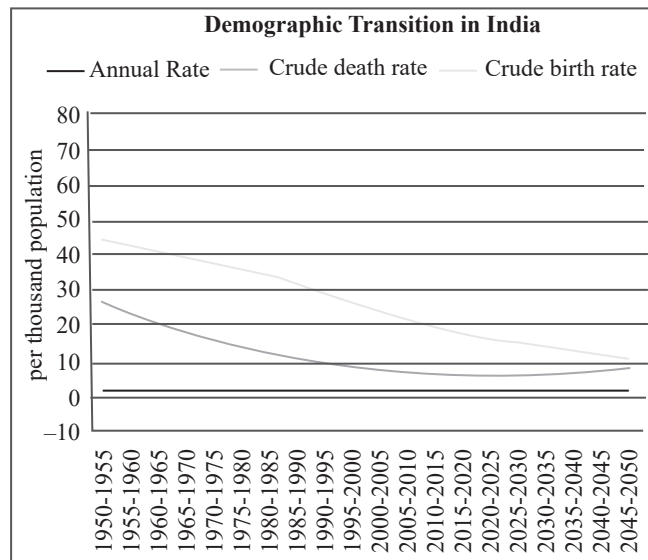
❑ In 1950-55, the average annual population growth rate was 1.71%, which peaked at 2.31% in 1980-85 and has declined since then, to become 1.04% in 2015-20.

❑ On the other hand, the death rate continued to decline at a lower rate. As the decline in birth rate outpaced the decline in death rate, this led the average growth rate of the population to decline steadily.

❑ Moreover, the changes in the population age structure associated with the demographic transition and a projected sustained decline in fertility for the next 30 years predict an increasingly smaller population growth rate of 0.23, which may turn negative after 2050.

❑ There are dramatic effects on the population age structure due to the onset of demographic transition as it generates large birth cohorts.

❑ First, this increases the share of the working-age population; then, as years go on, they start increasing the share of the population above 60 years. The continued decline in death rates reinforces the decline in fertility as the gains in survival become increasingly concentrated at older ages.

# 18 CHAPTER

# Scheduled Castes in India

The framers of the Constitution took note of the fact that certain communities in the country were suffering from extreme social, educational and economic backwardness arising out of age-old practice of untouchability and certain others on account of this primitive agricultural practices, lack of infrastructure facilities and geographical isolation, and who need special consideration for safeguarding their interests and for their accelerated socio-economic development. These communities were notified as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as per provisions contained in Clause 1 of Articles 341 and 342 of the Constitution respectively.

Scheduled Castes constitute the socially and economically deprived caste groups of Hindu society which mainly consist of agricultural labourers, cultivators of small landholdings, artisians, petty labourers and industrial workers.

❏ The Chamars and Pasis of Uttar Pradesh, the Balais of Bengal, the Meghs of Gujarat, the Mahars of Maharashtra, the Mala of Andhra Pradesh and the Adi-Davidas of Tamil Nadu are toiling Schedule caste concentrated in specific regions.

❏ According to the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Orders (Amendment) Act, 1990, Scheduled Castes can only belong to Hindu or Sikh or Buddhist religions. There is no religion bar in case of Scheduled Tribes.

## A Brief History of Scheduled Castes

The Scheduled Caste is a politico-legal-term. It was first coined by the Simon Commission and then Government of India, Act, 1935. When India became independent this term was adopted by the Constitution for the purpose of providing them some special facilities and the constitutional guarantees.

❏ Indian society has historically had a rigid, occupation-based, hierarchical caste system in which the relative place of a caste in the social hierarchy was determined largely by its traditional occupation.

❏ They are internally differentiated in terms of occupation, numerical segregated on the criteria of untouchability.

❏ Another term used for the Scheduled Castes or Untouchables is "Harijans" (the children of God). This term was first used by Mahatma Gandhi, which refers to an aggregate of castes which may differ from each other and which have been reduced to the lowest ritual and social status in the caste hierarchy.

❏ Another term which comes into currency almost at the same time is depressed class or classes. This term was used by Dr. Ambedkar and it refered to those classes

of categories or people who were poor, exploited and socially and ritually or religiously degraded.

❏ In particular, those performing 'unclean' or supposedly 'polluting' tasks came to be regarded not merely as 'low' castes but as 'untouchables'.

❏ The practice of 'untouchability' resulted in great injustice to the members of the concerned castes because they were discriminated against in every respect, and denied ownership of productive assets like land, as well as basic rights like education and equality, which resulted in perpetuation of their extreme socio-economic deprivation.

❏ In the 1931 Census, for the first time, the Government systematically categorized certain castes as 'depressed classes'. Thereafter, the Government of India Act, 1935, for the first time, provided for notification of socially disadvantaged castes as 'Scheduled Castes', and a list of such castes was accordingly notified in the Government of India (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1936.

❏ The Constitution of India, which came into effect on 26.01.1950, inter-alia, abolished "untouchability" and provided several special safeguards for the Scheduled Castes, so as to ensure that they are able to attain equality with the other social groups in the shortest possible time.

❏ These safeguards enabled reservation in elections to the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies and reservation in Government jobs.

❏ A number of initiatives have been taken by the Government for development of SCs, which have yielded positive outcomes, and have also resulted in narrowing the gaps between the Scheduled Castes and the rest of the population.

## Population of Scheduled Castes in India

The Sachar Committee report of 2006 revealed that scheduled castes and tribes of India are not limited to the religion of Hinduism. The 61st round Survey of the NSSO found that 90% of the Buddhists, one-third of the Sikhs,

# Scheduled Tribes in India

Primitive, geographically isolated, shy and socially, educationally & economically backwardness these are the traits that distinguish Scheduled Tribes of our country from other communities. Tribal communities live in about 15% of the country's areas in various ecological and geo-climatic conditions ranging from plains to forests, hills and inaccessible areas.

Tribal groups are at different stages of social, economic and educational development.

❑ Tribal groups in India are considered to be the earliest inhabitants of a country that experienced diverse waves of invaders and other settlers over thousands of years, making it difficult to identify the precise origin of today's tribal peoples from a —purist‖perspective.

❑ The state and discourse in India reject the term- 'indigenous peoples' and prefer instead to use the Constitutional term -*Scheduled Tribes*. The self-preferred term 'Adivasi' is commonly translated as 'original inhabitants', and literally means 'Adi or earliest time', vasi = resident of'.

## Concept of Scheduled Tribes

The list of tribes drawn up by the colonial and post-colonial government was based on political and administrative considerations, given that State recognition could be translated into important protective and developmental benefits.

**However, the identification of such groups has been based on recommendations made by the officials of the-**

❑ 1931 Census,
❑ the First Backward Classes Commission 1955, and the
❑ Report of the Advisory Committee on the Revision of the Lists of Scheduled Castes and Tribes, 1965.

**The currently followed criteria for identification are:**

❑ primitive traits,
❑ distinctive culture,
❑ geographical isolation,
❑ shyness of contact with the community at large, and
❑ General backwardness.

However, there are many forest-dwellers who are not tribals; settled agriculture is practiced by many tribes (who are not semi-tribal in other respects) and migration to urban areas does not necessarily lead to the shedding of all tribal cultural traits.

## De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes

Scheduled Tribes in India are enormously diverse in terms of their populations, occupations, and the kinds of discriminations they face. There are also some communities which are known as 'tribes' but who are not necessarily included within the Scheduled Tribes list.

**Two other important governmental classifications of tribes which refer to specific histories and vulnerabilities of these communities are:**

(i) De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes, and

(ii) Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs).

### De-notified Tribes (DNTs)

❑ The recent history of De-notified Tribes (DNTs) can be traced back to the Criminal Tribes Acts (CTA) of 1871 and later 1911 under which between 150 and 200 communities were deemed to be 'hereditary criminals' and subject to surveillance, confinement, and gross discrimination.

❑ The Acts represented the formalisation of a view held by the British for several decades before and are connected to previously existing prejudices against wandering and/or rebellious communities.

❑ The apparent purpose of the CTA was to contain and curb entire communities who were viewed as 'hereditarily criminal', in light of the then prevailing notion that crime was a genetic trait passed down from one generation to the next.

❑ The CTA was removed from the statute books in 1952 on the recommendation of the All India Criminal Tribes Inquiry Committee (1949) and henceforth, 'Criminal Tribes' came to be known as 'De-notified Tribes' instead.

❑ Even though the law has been repealed, the identification of these communities as ethnic groups having criminal antecedents continues to this day,

# 20
**CHAPTER**

# Other Backward Classes

Other Backward Classes (OBCs) refer to a constitutional category and comprise socially disadvantaged shudra castes. Castes located in the middle of the traditional stratification systems are the constituents of this section of the population. It is thus a social layer intermediate between the twice born and the untouchable.

The OBCs have not experienced untouchability, but they are backward in social and educational terms and under-represented in governmental positions. Thus, OBCs are socially and educationally backward classes. The OBCs are heterogeneous groups that consist of multiple castes which are placed in the graded social hierarchy and have been traditionally engaged in different caste based occupations.

## Internal Differentiation of the OBCs

The entities included under the term 'other backward classes' are not homogenous. The category is heterogenous comprising section of society between the higher castes and the scheduled castes the description includes diverse socio-economic entities.

Such social permutation on account of the diversities encompassing it remains a loose configuration. Land ownership remains the prerogative of a few selected castes among them. Distribution of land among the sections comprising it is skewed in favour of a few leaving the more numerous poor and deprived.

Deprivations of the marginalised among them force to work for others as share croppers, landless labourers and performers of traditional functional services. On the other hand, the top stratum among them is constituted of the owner cultivators.

Lower to them are the landless tenant cultivators, artisans and service castes that remain under the economic and political control of the landowning castes. In the past, such marginalized sections among the other backward classes worked as forced labourer, domestic servant, and palanquin bearers for those to whom they were dependent for their survival. Landlords used to receive customary payment from them on festive occasions.

## Demographic Profile

The caste-wise census was discontinued after the 1931 census. Hence, census data is not available on the population of OBCs in the country. However, the Mandal Commission had estimated OBC population at 52 per cent of the total population while the National Sample Survey Organization, based on its 61st round survey (2004-05), has estimated it to be 41 per cent.

## Sanskritization and Social Mobility

Sanskritization and social mobility of OBCs (Other Backward Classes) in India are important concepts in the context of India's complex caste system and the efforts to address historical social inequalities.

### Sanskritization

❑ Sanskritization is a sociological concept introduced by M.N. Srinivas, an Indian sociologist.

❑ It refers to the process by which lower-caste or marginalized groups in India adopt the cultural, social, and ritual practices of higher-caste groups, particularly the Brahmins, in an attempt to improve their social status.

❑ This often involves adopting the language, customs, and rituals associated with the upper castes.

❑ The idea behind Sanskritization is that by emulating the practices of higher castes, lower-caste individuals and communities hope to raise their social and economic status. They believe that by doing so, they will gain acceptance and recognition within the caste hierarchy.

❑ However, it's important to note that Sanskritization is not a uniform or guaranteed path to social mobility, and its success can vary significantly based on regional, historical, and individual factors.

### Social Mobility

❑ OBCs in India are a diverse group comprising various castes and communities that historically faced social and economic disadvantages.

❑ The Indian government has implemented policies, including reservation quotas in education and government jobs, to promote the social mobility of OBCs and other marginalized groups.

# 21 CHAPTER

# Minorities

Minorities refer to groups within a larger population that are in a numerical minority compared to the dominant or majority group. The recognition and protection of minority rights are essential for ensuring equality, diversity, and inclusivity within a society.

The Constitution of India uses the word 'minority' or its plural form in some Articles – 29 to 30 and 350A to 350 B – but does not define it anywhere.

❑ Six religious communities, viz. Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Sikhs, Zoroastrians (Parsis), and Jains have been notified as minority communities under Section 2(c) of the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992.

❑ As per the Census 2011 report, the minorities constitute around 20.2 per cent of the country's 1.2 billion people. Muslims are the largest minority group, which constitute around 14.2 per cent of the country. Christian numbers stayed put at 2.3 per cent, while the Sikh population fell to 1.7 per cent from 1.9 per cent.

## Concept of Minority

In common parlance, the expression "minority" means a group comprising less than half of the population and differing from others, especially the predominant section, in race, religion, traditions and culture, language, etc.

❑ The Oxford Dictionary defines 'Minority' "as a smaller number or part; a number or part representing less than half of the whole; a relatively small group of people, differing from others in race, religion, language or political persuasion".

❑ The term 'minority' has not been defined in the Indian Constitution but, the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations' Organisation in 1950 has defined minority to include "Only those non-dominant groups in a population which possess and wish to preserve suitable ethnic, religious and linguistic traditions or characteristics markedly different from the rest of the population".

## Minorities Under International Law

❑ Adopted by consensus in 1992, the United Nations Minorities Declaration in its Article 1 refers to minorities as based on national or ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic identity, and provides that States should protect their existence. There is no internationally agreed definition as to which groups constitute minorities.

❑ It is often stressed that the existence of a minority is a question of fact and that any definition must include both objective factors (such as the existence of a shared ethnicity, language or religion) and subjective factors (including that individuals must identify themselves as members of a minority).

❑ The difficulty in arriving at a widely acceptable definition lies in the variety of situations in which minorities live. Some live together in well-defined areas, separated from the dominant part of the population while others are scattered throughout the country.

❑ Some minorities have a strong sense of collective identity and recorded history; others retain only a fragmented notion of their common heritage.

## Safeguards for Minorities in India

### Constitutional Safeguards

❑ **Article 25:** This article says "all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right to freely profess, practice, and propagate religion subject to public order, morality and health." This article gives Sikh community right of wearing a turban and carrying of kirpans.

❑ **Article 26:** This article provides right to establish and maintain institutions for religious and charitable purpose and manage its own affairs in matters of religion and own, acquire movable or immovable property and administer it in accordance with law.

❑ **Article 27:** State makes prohibition against compelling any person to pay taxes for promotion of any particular religion.

❑ **Article 28:** People have freedom to attend religious instruction or religious worship in educational institutions wholly maintained, recognised or aided by the State.

# 22
**CHAPTER**

# LGBT

LGBT has become a widely accepted designation for social minorities based on sexual and gender orientation. All members of these sub-groups are subject to similar prejudices rooted in beliefs and traditions about sexuality and gender. The lack of social recognition has an effect on the capacity of LGBT people to fully access and enjoys their rights as citizens.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people are more likely to experience intolerance, discrimination, harassment, and the threat of violence due to their sexual orientation, than those that identify themselves as heterosexual.

This is due to homophobia (the fear or hatred of homosexuality). Some of the factors that may reinforce homophobia on a larger scale are moral, religious, and political beliefs of a dominant group.

## Concept of LGBT

LGBT is an initialism that stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender. The initialism 'LGBT' is intended to emphasize a diversity of sexuality and gender identity-based cultures and is sometimes used to refer to anyone who is non-heterosexual or non-cisgender instead of exclusively to people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender.

To recognise this inclusion, a popular variant adds the *letter Q* for those who identify as queer and/or are questioning their sexual identity as LGBTQ, recorded since 1996.

❑ **Lesbian:** A 'Lesbian' generally refers to women who are sexually attracted to women only. They are like gay people only but only men are included in gay whereas only such women are called lesbians. They are not at all attracted to opposite genders.

❑ **Gay:** The term "Gay" traditionally was used to refer to the people attracted to people of the same gender and be in a relationship with same gender people. But the lesbians, transgenders, and bisexuals are not included in the gay community.

❑ **Bisexual:** A 'Bisexual' person is one who is sexual, romantically and emotionally attracted to both the sexes.

❑ **Transgender:** It is an umbrella term used to portray those whose gender identity 'differs from that usually associated with their birth sex.
   ● Not everyone whose appearance or behaviour is gender-atypical will identify as a transgender

person.
   ● Many transgender people live part-time or full-time in another gender.
   ● Transgender people can identify as transsexual, transvestite or another gender identity.

❑ **Queer:** This term has been used as an epithet/slur against people whose gender, gender expression and/or sexuality do not conform to dominant expectations.
   ● Some people have reclaimed the word queer and self-identify in opposition to assimilation.
   ● For some, this reclamation is a celebration of not fitting into social norms.

❑ Later it was expanded to include *intersex people* in this group and the initialism became as LGBTIQ.

❑ **Intersex:** It is a general term used for a variety of conditions in which a person is born with a reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn't seem to fit the typical definitions of female or male.
   ● For example, a person might be born appearing to be female on the outside, but having mostly male-typical anatomy on the inside.

❑ The initialism has become conventional as self-designation and many of the English-speaking countries have adopted this initialism to identify the sexuality and gender-identity based community centres and emphasizes gender-based culture and diversity of sexuality.

❑ It indicates anyone who is non-heterosexual. Sometimes LGBTIQ or LGBT+ is used by some people meaning LGBTIQ as intersex people questioning their sexual identity and LGBT+ embracing spectrums of gender and sexuality.

## Evolution of the Rights of LGBT People in India

### 142nd Report of Law Commission

❑ The Law Commission in its 142nd report has expressed its desire for the deletion of section-377.

# Differently-Abled Persons (Divyangjan)

Socio-economic problems associated with differently-abled persons (Divyangjan) present a complex and pressing issue in contemporary society. Differently-abled individuals, who face physical, sensory, cognitive, or developmental impairments, often confront significant barriers that limit their social and economic opportunities.

The challenges that are faced by differently-abled persons arise from a combination of societal attitudes, inadequate infrastructure, discriminatory practices, and limited access to resources and services.

As a result, differently-abled individuals frequently experience disparities in education, employment, healthcare, and overall quality of life.

Understanding and addressing the socio-economic problems faced by differently-abled persons is crucial for promoting inclusivity, equality, and sustainable development in our communities.

## Defining Disability

According to the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016 "Person with Disability" means a person with long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which, in interaction with barriers, hinders his full and effective participation in society equally with others.

| Disabilities under RPwD Act, 2016 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| (i) | Blindness | (xix) | Multiple Disabilities including Deaf-Blindness |
| (ii) | Low-Vision | | |
| (iii) | Leprosy Cured Persons | | |
| (iv) | Hearing Impairment | (xx) | Acid Attack Victims |
| (v) | Locomotor Disability | (xxi) | Parkinson's Disease |
| (vi) | Dwarfism | (xi) | Muscular Dystrophy |
| (vii) | Intellectual Disability | (xii) | Chronic Neurological Conditions |
| (viii) | Mental Illness | | |
| (ix) | Autism Spectrum Disorder | (xiii) | Specific Learning Disabilities |
| (x) | Cerebral Palsy | (xiv) | Multiple Sclerosis |
| (xi) | Muscular Dystrophy | (xv) | Speech and Language Disability |
| (xii) | Chronic Neurological Conditions | | |
| | | (xvi) | Thalassemia |
| (xiii) | Specific Learning Disabilities | (xvii) | Hemophilia |
| | | (xviii) | Sickle Cell Disease |
| (xiv) | Multiple Sclerosis | (xix) | Multiple Disabilities including Deaf-Blindness |
| (xv) | Speech and Language Disability | | |
| (xvi) | Thalassemia | (xx) | Acid Attack Victims |
| (xvii) | Hemophilia | (xxi) | Parkinson's Disease |
| (xviii) | Sickle Cell Disease | | |

Further, person with benchmark disability means a person with not less than 40 per cent of a specified disability where specified disability has not been defined in measurable terms and includes a person with disability where specified disability has been defined in measurable terms, as certified by the certifying authority.

## Status of Persons with Disabilities in India

According to an estimate by the World Health Organization (WHO), globally, 15 per cent of the population lives with some form of disability, while over 80 per cent of that share live in Low- and Middle-Income Countries. On the other side, over 2.2 per cent of India's population endures some form of severe mental or physical disability.

In India, as per 2011 Census, approximately 2.68 crore people (2.21 per cent of the total population) are classified as 'Disabled' out of the total population of 121 crore. Among the disabled population, 1.5 crore are males, and 1.18 crore are females. The majority (69 per cent) of disabled individuals reside in rural areas.

## Problems associated with Differently-Abled Persons

The challenges faced by differently-abled individuals have long been a subject of concern and importance in our society. Differently-abled individuals, also known as persons with disabilities, encompass a diverse group of people who experience various impairments, limitations in activities, and restrictions in participation.

These individuals encounter unique obstacles that can hinder their full inclusion and participation in society. From physical barriers to social stigmas, the problems associated with differently-abled persons are multi-faceted and require attention and understanding from all members of society.

### Challenges Faced by Differently Abled Persons

**1. Physical or Architectural Barriers**

❑ Physical or architectural barriers are environmental factors that make it difficult or impossible for people with disabilities to access and use public spaces, buildings, and transportation.

# Alcoholism and Drug Abuse

Alcoholism and drug abuse affects much more than an individual who gets addicted as it puts a huge strain on several aspects of society. The economic effects of drug abuse can be measured in two forms, i.e. cost of government drug enforcement polices and the lost human productivity such as lost wages and decreased production that results from illness and premature deaths related to drug abuse. There are many hidden costs relating to disturbance in social life, wastage of young energy and increased crimes.

Alcoholism and drug abuse is widespread among adolescents, young adults and others. The abused drugs cause a variety of biological and psychological problems to the individual indulged in their use. Alcohol and drug abuse have been found to be associated with social problems like broken families, child abuse and delinquency, ruined career, homicide, suicide, etc.

Some diseases are also known to be associated with alcohol like cancer, heart disease, AIDS, gastrointestinal and neurological disorders. You will appreciate the amount of loss (which is unaccounted) this problem is causing to the nation and the world at large.

The incidence of drug abuse varies from place to place, whereas alcohol abuse is more or less a universal problem. In fact, the problem of drug dependence has reached epidemic proportions in many countries.

## Definitions of Terms associated with Addiction

**Alcoholism**, also known as alcohol use disorder (AUD), is a chronic and progressive medical condition characterized by an individual's inability to control their alcohol consumption despite negative consequences on their physical health, mental well-being, relationships, and overall quality of life. It is a form of substance use disorder specifically related to the excessive and compulsive consumption of alcohol.

**Drug Abuse:** It refers to the harmful or hazardous use of psychoactive substances, including legal and illegal drugs. It involves the misuse of substances in a way that leads to physical, mental, social, or legal problems. Drug abuse goes beyond recreational or occasional use and implies a pattern of behavior characterized by excessive and harmful consumption of substances. This misuse can have detrimental effects on an individual's health, relationships, and overall well-being.

**Drug Dependence:** It is described as "a state, psychic and sometimes also physical, resulting from the interaction between a living organism and a drug; characterized by behavioural and other responses that always include a compulsion to take the drug on a continuous or periodic basis in order to experience its psychic effects and sometimes to avoid the discomfort of its absence."

**Physical Dependence:** It is a situation where the drug abuser's body is so accustomed to a particular drug that he can function normally only when he takes drugs. When drug intake is suspended, the individual experiences a variety of physical withdrawal symptoms ranging from mild discomfort to convulsion depending upon the type of drug.

**Drug Addiction:** It is the use of drugs for a sufficient duration of time and in sufficient dosage that the individual's body develops tolerance and dependence upon the chemical.

## Magnitude of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse

The menace of alcohol and drug addiction is spreading fast among adults, young adults and even children in India. It is estimated that around 37 crore persons consume Alcohol and various psychotropic substances in India. The problem has started affecting the young generation, in particular, to such an extent now that detailed discussion on this matter was also held in Parliament on December, 2022 underlined the need to create public awareness across the country to educate the youth and work with a collective spirit for a drug menace-free India.

As on date, 535 de-addiction centres, i.e., 350 Integrated Rehabilitation Centers for Addicts (IRCAs), 53 Community based Peer led Intervention (CPLIs), 73 Outreach and Drop-in Centers (ODIC), 21 State level Coordinating Agencies (SLCA) and 38 Addiction Treatment Facilities (ATF) are running across the States/UTs in the Country.

## Why Do People Abuse Drugs?

People are different. So, they use or abuse drugs for different reasons. It is difficult to identify the exact reasons of drug abuse. Whatever may be the reason drug abuse is harmful for the individual, family and the society. An

# 25 CHAPTER

# Agrarian Distress in India

Agrarian distress refers to the economic, political, and social challenges faced by farmers and rural communities due to factors such as low crop yields, fluctuating prices of agricultural produce, high input costs, indebtedness, and lack of access to credit, markets, and infrastructure.

In recent times, Indian agriculture has made commendable progress in food grain production. India is self-sufficient in most of the farm products. But, at the height of farm output, farmers are a disappointed lot.

Despite spectacular rise in agricultural production Indian farmers continue to languish in poverty. Distress among farmers has been mounting in the recent past. Farmers' agitation has emerged as an intricate socio-economic and political problem in India with farmers in many states seeking farm-loan waiver as an easy solution. Farm loan waivers announced by several state governments is unlikely to solve the agrarian distress, caused by increasing costs and lower incomes.

Further, farmers in India have to contend with a skewed monsoon and unreliable rainfall, harsh natural catastrophes, disrupted supply lines, and rising inflation on a regular basis. These issues were worsened by the COVID-induced lockdowns. Due to the lockdown, there was major disruption of supply chains. Farmers were stranded with a big amount of produce, particularly perishables like milk, fruits and vegetables, flowers, and even chicken meat and eggs. Farm prices are also dropping as a result of the surplus, putting farmers out of business.

## Agrarian Distress Survey

There have been various surveys and reports in the past that provide insights into the state of agriculture and farmers' livelihoods in India.

**Here are a few key findings from some of these surveys and reports:**

❑ The **National Sample Survey Office (NSSO)** conducted a survey in 2012-13 that found that over half of rural households in India were engaged in agriculture, but only a small proportion of these households derived a major part of their income from farming.

❑ The **Situation Assessment Survey of Agricultural Households** conducted by the NSSO in 2013 found that around 52% of agricultural households were indebted, with an average debt of around Rs. 47,000.

❑ The **National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)** conducted a survey in 2018-19 that found that agricultural credit flows had increased by around 10% in the previous year, but many small and marginal farmers were still not able to access credit.

❑ The **Economic Survey 2020-21** found that the COVID-19 pandemic had impacted agriculture and allied sectors in India, with a decline in production of certain crops and disruptions to supply chains.

These surveys and reports provide some insights into the challenges faced by farmers in India and the state of agriculture in the country.

## Underlying Reasons for Agrarian Distress in India

The underlying reasons for agrarian distress in India are many ranging from unviable agriculture caused by the low productivity, unfavourable term of trade for agriculture, higher incidence of indebtedness among the farmers leading to unfortunate incidences of suicides, etc.

**Unviable Agriculture**

❑ According to 59th round of National Sample Survey (NSS 2003), about 40 per cent of farmers wanted to abandon agriculture mainly because it has become a highly unviable occupation.

❑ A recent repeat survey (NSS 70th round 2014) reveals worsening of the situation. In case of about two third farmers, consumption expenditure was higher than the net income received by these households. This suggests that large number of farmers have been managing their farming activities by borrowing. This has also adversely affected capital formation in agriculture.

❑ Rising cost of cultivation, particularly labour cost and cost of inputs like fertilisers are main reasons for the non-viability of cultivation.

**Ineffective Minimum Support Prices System**

❑ Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for several farm products were hiked significantly for last few years. As a result, the terms of trade tilted in favour of agriculture vis-a-vis industry.

# 26 CHAPTER

# Rural Development in India

Rural development implies both the economic betterment of people as well as greater social transformation. The government has taken a number of initiatives for the betterment of rural people in areas like administration (Panchayati Raj Institutions), employment opportunities (MGNREGA), drinking water, sanitation, road construction, health, education, etc.

India is a predominantly rural country with about two-thirds of the population living in rural areas. Rural development in India is therefore of utmost importance as it plays a crucial role in the overall development of the country. The Government of India has launched several schemes and programmes over the years to improve the standard of living of rural people and to address the challenges faced by them.

❑ Rural development in India is focused on improving the economic, social and cultural aspects of rural life. The key areas of focus include agriculture, rural infrastructure, healthcare, education, and employment generation.

❑ The government has launched several initiatives such as the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, National Rural Livelihood Mission, and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan to achieve these goals.

❑ Agriculture is the backbone of the rural economy in India, and the government has taken several steps to improve the productivity of agriculture and provide support to farmers. This includes initiatives such as the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, National Food Security Mission, and Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana.

❑ Improving rural infrastructure is also a key area of focus, as it is critical to improve the standard of living in rural areas. The government has launched several initiatives to improve access to electricity, water supply, and sanitation facilities in rural areas. The Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana aims to provide connectivity to unconnected habitations, while the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan aims to make rural areas open defecation free.

❑ Healthcare and education are also critical areas of focus in rural development. The government has launched several initiatives such as the National Rural Health Mission and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan to improve access to healthcare and education in rural areas. Employment generation is also a priority area, and the government has launched the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme to provide employment opportunities to rural people.

❑ Overall, rural development in India is a continuous process, and the government is committed to improving the standard of living of rural people and addressing the challenges faced by them.

## Concept of Rural Development

Etymologically, genesis and evolution of the concept of Rural Development can be linked with two words: 'Rural' and 'Development'. Before delving over the concept of Rural Development, let us consider the constituent words individually i.e.

● Rural, and
● Development.

**Rural**

❑ It is an area, where the people are engaged in primary industry. They produce things directly for the first time in cooperation with nature. Rural areas are sparsely settled places away from the influence of large cities and towns. Such areas are distinct from more intensively settled urban and suburban areas, and also from unsettled lands such as outback or wilderness.

❑ People live in village, on farms and in other isolated houses. Rural areas can have an agricultural character, though many rural areas are characterized by an economy based on logging, mining, oil and gas exploration, or tourism also.

❑ Lifestyles in rural areas are different than those in urban areas, mainly because limited services are available. Governmental services like law enforcement, schools, fire departments, and libraries may be distant, limited in scope, or unavailable.

❑ Utilities like water, sewer, street lighting, and garbage collection may not be present. Public transport is sometimes absent or very limited; people use their own vehicles, walk or ride an animal.

❑ A society or community can be classified as rural based on the criteria of lower population density, less social differentiation, less social and spatial mobility,

# Regional Imbalance

Development is a multi-dimensional process that involves reorganization and reorientation of the entire economic and social system of a region. Region can be a country, state or sub-regions within a State. But if any skewness is crept into this development process, it leads to unbalanced development of the region, which is largely reflected in the form of uneven development pattern, also termed as regional imbalance.

Regional Imbalance is a circumstance in which economically advanced and underdeveloped areas or regions co-exist in the corresponding region. It is manifested in the form of disparity in economic and social development of two regions i.e. one region/city/area has favourable developmental indicators than another region/city/area.

❑ For example, wide spread differences in per capita income, literacy rates, health and education services, levels of industrialization and other developmental parameters across different regions.

❑ Balanced regional development has always been an essential component of the Indian development strategy. Since all parts of the country are not equally well endowed with physical and human resources to take advantage of growth opportunities, and since historical inequalities have not been eliminated, planned intervention is required to ensure that large regional imbalances do not occur.

❑ This commitment was reflected in the Constitution and in planning objectives adopted thereafter.

❑ In promoting regional balanced development, public sector enterprises were located in backward areas of the country during the early phase of economic planning. In spite of pro-backward areas policies and programmes, considerable economic and social inequalities exist among different States of India, as reflected in differences in per capita State Domestic Product. While income growth performance has diverged, there is welcome evidence of some convergence in education and health indicators across the states.

❑ Therefore, due to planning and regional development initiatives, some regions of India have achieved spectacular growth after independence.

❑ But in contrast, there are regions of low level of development still prevailing in many parts of India. This issue is further compounded by the prevalence of isolated pockets of poverty within a rich and prosperous region.

❑ Therefore, it is felt that the State had a major role to play in removing disparities.

## Concept of Regional Imbalance

There are sharp differences in the theoretical opinions on the issue of development disparity or regional imbalance and it has been debated extensively by the scholars in terms of theory as well as empirical investigations.

**The Neo-Classical Theory of Convergence**

❑ The neo-classical school is a believer in market forces and flexible prices.

❑ Its perspective on regional developmental disparities is drawn from Solow's growth model.

❑ One implication on Solow's growth model is that the countries with different levels of per capita income over time tend to converge to one level of per capita income.

❑ But, lack of unanimity of empirical support for the convergence hypothesis leads to emergence of several other theories.

**Circular Cumulative Causation Theory of Gunnar Myrdal**

❑ Gunnar Myrdal argues that due to industrialization and gain in productivity, rich regions benefit more.

❑ He does not deny that growth spreads to poor regions through access to larger markets and trade opportunities. However, he insists that gains are offset by stronger backwash effects generated by deteriorating terms of trade resulting from high productivity gains in industrialization in rich regions.

❑ Therefore, the theory predicts divergence in regional incomes. Myrdal's and Krugman's analysis also resonates with Hirschman's theory of unbalanced growth.

**Theory of Unbalanced Growth by Hirschman**

❑ Unbalanced growth is a natural path of economic development.

# Demography of India

With a population of over 1.42 billion people, India is the second-most populous country in the world. The country's demographic profile is characterized by a large youth population, with nearly half of its population under the age of 25.

India is experiencing significant demographic changes, with declining fertility rates, increasing life expectancy, and rapid urbanization. These demographic changes have significant implications for India's development, including its economy, healthcare system, social welfare, and public policy.

Understanding the demographic status of India is crucial for policymakers and researchers to design and implement effective development strategies that cater to the diverse needs of the population. This chapter will give an overview of India's demographic status, its key trends, and their implications for the country's development.

## Census: Basic Concepts and Definitions

❑ **Census**: Population census is the total process of collecting, compiling, analyzing or otherwise disseminating demographic, economic and social data pertaining, at a specific time, to all persons in a country or a well-defined part of a country. As such, the Census provides a snapshot of the country's population and housing at a given point of time.

❑ **Family or Household:** A 'household' is usually a group of persons who normally live together and take their meals from a common kitchen unless the exigencies of work prevent any of them from doing so. Persons in a household may be related or unrelated or a mix of both. However, if a group of unrelated persons live in a census house but do not take their meals from the common kitchen, then they are not constituent of a common household. Each such person should be treated as a separate household.

❑ **Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes Households**: A normal household has been presumed to be a Scheduled Caste Household when head of the household belongs to a Scheduled Caste or a Scheduled Tribe household when head of the household belongs to a Scheduled Tribe.

❑ **Houseless Households**: Households who do not live in buildings or census houses but live in the open on roadside, pavements, in Hume pipes, under flyovers and staircases, or in the open in places of worship, mandaps, railway platforms, etc. are treated as Houseless Households.

## Census Process

**Classification of Area:** For Census purposes, total geographical area is broadly classified into Rural and Urban.

❑ **Urban**: Constituents of urban area are Statutory Towns, Census Towns and Outgrowths.

❑ **Statutory Town (ST):** All places with a municipality, corporation, cantonment board or notified town area committee etc.

❑ **Census Town (CT):** Places that satisfy the following criteria are termed as Census Towns (CTs): (a) A minimum population of 5000 (b) At least 75% of the male main working population engaged in non-agricultural pursuits (c) A density of population of at least 400 per sq.km.

❑ **Out Growth (OG):** Out Growth should be a viable unit such as a village or part of a village contiguous to a statutory town and possess the urban features in terms of infrastructure and amenities such as pucca roads, electricity, taps, drainage system, education institutions, post offices, medical facilities, banks, etc. Examples of OGs are Railway colonies, University campuses, Port areas, that may come up near a city or statutory towns outside its statutory limits but within the revenue limit of a village or villages contiguous to the town or city.

❑ **Urban Agglomeration (UA)**: It is a continuous urban spread constituting a town and its adjoining urban outgrowths (OGs) or two or more physically contiguous towns together and any adjoining urban out- growths of such towns.

❑ **Rural:** All area other than urban are rural areas. The basic unit for rural areas is the revenue village.

❑ **Religion:** The question on 'Religion' was asked from each individual since the beginning of the Census-1872.