

## **HUMAN GEOGRAPHY (SUBJECT CODE: 18BGE6EL)**

**UNIT – I: Human Geography: Nature and scope - Man and Environment relationship - Growth, distribution and Problems of world population.**

### **Human Geography**

Human geography is defined as —the relationship between the physical/ natural and the human worlds, the spatial distribution of human phenomenon and how they come about, the social and economic difference between different parts of the world. According to Ratzel —Human geography is the synthetic study of relationship between human societies and earth’s surface. According to Ellen C. Semple —Human geography is the study of the changing relationships between the unresting man and unstable earth. According to Paul Vidal de la Blache —Conception resulting from a more synthetic knowledge of the physical laws governing our earth and of the relations between the living beings which inhabit it

### **NATURE OF HUMAN GEOGRAPHY**

Human Geography is the study of the interrelationships between people, place, and environment, and how these vary spatially and temporally across and between locations. Whereas physical geography concentrates on spatial and environmental processes that shape the natural world and tends to draw on the natural and physical sciences for its scientific underpinnings and methods of investigation, human geography concentrates on the spatial organization and processes shaping the lives and activities of people, and their interactions with places and nature. Human geography is more allied with the social sciences and humanities, sharing their philosophical approaches and methods. Human geography consists of a number of sub-disciplinary fields that focus on different elements of human activity and organization, for example, cultural geography, economic geography, health geography, historical geography, political geography, population geography, rural geography, social geography, transport geography, and urban geography. What distinguishes human geography from other related disciplines, such as development, economics, politics, and sociology, are the application of a set of core geographical concepts to the phenomena under investigation, including space, place, scale, landscape, mobility, and nature. These concepts foreground the notion that the world operates spatially and temporally, and that social relations do not operate independently of place and environment, but are thoroughly grounded in and through them. With respect to methods, human geography uses the full sweep of quantitative and

qualitative methods from across the social sciences and humanities, mindful of using them to provide a thorough geographic analysis. It also places emphasis on fieldwork and mapping, and has made a number of contributions to developing new methods and techniques, notably in the areas of spatial analysis, spatial statistics, and GIS Science. The long-term development of human geography has progressed in tandem with that of the discipline more generally. Since the Quantitative Revolution in the 1950s and 1960s, the philosophy underpinning human geography research has diversified enormously.

The 1970s saw the introduction of behavioural geography, radical geography, and humanistic geography. These were followed in the 1980s by a turn to political economy, the development of feminist geography, and the introduction of critical social theory underpinning the cultural turn. Together these approaches formed the basis for the growth of critical geography, and the introduction of postmodern and post-structural thinking into the discipline in the 1990s. These various developments did not fully replace the theoretical approaches developed in earlier periods, but rather led to further diversification of geographic thought. For example, quantitative geography continues to be a vibrant area of geographical scholarship, especially through the growth of GIS Science. The result is that geographical thinking is presently highly pluralist in nature, with no one approach dominating.

## **SCOPE OF HUMAN GEOGRAPHY**

Geography as a field of study is integrative, empirical, and practical. Thus, the reach of geography is extensive and each and every phenomenon that varies over space and time can be studied geographically. Human geography is defined as —the relationship between the physical/ natural and the human worlds, the spatial distribution of human phenomenon and how they come about, the social and economic difference between different parts of the world.¶ The core concern of geography as a discipline is to understand the earth as home of human beings and to study all those elements that have sustained them. Human geography covers a very wide range of fields. It not only studies presence of human phenomenon but also relationship of human and physical world, the pattern and distribution of human processes including both social and economic. It makes study of geography more relevant as it tries to relate the physical and man-made world with full causal understanding hence making it more applicable to our daily lives. It not only helps us to understand various problems, their causes and effects, but also helps us in finding a suitable solution for them. In the present scenario with increasing discord between human beings and nature resulting in

environmental destruction, human geography becomes all the more relevant as it explains the relationship between human and nature and thus assumes highly important role in helping to bring back the environmental symphony and hence saving our planet. Each of the physical, biological and social sciences has its own philosophy, methodology and scope. For example, economics deals primarily with the production, movement and consumption of goods and services; geology is concerned with the composition and interior of the earth's crust; demography pertains to the characteristics of human population; and zoology and botany examine the animals and plants kingdoms respectively.

Similarly, geography examines numerous tangible and intangible natural and man-made phenomena. Human geography, the major thrust is on the study of human societies in their relation to the habitat or environment. Dealing with the spatial distribution of societies, human geography covers a very wide field or its scope is enormous. It embraces the study of human races; the growth, distribution and density of populations of the various parts of the world, their demographic attributes and migration patterns; and physical and cultural differences between human groups and economic activities. It also covers the relationship between man and his natural environment, and the way in which his activities are distributed.

Human geography also takes into account the mosaic of culture, language, religion, customs and traditions; types and patterns of rural settlements, the site, size, growth and functions of urban settlements, and the functional classification of towns. The study of spatial distribution of economic activities, industries, trade, and modes of transportations and communications as influenced by the physical environment are also the important topics of human geography. In brief, in human geography, we study the influence of physical environment on the economic activity, society, culture and religion of the people of a region. The impact of man on environment is also a topic of growing importance in human geography. The adjustment of man to his physical environment in typical geographical regions like equatorial, hot deserts and tundra is of great relevance to human geography as it helps in understanding the symbiotic relationship between social groups and their natural environment. Human geography deals with the world as it is and with the world as it might be made to be. Its emphasis is on people: where they are, what they are like, how they interact over space and time, and what kinds of landscapes of human use they erect upon the natural landscapes they occupy.

## **MAN ENVIRONMENT RELATIONSHIP**

Man-environment relationships refer to the interactions and feedbacks between the human and the natural components and, consequently, to the linkages between the social and the geophysical systems. The field of man-environment relationship operates with a series of concept and notions. They refer to the causes of environmental change, feedbacks and consequences for the communities, answers of the decision makers etc. There are various philosophies put forwarded by various schools of thoughts to study the man environment relationship in a better and easy way which are as follows: DETERMINISM: In the history of geographical concepts, there have been various approaches and schools of thought to study man-environment relationship. The first approach adopted by the geographers to generalize the patterns of human occupations of the earth surface was deterministic. The philosophy of determinism opines that the decisions and actions taken by man are just effects and governed by casual laws. According to this philosophy it is believed that all the human actions are the result of antecedent factors or causes. Determinists therefore believe that all the events, including human actions are predetermined and this philosophy of man environment relationship is often considered incompatible with free will but there some who believes that it is compatible or even necessary for free will to be able to exist. Philosophy of Determinism is based upon the interaction between primitive human society and strong forces of nature. Determinism is one of the most important philosophies which persisted up to the Second World War in one shape or the other. It says that the strong forces of environment control the course of human action. This implies that the history, culture, mode of life, and the level of development of the societal groups and countries are exclusively or largely controlled by the physical environment.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINISM**

The simple definition of environmental determinism is that the natural environment is responsible for all human actions. The point of view is that the physical environment controls the course of human action. In other words, the belief that variation in human behaviour around the world can be explained by the differences in the natural environment is the crux of this man-environment relationship philosophy. The deterministic school of thought is of the opinion that the history, culture, living style and the stages of development of a social group or nation are largely governed and controlled by physical factors of the environment. This philosophy says that aspects of physical geography, particularly climate, influenced the psychological mind-set of individuals, which in turn defined the behaviour and culture of the society that those individuals formed. For example, tropical climates were said to cause

laziness, relaxed attitudes and promiscuity, while the frequent variability in the weather of the middle latitudes led to more determined and driven work ethics.

This philosophy supports the idea that the highest achievement of civilizations like Egyptians, Mesopotamians, Indus valley, disappeared because of the climatic change. It is also believed that the attack of central Asian nomads on other civilization is because of change in climate because it was climate change which resulted into the drying up of their pastures which forced them move in different direction during 13th century. The first attempt made to explain the influence of environmental condition on the people and their culture was made by Greek and Roman Scholar. In the opinion of Aristotle, the people of cold countries are courageous but they lack political organisation thus they are unable to rule their neighbours. Similarly, the people of Asia lacks courage thus they are under slavery. On the other hand, people of Greece who occupy the middle position are gifted with finest qualities thus they are in a position to rule the world. Similarly, Strabo—the Roman geographer—attempted to explain how slope, relief, climate all were the works of God, and how these phenomena govern the life-styles of people.

Geographical determinism continued to dominate the writings of the Arab geographers. Al-Masudi said that the land having abundant of water people are humorous and the people of dry land are short tempered. The nomads who live in the open air are having strength, physical fitness and wisdom and those who live in closed areas of the cities are not. He further said that people of northern quarter those who are living away from sun at cold places are characterised by good physique, rude behaviour, thick flesh, thin skin, blue eyes, curly and red hairs. All these qualities develop in them because predominance of moisture in their land and their cold nature discourages religious belief. Ibn-Khaldun said that as we move away from the equator up to 64th parallel the population density increases and after 64th parallel population density again decreases. This is because at equator the population density is low because of high temperature and humidity but in temperate region the temperature is neither very high nor very low thus population density is high. After 64th parallel population density starts to decrease because of extreme cold climatic condition. The environmental causation continued throughout the 19th century when geographers themselves used to regard geography above all as natural science.

Carl Ritter—the leading German geographer— adopted an anthropocentric approach and introduced geographical determinism in the early 19th century. Ritter attempted to establish

the cause variations in the physical constitution of body, physique and health of men living in different physical environmental conditions. Alexander von Humboldt, one of the founders of modern geography and a contemporary of Ritter also asserted that the mode of life of the inhabitants of a mountainous country differs from that of the people of the plains. While dealing with man nature interaction he included man and his work but he did not give much importance to man as a major determinant.

The founder of the new determinism was Friedrich Ratzel. He supplemented classical geographical determinism with elements of Social Darwinism and developed a theory of the state as an organism which owed its life to the earth and which was ever striving to seize more and more territory. In the opinion of Ratzel, —similar locations lead to similar mode of life.

He cited the example of British Isles and Japan and asserted that both these countries have insular locations, which provide natural defence against the invaders. Consequently, the people of these countries have been making rapid progress. Miss Semple defined human geography as the study of changing relationship between the unresting man and unstable earth. She is also of the opinion that man is a product of earth's surface and nature has entered into his bones and tissues and into his mind and souls. She also gave enough importance to the concept of environmentalism or determinism which increased the credibility of human geography. Elseworth Huntington, an American geographer (writer of The Principles of Human Geography in 1945), was a protagonist of environmental determinism. Huntington's writings on climate and civilization displayed his predilection for racial typecasting and environmentalist explanations. The basic philosophy of Huntington was that the supreme achievements of civilization in any region were always bound up with a particular type of climate and variation in climate led to pulsations in the history of culture. Subsequent geographers like Mackinder, Chisholm, Davies, Bowman, Robert Mill, Geddes, Sauer, Herbertson, Taylor, etc., interpreted the progress of societies with a deterministic approach.

## **POSSIBILISM**

The theory of Possibilism was born in the beginning of 20th century. The concept of determinism which was conservative cannot be accepted by a society which is civilised and advanced. The reason behind this is that man with the help of technological development has modified the nature for example he has created canals for making the water available in the

extreme desert areas for making it suitable for living. The concept of possibilism says that nature provide a number of opportunities and possibilities from among which man is free to select or choose. The philosophy states that man with the help of his mind and will changes the influence of nature on him. The philosophy of possibilism attempts to explain the man and environment relationship in different way taking man as an active agent. The philosophy further states that nature provides opportunities and the number of opportunities increases as the knowledge and technology of a cultural group increases. The hypothesis of possibilism was put forwarded by Lucian Febvre who is of the opinion that man is the most powerful agent who modifies the terrestrial surface of the earth. Lucian said that ‘there are no necessities but everywhere possibilities’ for example man invented iron and it was up to him that how he makes the use of that iron.

It was up to him whether he uses the iron for making hammer or a bicycle, a car, a ship or a plane it depends on his technological development. So the example proves that there are possibilities everywhere but there are no necessities. Prior to the invention of iron though there was no necessity for a plane ship or a car but possibilities were still there. Vidal de Lablache further advocated and preached the philosophy of possibilism. In his work he has minimised the influence of environment on man. He tries to explain the differences between groups living in the same environmental condition. He said that the differences are not because of the natural environmental condition but due to the variation in the attitude values and habits of man. The possibility school of thought tries to explain the differences in human society on the basis of man himself bringing the changes and influencing the environment and it is not only the nature solely responsible for bringing the changes or differences in human society.

After Vidal de Lablache it was Jean Brunhes who became strong supporter of possibilism in France. Sauer, another supporter of possibilism said that it is the work of a geographer that he should investigate and understand that how a natural landscape transforms into a cultural landscape. From such work the geographer will be able to identify the major changes in that particular area that has resulted because of succession of human groups. For example, wheat does not have high yield where it was first domesticated (south-west Asia) but in America, Europe and some of the Asian countries. Thus after the Second World War the philosophy of environmentalism was attacked. Many geographers in Britain, Canada and USA said that explanation of phenomena only on the basis of nature and its forces is incomplete and unsatisfactory until and unless man is included into it. Population distribution means the

pattern of where people live. World population distribution is uneven. Places which are sparsely populated contain few people. Places which are densely populated contain many people. Sparsely populated places tend to be difficult places to live. Population Distribution Population distribution means the pattern of where people live. World population distribution is uneven. Places which are sparsely populated contain few people. Places which are densely populated contain many people. Sparsely populated places tend to be difficult places to live.

These are usually places with hostile environments e.g. Antarctica. Places which are densely populated are habitable environments e.g. Europe. India's population is 17.5 per cent of the world's population which is randomly distributed over 3.8 million square km of our country, India, which is actually 2.4 per cent of the world's area. Population of India, as per the Census 2011, is 1,210,193,422 compared to a total of 1,028,737,436 in 2001-11. Population distribution, growth, and structure Population refers to the total number of persons inhabiting in a country or region. India is the second most populous country of the world. The country covers only 2.4 per cent geographical area of the world, whereas it is home of the more than 17 per cent of the world's population. The country's 68 per cent populations live in rural area while the rest populations reside in urban areas. The studies concerning population distribution, growth and structure has a huge significance for less developed countries like India, because in their case the force of demographic transition have a direct bearing on the direction and pace of the process of development. In this section, we will discuss about the growth, distribution and structure of population of India. Population Growth in India The increase in the number of people living in a country or region during a specified time period is known as population growth. Population growth is the change in population over time and can be quantified as the change in number of individuals in a population per unit time. The term population growth can technically refer to any species, but almost always refer to humans.

The growth of population may be expressed in terms of absolute number and percentage increase per year. The population growth of India can be studied under the following four phases. (1) Phase of stagnant or slow population Growth (1901-21): During this period, population increased by 1.29 crore only. If we break this period in accordance with the two censuses, we find that during 1901-11, the decadal growth rate was only 5.75 per cent, as the natural growth rate of population was low. But in the next decade (1910-21), the growth rate of population declined to -0.3 per cent. This was due to high death rate (47.2) on account of



famines and epidemics like plague, cholera and malaria which took a heavy toll of human lives. The year 1921 is, therefore, known as the year of Great Divide. (2) Phase of steady population growth (1921-51): From 1921 onwards till 1951 there was a steady growth of population. During these years, population increased by 2.8 crore in 1931, to 4 crore in 1941 and to 5 crore in 1951. But the decadal growth rate in 1951 census was 0.9 percentages less than in the 1941 census due to the Partition of India in 1947. The main reason for the steady increase in population was the decline in death rate from 36.3 to 27.4 and of birth rate from 46.4 to 39.9 over the period. This resulted in an average natural growth rate of 12.2 during this phase of 30 years. 2 (3)

Phase of Rapid Population Growth or of Population Explosion (1951-81): This was the period of rapid population growth when population increased by 32.5 crore as against about 12 crore during the last 50 years from 1901 to 1951. The average annual growth rate of population increased from 1.25 per cent to 2.2 per cent in 1981. The main reason was a large decline in the death rate from 22.8 to 15 due to better medical facilities while the birth rate fell slowly from 41.7 to 37.2 over the period. This led to population explosion in the country.

(4) Phase of High Growth with Declining Trend (1981- 2011): During this phase, a definite declining trend of population growth is visible. Total population increased by 34.37 crore during 20 years. But the average annual growth rate had definitely declined to 1.93 per cent in 2001 as against 2.2 per cent in 1981. However, the trend of population explosion still persists even now. The declining trend in the annual growth rate is positive indicator, to the effect of various population control measures taken in our country. However, there is consistent growth in the population also. It is estimated that, India may overtake china in 2045. United Nations has estimated that the world population grew at an annual rate of 1.23 percent during 2000-2010. China registered a much lower annual growth rate of population (0.53 percent) during 2000-2010, as compared to India (1.64 percent during 2001-2011).

Census Year	Total Population (in million)	Decadal Growth
1901	238.40	-
1911	252.09	+5.75
1921	251.32	- 0.31
1931	278.98	+11.00
1941	318.66	+14.22
1951	361.09	+13.31
1961	439.23	+21.51
1971	548.16	+24.80
1981	683.33	+24.66
1991	846.42	+23.87
2001	1028.74	+21.54
2011	1210.85	17.70

Source: Census of India, 2011

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annual growth rate of population (0.53 3 percent) during 2000-2010, as compared to India (1.64 percent during 2001- 2011). In some States and Union Territories a reverse trend in population growth has been found in this respect. Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Kerala and Tamil Nadu are urban life style etc. 4 Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Kerala and Tamil Nadu are the States where the most significant drops in the net addition are found, while in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan the net addition of 1.6 crores to population has been found during 1991-2001 in comparison with the previous decade 1981 -1991.

Along with Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan, their contribution to the population growth during 1981-91 was about 36 per cent while it was 42 per cent during 1991- 2001. In the census of 2011, the death rate was 7.43 per cent 1000. The fall in birth has been correlated to the high living standard, expansion of education, urban life Population Density (i) Areas of High Density: The areas having a density of population of more than 400 persons per square kilometre are included in this category. Areas having fertile soil and those having good employment opportunities are densely populated. These areas have a high density due to fertile land and high amount of precipitation e.g. Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana, Kerala, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu, deltaic regions etc. In these regions, a larger number of people can be provided sustenance per unit of area due to availability of fertile land which can produce more food for a large number of people. But the situation is entirely different in the case of Union Territories like Delhi, Chandigarh and Pondicherry. These regions are highly urbanised and offer job opportunities in industrial and service sectors. (ii) Areas of Moderate Density: States and Union Territories in which the density of population ranges between 200 and 400 persons per square kilometre are called areas of moderate density of population. They are Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Odisha, Rajasthan, Assam, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Goa, and Tripura. Moderate density of population is characterized by the areas in which the agriculture is handicapped by rugged topography, lower amount of precipitation and paucity of water for irrigation.

The scope for developing primary and secondary activities is quite large if the facilities are provided in this area. For example, at the time of independence Chhotanagpur region was a sparsely populated area but development in the field of mining and industries in this part of the country has been mainly responsible for moderate density of population in this region.

(iii) Areas of Low Density: All the remaining parts of India having a density of population less than 200 persons per square kilometre may be classified under this category. The States and Union Territories falling under this category include Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram,

Sikkim and Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Low density population areas are characterised by rough terrain, low rainfall or unhealthy climate. Agriculture cannot be developed in too dry or cold areas. Difficulties exist not only in transport and communication in the 5 hilly and mountainous areas but also in the overall levels of economic development. That is why the density of population in all these areas is low. States Population Density (Census 2011) Bihar 1,102.40 West Bengal 1,029.20 Kerala 859.1 Uttar Pradesh 689 Haryana 573.4 Tamil Nadu 554.7 Punjab 550.1 Jharkhand 441.5 Assam 396.8 Goa 393.8

## **Population Composition**

### **Age Composition:**

Age composition refers to the number of people that are included in different age groups. Three basic determinants of age composition are: (i) natality, (ii) mortality, and (iii) mobility. These are interdependent, and any change in one may influence the other two. It is through these variables that the socioeconomic conditions influence the age structure. It is the fertility rate that determines the proportion of population in different age categories. That is why; most of the countries in Asia (excluding Japan, Singapore, Hong Kong and South Korea), Latin America and Africa have high fertility. Since the longevity and life expectancy in these countries is short, the proportion of population in the old age group is also not very large. The population of a nation is generally divided into three broad categories. They are: Children (below 15 years): This group is considered as unproductive and uneconomic as they have to be provided with food, clothing and medical care. They do not contribute towards the economy of the nation. The proportion of population in this age group in any country is determined by the stage of demographic transition it is passing through. This proportion is large if the country is passing through the first or the second stage of demographic transition. It starts declining as the country approaches the late stage. It is the minimum when the country is in the final stage of demographic transition. Working Age (15-59 years): This age group is economically productive as they are the working population of the country and contribute towards the economic growth of the country. The adult age group is biologically the most reproductive, economically the most productive and demographically the most mobile (migratory). It supports the bulk of other age groups; it carries the burden of feeding, clothing, educating the young age group and of looking after the old age group. The developed countries have relatively high proportion of adult population. Aged (above 59 years):

This age group is a retired workforce. However, they may be economically productive if they work voluntarily. The proportion of people in this age group, by and large, increases as the population of a country completes its demographic evolution. Children and aged affect the dependency ratio as they are not economically productive. The age composition of the Indian population is as follows: Children constitute 34.4% of the total population Adults constitute 58.7% of the total population, and Aged people constitute 6.9% of the total population The number and percentage of a population found within the children, working age and aged groups are notable determinants of the population's social and economic structure. From the above statistics, it is clear that the adults constitute more than half of the population of India. This age group is economically productive and thus contributes towards the economic growth of the country. According to other statistics, Adolescent population( between 10-19 years) constitute one fifth of the total population which means that in coming years, India will benefit from a young work force compared to other countries like China and Japan which in coming years will have an ageing population.

Sex Composition (Sex Ratio): Sex ratio is defined as the number of females per 1000 males in the population. This information is an important social indicator to measure the extent of equality between males and females in a society at a given time. The sex ratio in the country has always remained unfavourable to females

Population Explosion: • Hot Climate • Universality of Marriage • Child Marriage • Social Customs and Religious Superstitions • Joint Family System • Rise in Natural Fertility Rate • Low Level of Education • Lack of Entertainment Facilities • Low Level of Family Planning Practice

Causes of Decline in Death Rate in India There has been a rapid decline in death rate in India since 1921. It has almost approached the rate which obtains in the developed world. The world average death rate in 1999 was 9 per thousand. During the period 1911-20, the death rate was 48.1 per thousand whereas in 1991-2001 it was 8 per thousand. The major causes of declining death rate of India is mainly due to medical facilities, high standard of living, delay of marriage, high rate of literacy and awareness. Factors affecting the distribution of Population Uneven population distribution are characterized by massive difference in the density of population across various geographical locations. There is extremely high density of population at some places such as Delhi, Mumbai, etc. whereas; the state of Arunachal Pradesh has very low population density. Hence, there is uneven distribution of population in India. 9 The list of factors responsible for the uneven distribution of Population are given below –

Physical Factors

- Relief
- Climate
- River System
- Geographical Location
- Soil
- Mineral
- Vegetation Economic Factors
- Agriculture
- Industries
- Transport & Communication Minor Factor
- Government policies
- Historical factors
- Religion factors
- Political factor