



## PM-EAC Report on Share of Religious Minorities

**For Prelims:** [Demographic Dividend](#), [Total Fertility Rate \(TFR\)](#), [National Family Health Surveys](#), Census 2011, Demographic Transition Theory.

**For Mains:** Demographic Transition In India, Significance of India's Demographic Dividend, Challenges Associated with India's Demographic Dividend.

**Source:** [IE](#)

### Why in News?

According to a new analysis by the [Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister \(PM-EAC\)](#), the percentage of Hindus in India has decreased by 7.82% between 1950 and 2015, while the percentages of Muslims, Christians, and Sikhs have increased.

### What are the Key Findings of this PM-EAC Report?

#### ▪ Declining Majority Population across the World:

- From 1950 to 2015, as per the data collected on the religious demographics of **38 OECD countries**, 30 of these countries experienced a **significant decrease in the proportion of Roman Catholics**, the predominant religious group.
  - In 167 surveyed countries, the average reduction of majority populations globally during the period 1950-2015 was **22%**.
  - The decline of the majority religious population was steeper in OECD countries, with an average decline of 29%.
  - **In Africa, animism or native religion** was the dominant religion in 24 countries in 1950.
    - By 2015, they are no longer a majority in any of these 24 countries in Africa.
  - In the **South Asian** region, the **majority religious group** is **increasing** while minority populations have significantly **declined** in countries such as Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, and Afghanistan.

#### ▪ Findings for India:

- **Decline in Share of Hindu Population:** The population of Hindus has declined by 7.82%. As per [2011 census](#), Hindu population in India as of 2011 is approximately 79.8%.
- **Rising Share of Minority Population:** The share of Muslim population rose from 9.84% to 14.095% and Christian population rose from 2.24% to 2.36%.
  - Sikh population increased from 1.24% to 1.85% and the share of the Buddhist population rose from 0.05% to 0.81%.
  - The Jain and Parsi community populations decreased. The share of Jains dropped from 0.45% to 0.36%, and the share of the Parsi population decreased by 85% from 0.03% to 0.0004%.
- **Healthy Population Growth Rate:** As per the data from [National Family Health Survey](#), India's [Total Fertility Rate \(TFR\)](#) is currently around 2, which is close to the preferred TFR of 2.19. TFR is a reliable indicator for projecting population growth.

- For Hindus, it declined from 3.3 in 1991 to 2.1 in 2015, and further to 1.9 in 2024.
- In Muslims, it declined from 4.4 in 1991 to 2.6 in 2015, and further to 2.4 in 2024.
- **Equality for Minorities:** In India, minorities experience equal benefits and live a comfortable life, while global demographic shifts remain a cause for concern.

## What are Demographic Patterns and its Relevance?

- **Demographic patterns**
  - It refers to the **systematic variations and trends observed in human populations.**
  - These patterns **emerge from the study of population dynamics**, including factors such as birth rates, death rates, migration, and population composition.
- **Relevance:**
  - **Understanding Population Trends:**
    - Demographic data is used to identify patterns over time. By studying birth and death rates, they **can predict population growth or decline.**
    - It is crucial for **planning infrastructure, healthcare, education, and social services.**
  - **Analysing Causes and Consequences:**
    - It investigates the **causes behind population changes.** Factors like economic development, education, healthcare, and cultural norms influence birth and death rates.
    - **Consequences include workforce dynamics**, dependency ratios (proportion of non-working age groups), and implications for social security systems.
  - **Policy Formulation and Implementation:**
    - **Healthcare:** Understanding age-specific health needs helps allocate resources effectively.
    - **Education:** Demographics guide educational planning, such as school infrastructure and teacher recruitment.
    - **Urban Planning:** Population distribution affects city infrastructure, housing, and transportation.
    - **Ageing Population:** Policies address the needs of elderly citizens, including pensions and healthcare.

## What are the Basic Population Control Theories?

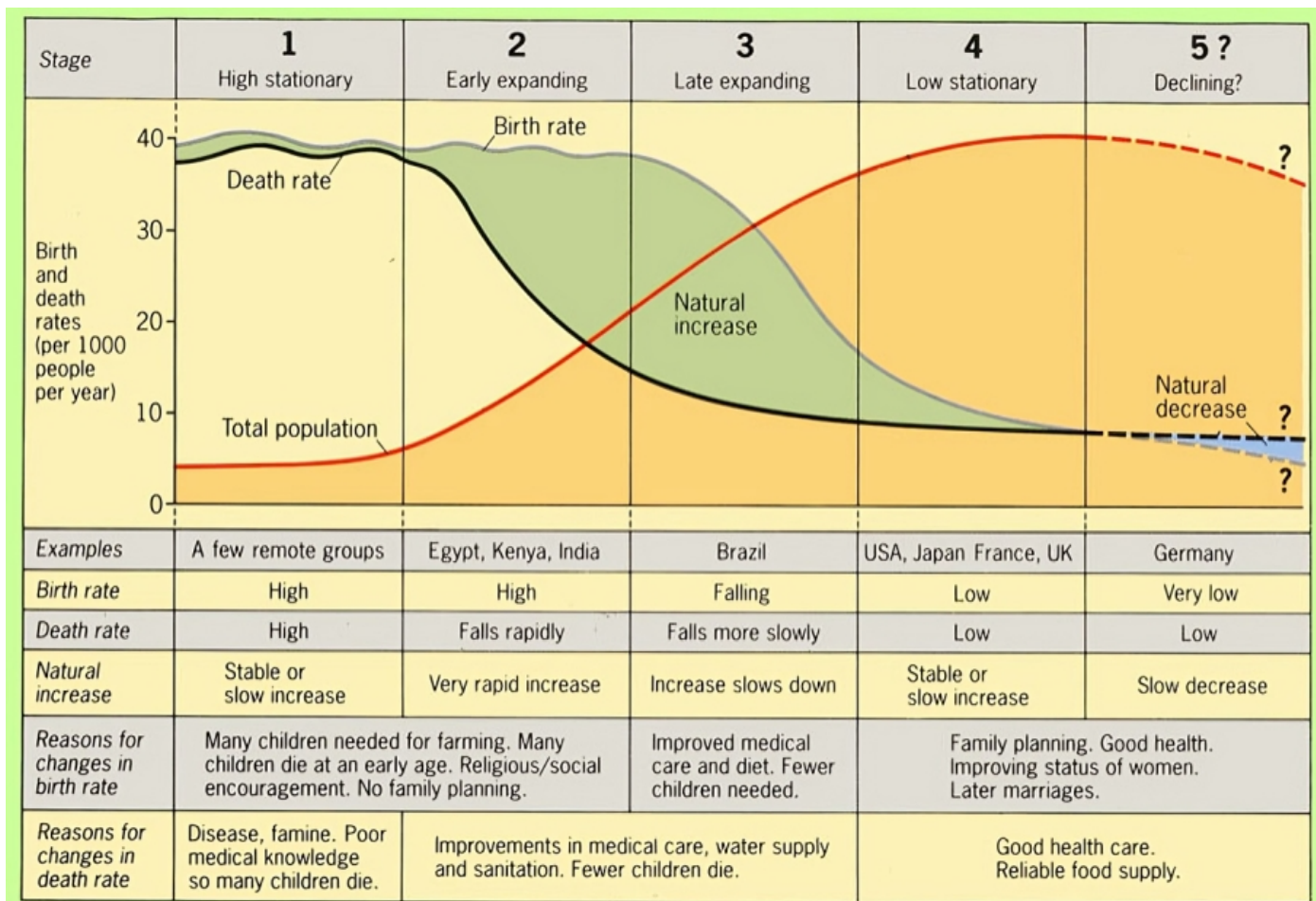
- **Malthusian Theory:** It was proposed by Thomas Robert Malthus, an English economist and demographer, in his 1798 work "**An Essay on the Principle of Population.**"
  - It revolves around the **relationship between population growth and resources.**
  - **Population Growth:** Malthus argued that **populations tend to grow exponentially**, meaning they increase at a geometric rate (1, 2, 4, 8, 16, etc.), while the **availability of resources only increases arithmetically** (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc.).
    - Therefore, population growth will eventually outstrip the capacity of resources to sustain it.
  - **Resource Constraints:** Malthus identified two primary constraints on resources: **subsistence (food)** and the ability of the environment to support the population (**limited land, water, etc.**).
    - He believed that as **population increased, pressure on these resources** would intensify, leading to scarcity, famine, and ultimately, a decrease in population through "positive checks" such as disease, starvation, and war.
  - **Checks on Population Growth:** Malthus classified checks on population growth into two categories:
    - **Positive Checks:** These are the natural forces that decrease population **growth, such as famine, disease, and war.**
    - **Preventive Checks:** These are **conscious decisions made by individuals or societies** to control population growth, such as delayed marriage, abstinence, and birth control.
  - However, **Malthus was ultimately proved wrong as breakthroughs** in agricultural

technology made countries, such as India, net food surplus.

- **Demographic Transition Theory:** It outlines the **process of population change** over time as societies progress through **different stages of economic and social development.**
- **Stage 1 - Pre-Industrial Society:**
  - Characterised by **high birth rates and high death rates**, resulting in a relatively stable population size.
  - Birth rates are high due to the **absence of birth control** and cultural preferences for large families.
  - Death rates are also high due to **limited medical knowledge, poor sanitation, and widespread disease.**
- **Stage 2 - Transitional Phase:**
  - Begins with industrialisation and improvements in healthcare and sanitation.
  - **Death rates decline significantly due to advances in medicine, hygiene, and food production.**
  - **Birth rates remain high initially, leading to rapid population growth** as death rates plummet.
  - This stage often witnesses a population explosion.
- **Stage 3 - Industrial Society:**
  - Birth rates start to decline due to various factors such as urbanization, education, economic changes, and the empowerment of women.
  - However, birth rates remain somewhat higher than death rates, resulting in continued population growth, albeit at a slower pace.
- **Stage 4 - Post-Industrial Society:**
  - **Both birth rates and death rates are low**, resulting in a stable or slowly growing population.
  - Birth rates may even fall below replacement level, leading to concerns about population ageing and demographic imbalance.
- **Stage 5:**
  - In some models, **a fifth stage is proposed where birth rates fall below replacement level**, resulting in population decline (**E.g. Germany**).
  - This stage is characterised by a significant ageing population and potential demographic challenges.

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## UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

### Prelims:

**Q1. In the context of any country, which one of the following would be considered as part of its social capital? (2019)**

- (a) The proportion of literates in the population
- (b) The stock of its buildings, other infrastructure and machines
- (c) The size of population in the working age group
- (d) The level of mutual trust and harmony in the society

**Ans: (d)**

**Q2. India is regarded as a country with “Demographic Dividend”. This is due to (2011)**

- (a) Its high population in the age group below 15 years
- (b) Its high population in the age group of 15-64 year
- (c) Its high population in the age group above 65 years
- (d) Its high total population

**Ans: (b)**

**Mains:**

**Q1.** Discuss the main objectives of Population Education and point out the measures to achieve them in India in detail. **(2021)**

**Q2.** "Empowering women is the key to control the population growth." Discuss. **(2019)**

**Q3.** Critically examine whether growing population is the cause of poverty or poverty is the main cause of population increase in India. **(2015)**

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