



## Demographic Transition and Opportunity for India

**For Prelims:** Economic Survey, Periodic Labour Force Survey, National Family Health Surveys, Malnutrition, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs).

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

### Why in News?

The world is going through a **phase of [demographic transition](#) towards aged populations**. Adaptation strategies will require **governments, businesses and common people to make key adjustments**.

- This may usher in a great opportunity for India that is **experiencing a demographic dividend**.

### What is the Demographic Transition and Demographic Dividend?

- A **demographic shift refers to a change in the composition of a population over time**.
  - This change can occur due to various factors such as **changes in birth and death rates, migration patterns**, and changes in social and economic conditions.
- A **[demographic dividend](#)** is a phenomenon that occurs when a country's population structure shifts from having a high proportion of dependents (children and elderly) to having a **higher proportion of working-age adults**.
  - This change in population structure can result in economic growth and development if the country invests in its **human capital and creates conditions for productive employment**.

### What is the Significance of India's Demographic Dividend?

- **About:**
  - India **entered the demographic dividend opportunity window in 2005-06** and will remain there till **2055-56**.
  - India's median age is markedly **lower than that of the US or China**.
    - While the median ages of the **US and China are already 38 and 39 respectively**, India's median age is not expected to reach 38 until 2050.
- **Challenges Associated with India's Demographic Dividend:**
  - **Low Female Labour Force Participation:** India's labour force is constrained by the **absence of women from the workforce**.
    - As per **Periodic Labour Force Survey 2020- 2021**, female labour workforce participation stands at **25.1%**.
  - **Environmental Degradation:** India's rapid economic growth and urbanisation have led to **significant environmental degradation**, including **[air pollution](#), water pollution, and deforestation**.
    - Addressing these issues is essential to **ensuring sustainable economic growth**.
  - **High Dropout Rate:** While over 95% of India's children attend primary school, the

**National Family Health Surveys** confirm that poor infrastructure in **government schools, malnutrition, and scarcity of trained teachers** have resulted in poor learning outcomes and **high dropout ratios**.

- **Lack of Employment Opportunities:** With a large and growing working-age population, **Indian job market is not able to generate enough jobs to meet the demands of this expanding workforce.**
  - This has resulted in high rates of **underemployment and unemployment.**
- **Lack of Adequate Infrastructure:** Poor infrastructure, including **inadequate education and health facilities, transportation, power, and communication network**, makes it challenging for people to access basic services and employment opportunities, **particularly in rural areas.**
- **Brain Drain:** India has a large pool of **highly skilled and talented professionals**, but many of them choose to **leave the country in search of better job opportunities** and living conditions abroad.
  - This brain drain is a significant loss for India, as **it results in a shortage of skilled workers and limits the country's ability** to fully leverage its demographic dividend.

## How India can Utilise its Demographic Dividend?

- **Gender Equality:** India needs to address **gender inequality** in education and employment, including **improving access to education and employment opportunities for women.**
  - Women's participation in the workforce can increase economic growth and lead to a more inclusive society.
- **Raising Education Standards:** In both rural and urban settings, the public school system must ensure that **every child completes high school and goes on to skilling, training, and vocational education.**
  - The modernization of school curricula along with the implementation of **Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCS)** and the establishment of open digital universities will further contribute to India's qualified workforce.
- **Encouraging Entrepreneurship:** India needs to encourage entrepreneurship and innovation, particularly among the youth, to **create job opportunities and contribute to economic growth.**

## 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)**

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

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