

## Lecture 17: Demographic Schism between Developed and Developing Countries and Future Prospects

### Slide 1

#### DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDE BETWEEN DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

According to UNFPA's *State of World Population 2009* the world population has reached 6.83 millions and it is growing at the rate of 1.2 percent per year. There is a great demographic divide between developed and developing countries. The more developed countries have only 1.23 millions and they exhibit a growth rate of only 0.3 percent per year. The less developed countries have 5.60 million people and they exhibit a growth rate of 1.4 percent per year. 0.83 million people in the less developed countries are living in what are designated as the least developed countries which exhibit a growth rate of 2.3 percent. Table 5.3 shows the size of population, rate of growth and doubling time for developed and developing countries of the world.

TABLE 5.3: SIZE AND GROWTH OF WORLD POPULATION AND MAJOR REGIONS, 2009

World/region	Size of population (millions)	Growth rate, 2005-2010	Doubling time (years)	Projected population in 2050
World	6,829.4	1.2	58.3	9,150.0
More developed countries	1,233.3	0.3	233.3	1,275.2
Less developed countries	5,596.1	1.4	50.0	7,875.0
Least developed countries	835.5	2.3	30.4	1,672.4

The divide in population dynamics of developed and developing countries has implication for economic, political and social divides. There are also such divides within the less developed countries, caused by their colonial past and unequal and capitalist development.

## Slide 2

Table 5.4 shows the life expectancy and a few other measures of mortality in some high life expectancy and some low life expectancy countries.

TABLE 5.4: EXPECTANCY AND OTHER MEASURES OF MORTALITY FOR  
SELECTED COUNTRIES, 200

Life expectancy	Country	IMR per 1000 live births	Life expectancy (M/F)	Maternal mortality ratio
High				
	Japan	3	79.4/86.5	6
	Hongkong SAR, China	4	79.6/85.3	-
	France	4	78.0/84.9	8
	Italy	4	78.3/84.3	3
	Switzerland	4	79.6/84.3	5
	Iceland	3	80.4/83.5	4
Low				
	Mali	104	48.1/49.2	970
	Mozambique	86	47.4/48.8	520
	Nigeria	108	47.6/48.7	1,100
	Lesotho	67	45.0/45.7	960
	Swaziland	62	47.1/45.5	390
	Afghanistan	154	44.3/44.3	1,800

The above table shows that in a number of countries, such as Japan, Hongkong, France, Italy and Switzerland life expectancy for females has reached above 84. Life expectancy for males is 5-6 years less than for females but that is also above 79. On the other hand there are still countries such as Afghanistan, Swaziland, and Lesotho where life expectancy for females is below 46. These countries are decades behind the developed countries. Interestingly, there is very little difference in these countries in life expectancy between males and females.

### Slide 3

Table 5.4 also shows that in high mortality countries maternal mortality ratio is particularly high. In Afghanistan it stands at 1,800 and in Nigeria at 1,100. Infant mortality is also high but it varies from a moderate level of 67 to a very high level of 154. This suggests that it is easier to improve infant mortality as compared to maternal mortality. For the latter just public health measures are not enough. There is also a need for improved transportation, empowerment of women, and change of culture and traditions.

Table 5.5 shows the differences in total fertility rates.

TABLE 5.5: TOTAL FERTILITY RATE FOR SELECTED COUNTRIES, 2009

Total fertility rate	Country	Total fertility rate
High		
	Hongkong SAR, China	1.01
	Korea, Republic of	1.22
	Japan	1.26
	Singapore	1.26
	Poland	1.27
	Germany	1.32
Low		
	Chad	6.08
	Uganda	6.25
	Somalia	6.35
	Togo	6.38
	Afghanistan	6.51
	Niger	7.07

#### **Slide 4**

The above table shows that the total fertility rate varies from 1.01 (in Hongkong) to 7.07 (in Niger). In most developed countries fertility is below 2.1 and there are several countries in which average rate of population growth is negative.

Table 5.6 shows the broad characteristics of the populations of developed and developing countries.

**Slide 5**

**TABLE 5.6: BROAD CHARACTERISTICS OF POPULATION IN THE DEVELOPED  
AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

Characteristic	Developed countries	Developing countries
Density of population	Varies greatly	Varies greatly
Growth rate	Near zero or negative	Varies from a low growth rate to continuing high growth rate (1-2.5)
Fertility	Below replacement level (1.64)	Declining from moderate to low level (3-4)
Mortality	High life expectancy with a difference of 4-7 years between males and females (about 81 for females)	Low to moderate level of life expectancy with less differences between males and females (58-68 for females)
Migration	Emigration often leading to internal reaction against liberal migration policies	Varies. While most countries sending migrants to other countries, several countries are having significant migration of professionals and workers
Average age of population	Going up. Not only proportion of aged is high, among the aged (60+) proportion of more aged (80+) is increasing.	The process of aging is on. Several countries like India have the advantage of opening of demographic window
Income levels	Very high	Low to moderate, with some countries having high income (one ninth of the world income level)
HDI	High	Low to medium
Share in the world population	Decreasing	Increasing
Future predictions	Negative natural growth rate	Low to moderate, yet positive growth rate
Population policy	Pronatal – aiming at raising the fertility rate	Antinatal – aiming at reducing the fertility rate
Are policies effective	No or less effective	Difficult to assess as both population policy and improvement in social development are leading to reduction in fertility

## Slide 6

Population growth has both positive and negative consequences. Negative consequences are commonly mentioned in literature. Among the positive consequences, several of the developing countries are having the advantage of opening of **demographic window**. This concept implies the bulging of population in working ages. Demographic window occurs because of the following two reasons:

- Constant decrease in fertility level leading to reduction in proportion of population at younger ages
- Lack of significant improvement in life expectancy at older ages leading to slower rise in proportion of population at older ages

It is estimated that this advantage of demographic window will remain for about 20 years. After that time the low fertility cohort will start entering the working ages and there may also be an improvement in life expectancy at older ages. Then the proportion of population in working ages may decline.

The Planning Commission in India stipulates that if the youths can be provided suitable skills then they will fill the labour force shortage facing the industrially advanced, aging economies of the world and this will help both the labour force and the national economy.

### BOX 5.2: DEMOGRAPHIC WINDOW

Demographic window may be an advantage or a disadvantage. If the increasing population in working ages may be provided skills, suitable employment and resources, they can contribute to society and economy considerably. If they cannot be provided work and resources, the society may face alienation, resistance and anomy.

## Slide 7

### FUTURE PROSPECTS

Table 5.7 shows the UN projections of world population and major regions. As per *The State of World Population 2009* the world population is likely to reach the figure of 9.1 billion in 2050.

TABLE 5.7: PROJECTIONS OF WORLD POPULATION AND MAJOR REGIONS

World/region	Size of population (millions), 2009	Share in the world population, 2009	Projected population in 2050	Share in the world population, 2050
World	6,829.4		9,150.0	
More developed countries	1,233.3	18.06	1,275.2	13.94
Less developed countries	5,596.1	81.94	7,875.0	86.06
Least developed countries	835.5	12.23	1,672.4	18.28

The above table shows that the share of developed countries in the world population is declining. Almost all the growth in the world population in the period 2009-2050 will take place in the developing countries only. Thus the share of developed countries which was more than 20 percent in the beginning of the Christian era is going to decline to 14 percent and the share of developing countries will increase from less than 80 percent to 86 percent.

## Slide 8

Future is unpredictable. Different countries will have different demographic paths in the future. We can have various scenarios:

- Universally low fertility, characteristic of second phase of demographic transition and national governments worried about it, but not doing anything to raise fertility, leaving it to market forces
- Universally low fertility, and national governments using ideology and political resources at their disposal, to encourage women to withdraw from work temporarily and produce right number of children
- While most parts of the world have low fertility, some countries, for religious, political or socio-economic reasons, continue to maintain moderate fertility levels and they support the demographic need of the world community
- There is another demographic transition and after reaching a below replacement fertility levels more and more countries move towards a replacement level fertility or more.

At the moment it appears that in the future more and more countries will face the problem of fertility going below the replacement level.



## Questions and Exercises

### Slide 1

1. What is the present size of the world population and at what rate is it growing?  
What is its doubling time?
2. Why did population of the world grow at extremely slow rate till the beginning of the nineteenth century?
3. What are the regional differences in world population growth and what are the reasons behind them?
4. What are difficulties in predicting the future of world population?
5. Who is described as six billionth baby? What is the significance of celebrating the birth of six billionth baby?
6. Classify the countries on the basis of birth and death rates. Do you find any relationship between the two?
7. What are the developed and less developed countries?

## References

### Slide 1

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