UNIT 1 : POPULATION EDUCATION

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1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will able to-

- define the concept of Population education;
- describe the nature of Population education;
- describe the objectives of Population education;
- explain the scope of Population education; and
- discuss the need and importance of Population education.

1.2 INTRODUCTION

All of us acknowledge that population explosion is one of the most fundamental problems of the world which adversely affects various aspects of quality life of the people as a whole, especially for developing countries like India. Owing to rapid population growth problems such as- poverty, unemployment, improper housing, malnutrition, under-nutrition, pollutions, wars, juvenile delinquency, water scarcity, illiteracy, political instability, terrorism, human trafficking etc. have been on the increase day by day across the globe. The current world population is 7.7 billion as on October 2019 according to the most recent United Nations estimates elaborated by Worldometers. According to current projections, the global

population will reach eight billion by 2024, and is likely to reach around nine billion by 2042. In case of India, the current population is estimated at 136.65 crores in 2019 at midyear according to UN data. Some basic information shall make the matter more clear. India has 17.71 per cent of global population and 2.4 percent of land area on the globe. If current trend of population growth continues, India may overtake China in 2045 to become the most populous country in the world. As we know, the nucleus of economic and social development the country is to improve the quality of lives of people, so that they could be assets to the society by making themselves productive. However, without stabilising the population it is almost impossible for us to promote sustainable development with more equitable distribution in the country. Therefore, it is now being realised that the existing population control measures should be supported by formal education on awareness of growing population problems in order to develop the right attitude among youngsters at an early age so that they are able to make rational decisions. As children of today will be the parents of tomorrow therefore, through population education we may strengthen and enlarge this area of commitment towards checking population growth by developing right attitudes and approaches amongst the vast young population.

In this Unit we shall study the basics related to the concept of Population education. Here, we shall explain the nature, scope and different meanings and definitions of Population education. Also, we shall discuss the need and importance of population education to check the problem of population explosion in the country. Thus, the overall focus of the present unit is to provide you learner with a conceptual clarity on the term Population Education and help you to realise the need and importance of Population education in the context of rapid population growth in the country.

1.3 CONCEPTS OF POPULATION EDUCATION

You might have come across the concepts like birth control, family planning and sex education, etc. in relation to population control in your day-to-day life. Here, we are going to introduce you to a much wider concept than these, i.e. Population Education. Though many people use the term population education interchangeably with birth control, family planning and sex education, etc. however, there are subtle differences in the same. Population education as the name itself indicates is an education programme and the term consists of two words Population and Education. Population, in general, refers to the

total number of people inhabiting in a specified geographical area, be it a village, district, country or the world as a whole; or belonging to any particular race, religion, sex, class, caste, group, community, and so on. Education is the process that imparts, improves or changes the knowledge, information, understanding, attitudes, skills, abilities, practices and so on of the people for their effective performance in life as an individual and as a member of the family, society, nation and the world. Having considered the two terms, 'population' and 'education', deciding on what kind of education to be imparted to which section of population to gain an insight into population matters and to what extent poses a serious challenge to population educators and educationists.

According to UNESCO (1970), "Population education is an educational programme which provides for a study of population situation of the family, community, nation and world with the purpose of developing in the students rational and responsible attitudes and behaviour towards that situation." Stephen Viederman defines population education as 'the process by which the student investigates and explores the nature and meaning of population process, population characteristics, the causes of population change and consequences of these processes, characteristics and changes for himself, his family, his society and the world.'

Population education therefore involves people in the learning process and widens their understanding of population related issues in a broader perspective and helps in developing appropriate skills in analysing and defining the issues in a way which is both personally meaningful and socially relevant. Further, population education develops not only proper attitude among students towards population problems but also develops the capacity to take rational decisions towards problems arising out of rapid population growth. In fact, population education covers any or all matters related to population that influence(s) development, standard of living and quality of life. Thus, population matters are comprehensive and inclusive thereby forming the content of Population education that enables people or the target groups to take rational and responsible decisions in this regard.

As stated above, Population education is neither family planning nor sex education. There is some difference. Whenever we talk of sex education, the stress is on prevention of sexual disease and on family planning. Family planning is one of the themes of population education. On the other hand, in sex education, stress is laid on an individual whereas in population education, the emphasis is on the interaction between individual, family, society

in national context. Further, family planning is for married couples which is purely a clinical or medical approach. On the contrary, Population education is purely an educational programme in order to create awareness and develop understanding.

The following are some definitions of population education which shall help you in grasping the concept more clearly and precisely:

According to Dr. V.K.R.V. Rao, "….Population education is essentially related to human resource development. Thus, population education is not only concerned with population awareness but also with developing values and attitudes so that both quality and quantity (of population) are taken care of."

According to Burbson, "Population education is an exploration of knowledge and attitudes about population, family and sex. It includes population awareness: family living, reproduction education and basic values."

According to R.C. Sharma, "Population education is the study of human population in relation to his environment with a view to improve his quality of life without adversely affecting the environment."

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Define Population education.

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Q 2: Distinguish Population education from similar concept.

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1.3.1 Nature of Population Education

Population education is relatively a new field of study. As we know, population matters are not constant and keep changing. Accordingly, the concept of population education has gradually evolved by adapting itself to the changing needs, requirements and emerging issues and concerns. Keeping this point in mind, the nature of population education is summarised as below:

- The population by its very nature is referred not only to the quantitative aspect or just an essay in numbers but also to the qualitative aspects on human

population, i.e. quality of life. Population education, therefore, is essentially, related to human resource development.

- Population education is purely an educational programme.
- Population education programme like any other educational programme helps the students in developing their knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and values with regard to its content materials.
- Its concept is multi-disciplinary and related to a number of disciplines.
- It provides a learning situation for understanding population situation in family, community, nation and the world at large.
- It helps to understand the implications of population factors for the well being of the individual, the family and the society.
- Population education studies the relationship of man and environment with regard to his quality of life.
- What makes population change over time constitutes a primary concern of population education.
- It is equally concerned with the effects that such changes can produce in families, communities, nations and the world.
- . Population education involves the study of the probable causes and consequences of population change. These causes and consequences may be biological, social, economic, political and cultural in nature.
- . The content of Population education mainly revolves around relationship between population factors on one hand and various socio-economic processes on the other.
- Population change and development are interdependent. Population change at any level - family, community or nation - is the result of decisions based on certain considerations, which they consider rational in the given situation/ context. Whether the decisions are rational or not depend upon their understanding of all the relevant matters at that particular level. This is what is precisely meant by Population education - knowledge, understanding, attitudes and practices/behaviours of people in respect of their population situation - that is intended to lead to such - population change, influence the quality of their lives, both at present and in the future. Therefore, it has bearing on various population matters at both the micro and macro levels in the present and the future.

1.3.2 Objectives of Population Education

The following general objectives of Population education have been decided at a workshop organised by NCERT (1971) at New Delhi which are mentioned below:

- to develop an understanding of some demographic concepts and processes;
- to develop among the younger generation an understanding of the most important phenomenon of the modem world viz., rapid growth of population and its causes;
- to develop an understanding of the influence of population trends on the various aspects of human life - social, cultural, political and economic;
- to develop an understanding of the close interaction of population growth and the developmental process with particular reference to development programmes for raising peoples living standards;
- to develop an understanding of the evil effects of over population on the environment and the concomitant dangers from pollution;
- to develop an understanding of scientific and medical advancement enabling to get an increasing control over famines, diseases and ultimately death and imbalance thus created between death rate and birth rate;
- to develop an understanding of biological factors and phenomenon of reproduction which are responsible for continuance of the species;
- to develop an appreciation of:
  - the small family norm as proper and desirable;
  - the relation between population size and the quality of life; and
  - the fact that family size is a matter of deliberate choice and human regulation rather than of accident or forces beyond human control;
- to develop an attitude of responsibility and mutual help and cooperation in all aspects of personal and family living;
- to develop an appreciation of the relationship between the keeping mother healthy, the welfare of the children and the small size of the family;
- to develop an appreciation of the fact that the actions of each individual member of the society affects others, and personal and national decisions concerning

family size and population have long range consequences for the whole world;

- to develop an awareness of population policies and programmes of the country; and
- to provide students with a basic demographic vocabulary so that they are able to read and interpret demographic material with some understanding.

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Q 3: Briefly describe the nature of Population education.

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Q 4: Write any three major objectives of Population education.

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1.3.3 Scope of Population Education

From the foregoing discussion you might able to perceive the content of population education that provides us an idea of the scope of population education. The scope of population was essentially demography-laden. In course of time, the content has been elaborated and specified to include various other concepts, thereby, enlarging the scope of Population education. Population education is a multidisciplinary and value-laden educational programme aimed at improving the quality of life at present and in future. Its content is to be drawn from demography, population dynamics, population studies, sex education, family planning and population policies and programmes. Its content, thus, is to be judiciously derived from several academic disciplines such as demography, sociology, geography, economics, psychology, biology, ecology, population studies, medicine, etc. Broadly and in general, it can be said to include the following aspects:

i) **Demography:** It is the study of population and deals with the measurement and analysis of birth rate, death rate, migration rate, etc. Birth, death and migration are the major elements of demography. Population change is a biological process. Demography includes birth rate, death rate, sex ratio, dependency ratio, and age-sex pyramid and population growth rate.

ii) **Consequences of Population growth**: Rapid population growth directly affects various aspects of human life -biological, social, economic and cultural; environment and ecological balance, and on development and welfare programmes of the country. The adverse effects of population growth on people's health are important parts of population education. It also deals with analysis of population growth and its consequences in daily life.

iii) **Determinants of Population Change:** Population change in a place takes place due to birth, death and migration. It also comprises biological, social and cultural aspects which directly affect the elements of population change. It also analyses the factors like poverty, practices which influences population change.

iv) **Human Sexuality and Reproductive System:** It includes the fundamental aspects of human sexual and reproduction process like sexual behaviours, development of human reproductive system and associated problems. The scope of population education helps to develop a positive attitude towards reproductive health.

v) **Planning for the Future:** It includes various aspects of population management like appropriate age at marriage and first conception birth spacing, family planning, family welfare and use of contraceptives.

The following points are also taken into consideration while discussing about the scope of population education:

The quality of life has increasingly been the focal aspect of Population education. In view of this, NCERT (1988) has built the conceptual framework of Population education around six major themes, namely: i) family size and family welfare, ii) delayed marriage, iii) responsible parenthood, iv) population change and resource development, v) population related beliefs and values, and vi) status of women. The content focusing on these themes is drawn from six content areas: i) population and economic development, ii) population and social development, iii) population, environment and resources, iv) population and family life, v) population, health and nutrition, and vi) population dynamics.

Besides the above mentioned content areas, the emerging issues such as problems of adolescents, sexually transmitted diseases including AIDS, urbanisation and concern for the aged are woven into this conceptual framework.

On the other hand, since the Millennium Summit 2000 in which the goals of population and development education have become integral part of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the content and scope of population and development education have increased widely. It includes any aspect that has any form of relevance to achieving the goals of MDGs such as: eradicating poverty and hunger; achieving universal primary education; promoting gender equality and empowering women; reducing child mortality rates; improving maternal health; combating HIV/ AIDS, malaria, and other diseases; ensuring environmental sustainability; and developing a global partnership for development.

At length, it may be mentioned that the objectives, content and scope of population education vary from target group to target group depending upon their educational level as well as national, local needs, individual needs and problems.

ẅ CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 5: Mention some important content areas that are come under the scope of Population education.

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Q 6: Briefly explain how the scope of population education is related to the MDGs.

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1.4 NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF POPULATION EDUCATION

As mentioned above, if the current trend of population growth continues, India may overtake China in 2045, to become the most populous country in the world. Though population explosion is a world-wide problem, however, the magnitude of the problem and the urgency to gauge its seriousness are perhaps nowhere as pressing as they are in India. India alone accounts for about 17.71 per cent of the world's population with no more

than 2.4 percent of the total area of the world. There is thus the pressing need to spread population education in developing countries like India in particular and the world in general, which suffers from the problems of ever increasing population.

The human beings, by contributing to rapid growth of their population are endangering their individual, familial, social and national well-being. Therefore, a man-made problem and effective solution should also evolve from his rational thought and action i.e., rational mind and behaviour. This is possible mainly by educating people regarding their role with respect to population problems and issues - Population education.

In the light of the above discussion, the need and importance of Population education is explained below.

- The population situation may be defined as the interrelationships between births and migration and other aspects of life. Due to high birth rate and low death rate, there is rapid growth of population which seriously affects the country's welfare, economy and values. Therefore, family planning education is necessary to lower the high rate of population growth. Its purpose is to create awareness regarding the frequency of births that may be controlled by using modern contraceptive techniques, as well as to present the advantages of this reduction in births, etc. Birth control programmes have been launched in the country and are directed towards couples with a single child and where the couples are in the reproductive age group. However, there are no serious efforts with regard to the launch population education programme for the younger generation. We are to start population education programme for children as today's children will be parents of tomorrow.
- The younger generation should be well-informed regarding the consequences of population growth on the national, political, economic and personal life of people. Small children should be properly educated in order to lead a planned adult life. Therefore, it is the need of the hour to introduce Population education for youngsters to cultivate desirable attitudes among them towards population matters and to ensure their responsible behaviour in the future towards population problems.
- Countries like India must invest huge amount of their resources in meeting the basic demands of the increasing population, owing to which, very little resources are left for improving the quality life of the people. As a result of that, the quality of life of people leads in general to deficiency of food and inadequate facilities for education and health etc. Hence, either to increase the quality of life or to maintain the existing

quality of life, the population must not be allowed to grow beyond its resources and, therefore, its control assumes very important task. As one of the strategies, every nation is involved in educating its people in matters pertaining to population with the purpose of enabling them to take rational decisions and implement them to reduce the growth rates with a view to promote quality of life.

- Further, the other social problems that are caused due to population explosion such as crime, violence, anti-social activities, juvenile delinquency, terrorism, etc., and environmental problems such as pollution, global warming and ecological imbalance would also increase. Population education can alone provide lasting solutions to all such problems.
- Population education being an educational programme is capable of influencing the knowledge, skills, attitudes and practices of people with regard to population matters. It has been shown by many investigations that knowledge influences attitudes and attitudes in turn influence practices. Population education, therefore, becomes a pre-condition for desirable practices with regard to population matters.
- Population education helps in establishing equality of sexes by helping women to acquire their rightful status and become equal partners in progressing towards the overall goal of accelerating the pace of socio-economic development. Let us hope that Population education can be a means through which women would be able to take their own decision in all walks of their life-individual, family, community and society at large.
- Population education may help people recognise and define the nature of problems which have population components. It may help them realise better, how problems arise and what consequences their decisions and action will have. Within a developmental context, it may be designed to help people comprehend the social and economic development which to some extent is influenced by population process and that their decisions may depend upon the social and economic status of a society or nation.
- Population education may be used as an instrument for social change. There are many people in our country whose life is still governed by blind faith, superstition, dogma and fatalism and these factors may also be considered responsible for high population growth in the country. Population education as an agent of change has

great potentiality to inculcate rational humanism among students, imbued with the spirit of scientific inquiry that will help in removing ignorance and superstitions from the society.

- Population education directly or indirectly helps in establishing a true democratic society. Thus, it is clear that the lesser is the population the better is the democracy.
- Population education, being behavioural and multi-disciplinary in nature is a powerful device in promoting changes with regard to values. It helps to learn or to find out how best can we impart value-oriented education and ensure that children do develop a value system, inculcate socially desirable attitudes, widen their cognitive map, and imbibe the spirit of human affiliations.

2 1.5 LET US SUM UP

- Population education is an educational programme which provides for a study of population situation of the family, community, nation and world with the purpose of developing in the students rational and responsible attitudes and behaviour towards that situation.
- Population education covers any or all matters related to population that influence(s) development, standard of living and quality of life.
- Population education is neither family planning nor sex education.
- Sex education is given stress on prevention of sexual disease and on family planning.
- Family planning is one of the themes of population education.
- Sex education stresses or emphasizes on individual whereas in population education, it is the interaction between individual, family, society in national context.
- The concept of Population education has gradually evolved by adapting itself to the changing needs, requirements and emerging issues and concerns.
- Conceptualisation of Population education is of course rooted in complex socio-cultural and historical differences.
- Population change and development are interdependent.
- The objective of Population education is to develop an appreciation of the fact that the actions of each individual member of the society affects others, as well as personal and national decisions concerning family size and population which have long range consequences for the entire world.

- NCERT (1988) has built the conceptual framework of population education around six major themes. These are family size and family welfare, delayed marriage, responsible parenthood, population change and resource development, population related beliefs and values, and status of women.
- NCERT has identified six content areas, these are population and economic development, population and social development, population, environment and resources, population and family life, population, health and nutrition, and population dynamics.
- Population education deals not only with the cognitive domain but also with the affective domain of students.
- The human beings, by contributing to rapid growth of their population are endangering their individual, familial, social and national well-being. It is thus a man-made problem and effective solution should, therefore, also evolve from his rational thinking and action i.e., rational mind and behaviour. This is possible mainly through educating people on their role with regard to population problems and issues - Population education.
- Population education helps in establishing equality of sexes by helping women to acquire their rightful status and become equal partners in overall goal of accelerating the pace of socio-economic development.
- Population education, being behavioural and multi-disciplinary nature is a powerful device for promoting changes with regard to values.

1.6 FURTHER READING

1) Aggarwal, J.C. (2010). *Theory and Principles of Education.* New Delhi: Vikash Publishing House Pvt. Ltd.
2) Gupta, P.K. (2012). *Population Education*. Meerut: R.Lall Book Depot.
3) Nanda, S.K. (2008). *Population Education.* Delhi: Doaba House.
4) Seshadri, C., and Pandey, J. L. (eds). 1991. *Population Education: A National Source Book* Vol- I. New Delhi: NCERT.
5) Sharma, R. C. 1991. “An Overview of Population Education” in Seshadri, C. and Pandey, J. L. (eds). op cit.
6) http://egyankosh.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/43753/1/Unit-1.pdf

1.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: Population education is an educational programme which provides for a study of population situation of the family, community, nation and world with the purpose of developing in the students rational and responsible attitudes and behavior towards that situation.

Ans to Q No 2: The term Population education is sometimes used interchangeably with family planning or sex education. But there are some differences. Whenever we talk of sex education, the stress is on prevention of sexual disease and on family planning. Family planning is one of the themes of Population education. On the other hand, in sex education, stress or emphasis is on individual whereas in Population education, it is the interaction between individual, family, society in national context. Further, family planning is for married couple which is purely a clinical or medical approach. On the contrary, population education is purely an educational programme in order to create awareness and develop understanding.

Ans to Q No 3: Population education is relatively a new field of study. As we know, population matters are not constant and keep changing. Accordingly, the concept of population education has gradually evolved by adapting itself to the changing needs, requirements and emerging issues and concerns. Like-wise, the conceptualisation of Population education is rooted in the complex socio-cultural and historical differences of the society. Further, population change and development are interdependent. Population change at any level - family, community or nation - is the result of the decisions based on certain considerations, which they consider rational in the given situation/ context. Whether the decisions are rational or not depends upon their understanding of all the relevant matters at that particular level. This is what precisely means Population education.

Ans to Q No 4: The three major objectives of population education are as below: (i) To develop among the younger generation an understanding of the most important phenomenon of the modem world viz., rapid growth of population and its causes; (ii) to develop an understanding of the influence of population trends on the various aspects of human life - social, cultural, political and economic; and (iii) to develop an appreciation of the fact that the actions of each individual member of the society

affects others, as well as personal and national decisions concerning family size and population have long range consequences for the entire world.

Ans to Q No 5: Following are the some important content areas that comes under the scope of Population education: i) population and economic development, ii) population and social development, iii) population, environment and resources, iv) population and family life, v) population, health and nutrition, and vi) population dynamics.

Ans to Q No 6: The goals of population and development education have become integral part of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) since 2000, the content and scope of population and development education have increased widely to include everything that has any relevance to achieving the MDGs, namely: eradicating poverty and hunger; achieving universal primary education; promoting gender equality and empowering women; reducing child mortality rates; improving maternal health; combating HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases; ensuring environmental sustainability; and developing a global partnership for development.

1.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions (Answer each question in about 50 words)

Q 1: Write the meaning of population education in your own words.

Q 2: What are the distinguishing attributes of population education?

Q 3: Write any five MDGs goals set by Millennium Summit 2000.

B) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: How population change is related to development?

Q 2: How does Population education establish gender equality in society?

Q 3: How does Population education content an integral part of different subjects?

C) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: Describe the objectives of Population education.

Q 2: Explain the scope of Population education.

Q 3: Discuss the need and importance of Population education.

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