UNIT 14 : PROBLEMS OF THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES

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14.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to,

- find out the causes of poverty in third world countries and seeking possible solutions to them
- conceptualize the causes, possible solutions and effects of population explosion in third world countries
- know the causes and find out possible solutions of iilitercay in third world countries

- conceptualize the meaning of equalization of educational opportunity
- know the causes behind inequality of educational opportunity in third world countries and to find out possible solutions
- know the provisions of Indian constitution regarding equalization of educational opportunity.

14.2 INTRODUCTION

If we go through the history, then it can be traced that the word 'Third World' was arouse during the Cold War to define those countries that were remained non-aligned with either NATO or the Warsaw Pact. The countries represented the 'First World' were the United States, Canada, Japan, South Korea, Western European nations and their allies, while the Soviet Union, China, Cuba, Vietnam and their represented the 'Second World'. This terminology helped to provide a way of categorizing the world nations into three broad groups based on political and economic divisions. The word 'Third World' is being replaced by some other terms like ' Developing countries', ' least developed countries' or the ' Global South'. It is because of the fact that the concept is no longer represents the current political or economic state of the world and historically poor countries have transited different income stages.

The countries with colonial pasts in Africa, Latin America, Oceania and Asia were normally included in the Third World. But, due to the complex history, there is no universally agreed definition of Third World. Some countries in the Communist Bloc like Cuba were often regarded as 'Third World'. There are many Third World countries that were economically poor and non- industrialized, so it became a stereotype to define those countries as 'Third World'. Also the world 'Third World' sometimes includes newly industrialized countries like Brazil, China and India which are now more commonly referred to as part of BRIC.

14.7 PROBLEMS OF POVERTY IN THE THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES

A huge number of world's children are residents of developing countries and the largest number are in the low income countries. In the past few decades, the world's population has increased double and the growth has been mostly concentrated in the developing countries, which is now 2% per year. Therefore, the age distribution of the population differs between the developed and developing countries (Table 14.1).

Table 14.1

Age structures in developed and developing countries

Country group	% age distribution (Years)					Total fertility rate
	0-4	5-14	15-64	65+	All	
Developed countries	7.6	15.5	65.6	11.3	100	1.9
Developing countries	13.4	25.6	57.0	4.0	100	4.2

Images of poverty in developing and Third World nations are very shocking. According to UNICEF, approximately 600 million children in developing countries live on less than $1 per day. Moreover, one person, usually a child under the age of five dies of hunger every 3.6 seconds (Beach, Justin, 2008). Poverty exists in every country and there are different reasons behind it.

14.3.1 Major Reasons

The major reasons behind poverty in Third World countries are as follows.

1. **Impact of colonialism:** Many of the Third World countries have never fully recovered from the effects of colonialism. The colonial powers used most colonies as source of inexpensive Labour and provide little in terms of services and development to indigenous populations. The wealthier nations support

dictatorship so that they can ensure steady flow of inexpensive resources into neo-colonial pockets.

2. **Corruption and elitism:** In many parts of the developing countries, corruption and elitism contribute towards poverty. For getting success like Govt. contracts, bribery is used. Corrupt Governments provide opportunities of jobs to friends and relatives of those who play roles within the Govt. itself. This creates a situation of making the wealthy people wealthier and the poor, the more decrease in wealth and power.
3. **Educational opportunities:** In developing countries, many children do not attend school regularly either because of getting less educational opportunities or to work for family support. It creates a cycle of poverty where each successive generation needs children to work rather than go to school.
4. **Environment and resources:** Developing nations are mostly lack of basic resources like fuel, water, land etc for growing food and cropping. Diseases increase as a result of poor public health and environmental practices. As per UNICEF, one in five children worldwide lack sanitation facilities, while one in four children has no safe drinking water.

14.3.2 Effective Ways

There are some effective ways that can be employed to end the problem of poverty of the Third World countries and some of them are as follows.

1. Developing and implementing rapid and sustained economic growth policies and programmes.
2. Improving the management of water and other natural resources.
3. Encouraging countries in improved trades to wipe out poverty.
4. Investing and implementing agricultural plans and programmes.

5. Encouraging more job opportunities.
6. Provide country people basic facilities of education, healthcare, sanitation, food etc.
7. Provide facilities of technology and innovation etc.

14.4 POPULATION EXPLOSION

The Third World countries have been taking initiatives for spreading public and private family planning. But, population growth cannot be stopped in those countries. Out of every 100 population of the world, 97 are born in the Third World. Especially in the countries like Africa, average women give birth of five to eight children each. If the current growth rates of population in these countries remain unchanged, they will double in population in every 24 years. Though, there are instances of family planning programmes and they get success, but these programmes need to have long term effectiveness. According to Roland Berger's 'Trend Compendium 2030: Demographic Dynamics' maps out global changes in human demographics between 2013-2030. Between 2013 and 2030 the developing regions will see 97% of the world's population growth of 1.2 billion people.

14.4.1 Causes of population explosion

The increased rates of population in the Third World countries remain a serious issue during the last some decades. There are several causes behind them and some are as follows.

High fertility rate: Fertility rates in Third World countries are very high. This rate will remain high until the educational, health, social and other environments of these families will be remain unimproved.

Economic development: Economic development and population growth are inter-connected. Where there is economic development, death rates are reduced and results in population growth.

Technological development: Technological development in the Third World nations results in advanced medical facilities that

cause reduction in mortality rates.

Fertility treatment: Though it plays a very minor role in population growth than other causes, still its impact cannot be ignored. The Third World countries have developed and improvised the fertility treatments for which lots of couples having no children can expect children and it increases the population.

Poor contraceptive use: Though the Third World countries make contraceptives available, still the couples plan for their children by making poor uses of them, for which they experience unexpected pregnancies.

Immigration: Unchecked immigration to the Third World countries also results over population. This is particularly problematic in countries where immigration numbers far exceed emigration numbers.

Child Labour: In the Third World, where there are few child labor laws, children are seen as sources of income. They lose the educational opportunities, resulting poor decision in birth control.

14.4.2 Effects of population explosion

The problem of population explosion results seriously like the following.

1. Population explosion causes greater demand on the freshwater supplies in the countries.
2. It also creates shortage of various renewable and nonrenewable resources.
3. Over-population also creates extinction of much wildlife. World's various wildlife species are at stake due to population explosion.
4. Over populated Third World countries consume food, water and fossil fuels at recorded rates. The world's ecosystem also changed rapidly in the latter half of the twentieth century that at any other point in history.

5. It also results in intensive farming resulting major climate change, damaging local eco-system and land quality.
6. Over population results in climate change. The global temperature is changing terribly and these countries contribute towards emissions.

14.4.3 Solutions

This problem of population explosion can be solved to a great extent. For this, some initiatives are as follows.

Better sex education: In many countries, lack of sex education or poorly implemented sex education contributes towards over population. Better sex education will be helpful in understanding the potential consequences of having sex and its relation with child birth along with knowing scientific methods of birth control.

Access to contraceptives: According to WHO, 225 million women living in developing countries would prefer to postpone child birth, but not using any form of contraceptives. The Third World countries should make efforts for access to contraceptives for their countrymen.

Change in policy: The countries should make effective birth control policies. The distribution of goods, incentives, facilities etc should be made keeping in mind minimum or maximum numbers of children in families. But, this is a difficult issue to confront, thus utmost care and proper planning should be made. Recently China's 'One –Child' policy has been abandoned.

Population explosion on curriculam: The countries should include population explosion, its consequences, causes, policies, world population rates, climate change etc at all levels of education to make people know about population facts.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Write any two causes of population explosion in Third World countries.

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Q 2: Write any two effects of population explosion.

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Q 3: Write any one policy of population control taken by China.

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14.5 ILLITERACY IN THE THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES

Among the various issues hampering development in the Third World countries is nothing but illiteracy. According to a report published by UNESCO, one in four young people in such countries are unable to read a sentence, 175 million young people lack basic literacy skills. In the 11th annual ' Education for All Global Monitoring Report', UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova, access to education is not the only crisis in such countries, poor quality is also a serious issue that should be addressed and solved. Billions of dollars are being wasted in education funding. According to the UNESCO report, adult illiteracy has been remained a serious problem in those countries over the years, in 2011 there were 774 million, in 2015 743 million adult illiterates. Moreover, ten countries namely India, China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Egypt, Brazil, Indonesia and Democratic Republic of the Congo, three- quarters of world's total illiterate adults are reported to exist. Since 1990, almost two thirds of global illiterate adults are women. So, if this trend continues by 2072, the poorest young women in developing countries will not achieve universal literacy.

The rich Third World countries' education systems are found to have failures regarding giving special benefits to the minorities, according to a report in 'The Guardian'. For example, in New Zealand, in grades four and

eight, almost all the rich get all minimum facilities, while only 2/3 of poor students get. In 2011, Norway and England performed below minimum learning levels in Mathematics. According to the NGO named 'Save the Children', young people from low income families in under graduate were already falling behind by the age seven in schools.

14.5.1 Causes of illiteracy

Some of the prominent causes behind the illiteracy problem in these countries may include the following.

1. Poverty among the individual families.
2. Child marriage system in many countries.
3. Health issues.
4. Lack of educational facilities and its equalization.
5. Adult illiteracy etc.

14.5.2 Solutions

To solve the problem of illiteracy, following are some of the steps to be taken.

1. Governments should rethink their teaching policies.
2. The marginalized and disadvantaged learners should get equal benefits.
3. Teachers should be trained enough to train the bright as well as weakest learners.
4. Widespread adult literacy programmes should be launched.
5. Countries should commit to spend at least a good percentage of their gross national products on education.
6. Donors should increase their aid for education and should sharpen the focus to support the poor and underdeveloped population.

14.6 EQUALIZATION OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

There is a famous saying about equalization of educational opportunity by Kothari Commission (1964-66), “One of the important social objectives of education is to equalize opportunity, enabling the backward or underprivileged class to use education as a means to improve their condition”. So, in order to minimize the exploitation of the weak and to build up an egalitarian society, equality of educational opportunity should be made irrespective of caste, tribe, disabled, gender, and minority and so on.

The term ‘equality of educational opportunity’ denotes provision of education for all, including all the religions, castes, creeds, sex, locations etc. It goes to mean providing educational facilities and opportunities suited to individuals as per their intelligence and aptitudes. According to NPE, 1986, equality of education means, “to provide for equal opportunity to all not only in access but also in the conditions for success.”

The following articles of Indian constitution guarantee equality of educational opportunities.

Article 26 (1), it states that education is a fundamental right. No person should be denied admission to educational institutions on the grounds of caste, colour, creed, religion or any of them.

Article 21 (A): The 93rd amendment of the Directive Principles of State Policy declares, “The state shall endeavor to provide free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years”.

Article 46: The state shall promote with special care the education and economic interests of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and the weaker sections of the society.

14.6.1 Causes of inequalities

Today around the world, millions of children do not have access to education. This problem is very prominent in the Third World countries. Some of the causes of inequality of educational opportunities in such countries are as follows.

1. **Marginalization and poverty,** in many countries children find themselves on the margins of the education system and do not get benefit from it. Due to poverty of parents, many children do not get opportunity to go to school and so on.
2. **Financial deficits of the countries,** some Third World countries are not financially so strong to cater to educational opportunities to all.
3. **Inequality between girls and boys,** in countries like Arab, Central Asia and in Southern and Western Asia, boys are given more privileged. In sub-Saharan Africa, over 12 million girls are at risk of not receiving education. In Yemen, more than 80% of girls never get opportunity to go school. Afghanistan or Somalia makes no effort to reduce the gap between girls and boys with regard to education.
4. **Adult illiteracy,** widespread adult illiteracy in the countries also contributes towards not sending their children to get educational facilities.
5. **Inequality between advanced and backward**, a clear disparity has been observed between the advanced and backward classes to get education in developing nations.

14.6.2 Measures to be taken

There are still some measures to narrow the gap between various categories of people regarding the opportunities of education availed by them.

1. Reducing the cost of education, for example enrollment increased by 12% in Ghana, 18% in Kenya, 23% in Ethiopia and 51% in Malawi increased after reducing the cost.
2. Introducing school lunch programme. Malnutrition leads to poor learning. As per the World Food Programme in 2009, 66 million school children are hungry.
3. Educating parents, adult education drives should be fasten to aware them about the need of educating their children.

4. Improved resources for teachers, facilities like Computer-Assisted Learning will help to increase students' enrollment and making teachers skilled.
5. Narrowing the gap between the advanced and weaker sections of the society will be greatly beneficial in this regard.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 4: Write any two causes of illiteracy in Third World countries.

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Q 5: Write any two steps to wipe out illiteracy.

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Q 6: Write the famous quote of Kothari Commission about equalization of educational opportunity.

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Q 7: Write any one cause of inequality in education.

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Q 8: Write any two measures to narrow the gap between various categories of people to provide equal opportunity in education.

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14.7 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we have discussed on

- The Third World countries have been confronting various issues since long times.

- Poverty has been recognized to be the prominent problem in Third World countries. Some causes of poverty include impact colonialism, corruption and elitism, educational opportunity, environment and resources etc.
- Most of the Third World countries are over-populated. Its major causes are high fertility rate, economic development, technological development, poor contraceptive use, immigration, child labor etc. Population explosion results shortage of various resources, extinction of wildlife, climate change etc. Better sex education, access to contraceptives, change in policy etc can go a long way to solve this problem.
- Illiteracy remains a major problem whose main causes include poverty, child marriage, health issues, lack of educational facilitates etc. It can be solved by taking steps like rethinking about the educational policies, teachers' trainings, and adult literacy programmes etc.
- The Third World countries are not being able to provide equal educational opportunities to all. It's because of the facts like marginalization and poverty, financial deficits of the countries, adult illiteracy etc. Reducing the cost of education, school lunch programme, adult literacy programmes etc can be useful for solving this problem.



14.8 FURTHER READING

1) Bhavnagar, Suresh. & Saxena, Anamika. (2006). Modern Indian Education and its Problems. R. Lall Book Depot. Meerut.
2) Handelman, Howard. (2000). the Challenge of Third World Development, Abingdon: Taylor & Francis Inc.
3) Kolay, Swapan. Kumar. & Kolay, Mousumi. (2000). Education: Perspectives and Issues, New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House.
4) Manjuri, Hema. (2013). Problems of Developing Nations, Delhi: Vista International Publishing House.

5) United Nations Relief and Work Agency (UNRWA). (2014). Education Reform Strategy. Manas Publication.

6) Phillipson, Herbert. (2000). Education: A Search for New Principles, Abingdon: Taylor & Francis Ltd.



14.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: The two causes of population explosion in Third World countries are technological development and high fertility rate.

Ans to Q No 2: Two effects of population explosion are shortage of various renewable and nonrenewable resources and extinction of many wildlife.

Ans to Q No 3: The name of the policy taken by China for population control is 'One-child' policy.

Ans to Q No 4: The two causes of illiteracy in Third World countries are Poverty among the individual families and child marriage system in many countries.

Ans to Q No 5: Two steps to wipe out illiteracy are as follows.

a. Governments should rethink their teaching policies.

b. The marginalized and disadvantaged learners should get equal benefits.

Ans to Q No 6: The famous quote of Kothari Commission regarding equalization of educational opportunity is, "One of the important social objectives of education is to equalize opportunity, enabling the backward or underprivileged class to use education as a means to improve their condition".

Ans to Q No 7: One cause of inequality in education is gender disparity.

Ans to Q No 8: Two measures to narrow the gap between various categories of people to provide equal opportunity in education are as follows.

a. Introducing school lunch programme. Malnutrition leads to poor learning.

b. Educating parents, adult education drives should be fasten to aware them about the need of educating their children.



14.10 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

A. Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Write the full form of NATO.

Q 2: What do you mean by 'Third World'?

Q 3: Who maps out 'Trend Compendium 2030: Demographic Dynamics'?

Q 4: What is the full form of WHO?

Q 5: Write any one third world country.

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

Q 1: Write any five causes of poverty. How it can be solved?

Q 2: 'Inequality is a serious threat to educational progress of a country'-Why discuss.

Q 3: What should be the concrete steps to be taken to wipe out the gaps among various categories of people to enjoy inequalities n education?

Q 4: 'Poverty is a great hindrance to education'-Why discuss.

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