



Population Geography:
Relation with other Social
Sciences

- The study of population is by no means the domain of a single discipline.
- And the generally prevalent overlapping of population problems being investigated by various social sciences puts a question mark on the field of each of such social sciences.
- Apart from geography, demography, sociology, anthropology, economics, history etc., have been making positive contributions of their own in understanding various aspects of population.
- The boundary lines between population geography and other social sciences also having their concern with population, however, cannot be drawn precisely.

- The overlap referred to above is perhaps most pronounced between demography and population geography.
- Traditionally, demography is concerned with the statistical analysis of vital rates.
- Demographers have concerned themselves more with the statistics of births, deaths and marriages and have ignored the influence of migration and spatial variations in general.
- Demography has often been considered as the quantitative study of human population.
- That is why, it often seems that the sole function of the demographers is to distinguish patterns and regularities in population characteristics per se, irrespective of place, time, and class of people.

- However, it is misleading to perpetuate the view that demographers are merely population statisticians who lack sense of place.
- In recent years, the contributions of demographers include many examples where regional and national levels of mortality or fertility have been the subject of discussion or where fertility, mortality and migration have been combined to generate inter-regional population growth models.
- In fact, demography and population geography are so intimately related with each other that these can be merged together if the population geographer adopts the demographer's analytical sophistications and the demographer, in return, becomes more spatial.
- Basically demography studies the population processes and geography studies the spatial variations of such processes.

- Other social sciences that come into conflict with population geography in this regard are the Lesser Gods.
- That is to say that each of these disciplines looks at population from its own microscope.
- A sociologist finds his greater concern with the studies relating to social groups in their institutional organization.
- The anthropologist's main concern, on the other hand, lies in three major problems of man:
 - (i) the evolution of man;
 - (ii) the ontogenetic development of man; and
 - (iii) the classification of human races.

- One can also find population studies conducted by economists.
- However, their concern for population studies is only incidental and economic implications of any demographic pattern are the focus of such investigations.
- Similarly, historians, attempting to analyse population, have been found to be chronological in their approach. Their main concern has been to trace population trends through time.

- Thus, geography is unique vis-à-vis other social sciences with regard to population studies as it has an emphasis upon spatial perspective.
- It is this distinguishing feature of geography that sets it apart from other social sciences, which also deal with population phenomena.
- While it is true that population geography distinguishes itself from other social sciences dealing with population mainly on the basis of its approach, there are also significant differences in the spectrum of population phenomena being covered by various social sciences. Obviously so, because each social science has its own objective to achieve.