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COLLEGE: SOCIAL AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES.

COURSE TITTLE: DEMOGRAPHY.

COURSE CODE: TEM 206.

ASSIGNMENT:

1. Defined The concept of Demography

2. Explained the Thomas Malthus Theory of Population

ANSWER:

1 THE CONCEPT OF DEMOGRAPHY: Demography is the study of human populations their size, composition and distribution across space –and the process through which populations change. Births, deaths and migration are the ‘big three’ of demography, jointly producing population stability or change.

A population’s composition may be described in terms of basic demographic features age, sex, family and household status and by features of the population’s social and economic context language, education, occupation, ethnicity, religion, income and wealth. The distribution of populations can be defined at multiple levels (local, regional, national, global) and with different types of boundaries (political, economic, geo graphic). Population studies is broadly defined as the scientific study of human populations. Major areas studied include broad population dynamics; fertility and family dynamics; health, aging, and mortality; and human capital and labor markets.

Demography *demo-* from Ancient Greek *dēmos* meaning "the people", and graphy from "writing, the statistical study of populations, especially human beings.

Demography encompasses the study of the size, structure, and distribution of these populations, and spatial or temporal changes in them in response to birth, migration, aging, and death. As a very general science, it can analyze any kind of dynamic living population, i.e., one that changes over time or space (see population dynamics). Demographics are quantifiable characteristics of a given population.

Demographic analysis can cover whole societies or groups defined by criteria such as education, nationality, religion, and ethnicity. Educational institutionsusually treat demography as a field of sociology, though there are a number of independent demography departments.

Demography is the scientific study of human populations especially with reference to their sizes, density, composition, distribution and changes that occur in them over time; and the social, economic, political, environmental, health and other consequences that accompany such changes. It therefore, enables the formulation and development of policies and programs that are required to provide appropriate solutions to such issues or challenges It is a discipline that cuts across many aspects of human development and therefore finds relevance and applications in several social science, science and health disciplines, including economics, psychology, sociology, geography, business management and science disciplines such as biology, public health and medical sciences. Statistics is an important tool in demography.

2 THE THOMAS MALTHUS THEORY OF POPULATION:

In his 1798 book *An Essay on the Principle of Population*, Malthus observed that an increase in a nation's food production improved the well-being of the populace, but the improvement was temporary because it led to population growth, which in turn restored the original per capita production level. Malthus saw population growth as being inevitable whenever conditions improved, thereby precluding real progress towards a utopian society: "The power of population is indefinitely greater than the power in the earth to produce subsistence for man. According to Malthus, there are two types of 'checks' that can reduce a population's growth rate. Preventive checks are voluntary actions people can take to avoid contributing to the population. Because of his religious beliefs, he supported a concept he called moral restraint, in which people resist the urge to marry and reproduce until they are capable of supporting a family. Malthus said that “By nature human food increases in a slow arithmetical ratio; man himself increases in a quick geometrical ratio unless want and vice stop him. The increase in numbers is necessarily limited by the means of subsistence Population invariably increases when the means of subsistence increase, unless prevented by powerful and obvious checks.” Malthus based his reasoning on the biological fact that every living organism tends to multiply to an unimaginable extent.

The theory propounded by Malthus can be summed up in the following propositions:

(1) Food is necessary to the life of man and, therefore, exercises a strong check on population. In other words, population is necessarily limited by the means of subsistence (i.e., food).

(2) Population increases faster than food production. Whereas population increases in geometric progression, food production increases in arithmetic progression.

(3) Population always increases when the means of subsistence increase, unless prevented by some powerful checks.

(4) There are two types of checks which can keep population on a level with the means of subsistence. They are the preventive and a positive check.

Malthus observed that population would tend to increase at a geometric rate (2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, etc.), but food supply would tend to increase at an arithmetic rate (2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12). Malthus then divided his theory into 4 different sectors: The first proposition is that the population of a country is limited by the means of subsistence. In other words, the size of population is determined by the availability of food.

The second proposition states that the growth of population will out-run the increase in food production. Malthus thought that man’s sexual urge to bear offspring knows no bounds that there was no limit to the fertility of man.

third proposition, as the food supply in a country increases, the people will produce more children and would have larger families. This would increase the demand for food and food per person will again diminish. Therefore, according to Malthus, the standard of living of the people cannot rise permanently. The fourth talks about preventive checks and

Preventive Checks:

Preventive checks exercise their influence on the growth of population by bringing down the birth rate. Preventive checks are those checks which are applied by man. Malthus thinks that with a large number of children, the standard of living of the family is bound to be lowered. He may think that if he has to support a large family, he will have to subject himself to greater hardships and more strenuous labour than that in his present state.

Positive Checks:

Positive checks exercise their influence on the growth of population by increasing the death rate. They are applied by nature. The positive checks to population are various and include every cause, whether arising from vice or misery, which in any degree contributes to shorten the natural duration of human life. Malthus recommended the use of preventive checks if mankind was to escape from the impending misery. If preventive checks were not effectively used, positive checks like diseases, wars and famines would come into operation.

today Malthus have not turned out to be true due to several factors which have made their appearance only in recent times, yet the essentials of the theory have not been demolished. He said that unless preventive checks were exercised, positive checks would operate. This is true even today. The Malthusian theory fully applies in India.