

INDIAN POPULATION: GROWTH TO EXPLOSION MARXIAN PERSPECTIVE

Ciciel Dewan

Student of M.A. in Sociology, IGNOU, Kolkata
Email id: ciciel0911@gmail.com

Abstract: Marx's perspective of class structure in capitalistic form of society has given a holistic picture to understand the nature of "Bourgeoisie" and "Proletariat" for population growth which is directly correlated with materialistic needs of the people. There has been a latent relation between population growth and dialectical materialism in capitalist society which has been discussed in Marx's theory of population. In context to India, which facing the problem of population explosion is somehow related with the nature of material production of the society and the quest to achieve it. This article deals proposition that how Marx's analysis of population is relevant in context of Indian society in terms of population explosion especially in rural areas and the apathies which the rural poor face in their life.

Keywords: Materialism, Bourgeoisie, Proletariat, malnourished, Orthodox, Prejudice, Arithmetic, Geometric, Communism, Capitalist.

1. INTRODUCTION

History has been the living proof of human society to show how materialistic needs of people shaped the structure and function of the society from primitive communism to modern communism to post-modern communism. As there has been a shift in the material needs of the society complementing with shift in the stage of society. However Marx's stages of society is progressive along with some reciprocal consequences like dilution or transparency of international boundaries, emergence of middle class, increase in population growth etc. In today's world, population may not be considered as an absolute factor but it is a relative factor that can be taken into account to analyse the developmental trend of a country. It is necessary to understand that high population growth or over population doesn't reflect the idea of development and also it doesn't mean that in order to progress a developed country prefer high mortality. The correlation between population growth and economic development is positive when and where there is an equilibrium between available resources and optimum population to inherit it of a respective country, then it can be said that population is acting as an relative agent with its latent function for the development of a country as it producing optimum numbers of skilled and technical labourers which are categorised into "Active Army" and "Reserve Army". The question in this context is where India stands or holds its position? The basic material need which has been taken into consideration by the Government of India initially is food, clothes and shelter. But under the influence of globalization and modernisation new additions have been made in the material needs of the people of India. In today's global structure India stands second after china in terms of population with 1.21 billion, it is the second largest populous country that comprise 17.4% of the total world's population while it inherits only 2.42% land of the total world. So under such circumstances there is a possibility of a direct relationship between the material needs of the people and rapid growth of population in India which in turn leading to over population and as a later consequence of population explosion. This phenomenon can be analysed under the Marxian framework of class struggle and his theory of population.

2. MARXIAN THEORY OF POPULATION

In order to understand the relationship between the growth of population and the material needs of people in India, first it is necessary to understand Marx's theory on population. Historical materialism i.e. the history showing the shift of material needs from requirement of food in primitive communism to slave in ancient society, to land in feudal society, to means of production in capitalist society. On the other hand dialectical materialism means in the form of debate for the quest to get the prevailing material needs. In capitalist society, the means of production or the resources were owned and controlled by the 'Bourgeoisie' classes or the rich class while the only asset 'Proletariat' had in their hand was labour for their subsistence. Among the Bourgeoisie class there was the existence of incidents of having property disputes in a family having more than 4 or 5 children or more. In other words a large size Bourgeoisie family were prone to disputes over property distribution which led to the breakdown of the family; disputes were taken to the doorsteps of the court of law and mean while it led to the shut down of the factories since the case was going on in the court. This situation made an impact on other Bourgeoisie family regarding their consciousness of having a concise size of family with not more than 1 or 2 children, so that it would not led such problems in the near future.

On the other hand in Proletariat section, for example; a family with husband-wife and 2 sons in which the father is the sole earner of bread for the family, later his 2 sons get employed in the same factory where their father works so now there are 3 eligible members in the family who are employed and earn money for the family and thus their economic condition got stable, they started making some savings, their standard of living improved. Seeing this, what other Proletariat families did was they opted for large size family thinking as many children they have especially sons, they will get employed and hence their family condition will improve. Thus a proletariat family started becoming composed of 6 to 7 members and in some cases even 9 to 10 members. In some instance when a family was trying to have a son but they got a daughter, so they kept trying to have a son. In such situation there was an inverse psychological correlation regarding population consciousness among the Proletariat with that of Bourgeoisie. Where the Bourgeoisie was trying to keep their section of population stable, an out bursting of population was taking place among the proletariats. So it can be said in Malthus term that the population of Bourgeoisie increased in arithmetic rate of 1, 2, 3, 4..... so on while population of Proletariat increased in geometric rate of 1, 2, 4, 8, 16..... so on. What went wrong in the thinking of Proletariat was the neglected the fact that the resources were limited, thus the establishment of factories were and consequently the job opportunities were also limited. As a result, there were many large size Proletariat families in which only the father was employed member of the family and none of their children got employed due to lack of employment vacancies because the labour requirement got filled to its maximum level in industries. The later consequences was, the living standard of the proletariat went further down, they became more poor, malnourished, their financial deficit went high, people died, children became homeless, many people died in plague because they didn't had enough money for treatment. This apathy of proletariat sparked the fire to raise their voice against the bourgeoisie ruling system, their exploitations and finally overthrow it.

3. IN CONTEXT TO INDIA

India is country which is more federal in nature rather than being communistic yet certain puzzle of Marx's theory of population fits into the scenario of rural India. If we consider the upper class and the labour class in India, most of the labour to Indian economy comes rural sector and especially from agricultural sector. The present scenario of rural India are:

High population in composition:

The population growth in rural areas are more than urban areas, according to census 2011, the proportion of rural population is 68.84% while that of the urban population 31.16%. It means that almost 70% of the total population of India comprised from rural sector. This section of population in Marx's term is actually the Proletariat section in which having a large size family or joint family system helps to get more individual labour which acts as an asset to earn money for the family irrespective of whether they engaged in industrial sector or agricultural sector.

Large size family:

There is a difference between having a large size family and joint family. A joint family is stable in nature while a large size family may get subjected to financial crisis. A large size family system in Marxian view can be state as a product of

the consciousness to have more active members who can earn for their so called “common kitchen” and their labour is the main asset to achieve all their material needs. Thus they prefer more children especially a boy, unlike the urban nuclear family or Bourgeoisie family where couple prefer one or two children only. Surprisingly, the middle class people in urban areas also prefer single or double child which reflects the Bourgeoisie thought process of population control i.e. concise family and family planning. Bourgeoisie and the middle class people are aware of the phenomenon of scarcity of resources and thus they support to have small size or nuclear family. On the other hand, large size family in rural areas face the problem of disguised unemployment of the ‘reserve army’ who are unable to employ themselves in the mainstream of employment due to limited job opportunities as a result of limited resources.

Unemployment:

The Proletariats of India are subjected to disguised unemployment, seasonal unemployment, educated unemployment etc. A large size family in India, where youngsters are facing such problems to employ themselves affects on the financial reserve of the family. Though in agricultural sector a farmer owns his land to cultivate but it is not enough when they don't possess proper knowledge, technology for harvesting, cultivation and seasonal fluctuations which creates serious damage on food production creates another dimension of deficit on the financial reserve of the family.

Low standard of living and poverty:

A large size family in which there is unemployment, damage of agricultural food crops and cash crunch, all these factors leads to their standard of living further low. Their per capita consumption of calorie decrease, they get malnourished and gets very difficult for them to sustain family's economy. In recent phenomena in which farmers are taking loan from the bank and use it in their agricultural production and when there is crop failure they are unable to return the loan, such cases further detriments the chances of a family to sustain for its existence and as a result incidents of suicides are taking place among the farmers. Point to note that here it is not the Bourgeoisie class and their exploitation rather it is the uneven distribution and allocation of resources among the Proletariats and the unconsciousness of the Proletariats to the problem of over population on economic dimension i.e. preferring to have a large size family affecting their economic prospectus.

Marxian ideology and Indian orthodoxy:

In rural areas family prefer to have more sons who can earn for the family and at the time of marriage they can get dowry from the girl's family. Due to this orthodox tradition and ideology, a family prefers boy over girl and it is considered to be more appreciative if they can have more sons. Here even the son is also become an asset for the family to earn money and spending on him becomes an investment as in the near future he is going to return it to his parents by taking care of them and providing financial support to them. Thus in rural areas when a family gets a girl child instead of son they either commit child infanticide or they keep trying to have a son no matter how many daughters they get. Thus a large family with maximum so called ‘reserve army’ i.e. daughter and minimum ‘active army’ i.e. son and over that lack of job opportunities due to scarcity of resources, facing problem of crop failure in their land and having economic crisis to repay the loan to the bank leads to a miserable situation in a farmer's life and ultimately drastic consequences of suicides takes place.

3. CONCLUSION

Marxian perspective of population stressed on the mode of production leading to the result of over growth of population. However, it can't be said that the capitalist mode of production is the sole determinant for the population explosion; it also depends on the consciousness of the people, their ideologies and preferences regarding population and family planning especially from social and economic perspective. In a rational way, a person is an economic asset to his family but such asset needs to be limited in number keeping in mind the scarce nature of available resources. There is an inverse proportional relation between labour asset and resources, as the number of labour increases resources gets more scarce and vice versa. Point to note that in society reducing labour force is not part of any suggestion, what is suggested is to keep the labour force or in other term the population in stable proportion with the resources. Another perspective is need understand that daughter or women should not be considered as reserve army on a detrimental orthodox prejudice basis of the society rather they should also be included in the strata of active army of labour especially in country side.

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