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Youth in India Report 2022

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Key Highlights

- Population is one of the key determinants of economic growth, especially its age cohort. While governments look at the youth as a labor market pressure, their active engagement is critical to sustainable and stable societies
- India is one of the youngest countries, with 27.3% of the population aged between 15-29 years. Because of declining fertility and increasing life expectancy, the youth population is expected to decline relative to the elderly.
- There will be a shift from the young population (up to 29 years) to middle aged people (30-59 years) and elderly population. Elderly population has increased from 6.8% to 9.2% in 2016 from 1991, and is projected to reach 14.9% in 2036. This will create more demand for healthcare facilities and welfare for the elderly.
- While globally, the number of young people is growing, their proportion varies. As countries develop, they experience more industrialization, urbanization and skill based economic production, fertility declines and this results in more youth relative to dependent children. It then continues until the highest share of total population is older (as most of the west currently experiences)
- Proportion of youth population reached peak in 2011 and then started to decline in most of the states, in some states like Tamil Nadu, the decline in population started from 2001. By 2036, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Himachal Pradesh are expected to have a greater share of the elderly population than the youth, while Bihar and Uttar Pradesh experienced increase in youth population until 2021 and is expected to decline now.
- Health is critical for the growth of any society. While most young people are healthy, a greater number of them suffer from illnesses which hurt their ability to grow. Promoting health during adolescence, which is a critical transitioning period is important.
- Adolescent girls who give birth have a much higher risk of dying of maternal causes. Preventing child marriage is therefore critical. Investment in health of the youth has a triple effect, improving health now, enhancing it through life and contributing to health of future generations.
- Early marriage in India has been declining over time, with the median age of marriage steadily increasing from 2005 to 2019. During the past decade, a number of schemes from Nanda Devi Kanya Yojana and Beti Bachao programs have increased life expectancy.
- Mean age at marriage is an important determinant of reproductive behavior of women, and mean age at effective marriage for females in India was 22.1 years in 2019 compared to 21.2 in 2011, which is higher in urban areas than rural areas.
- Age of women also affects fertility and there has been a postponement of first birth of children. Adolescent fertility rates have fallen over the last decade and current fertility rate for women aged 15-19 is at 10.6 per 1000 women.
- Population Control: Family planning is important for reducing unwanted pregnancies. Among currently married group with 2 children, 86% did not want more children. But there is no change in the percent of mothers aged 15-24 who did not want more children, but there is a decline in the age group of 25-34 who do not want more children.
- Expanding access to contraception is important. Currently, more than half of currently married women use some form of modern contraception, but the dominant method seems to be female sterilization. Male sterilization continues to be low.
- Use of hygienic methods for menstrual protection is also critical. Around 77.6 percent of women among 15-24 years reported using a hygienic form of menstrual method. However, percent use in

rural areas improves massively with increasing levels of women's education, and use of clothing is prevalent among women with no schooling.

- Mortality: Adolescent mortality rates in India remain low for those aged between 15-19 years and has declined in 2019 relative to 1971
- India has also seen better medical care facilities over the years. In 2019, over 83% births received institutional support from either government or private hospitals.
- Malnutrition: Adults in India suffer from double burden of malnutrition (abnormal thinness and overweight or obesity). 43% of Indian women aged 15-49 and 39% of Indian men aged 15-49 have one of these two problems. During 2019, 59% of women and 31% of men between 15-19 years were anemic.
- Education: It is critical for achieving human potential, with development of a country defined by education levels. Percent of literate individuals remains highest in the age group of 15-19 across all years and gender gap in literacy has come down in 2011 relative to 1991. Literacy rate has been on a continuous rise as the total fertility rate has consistently fell.
- There has been an increase in secondary education from 2011-2012 and 2020-2021. During 2020-21, the percentages have been far better in urban areas than rural ones. India has also seen an expansion in the higher education sector. Private, unaided recognized institutions have also increased by over 85 percent in the higher secondary education sector. Enrollment rates in schools have also increased.
- AISHE reports also point to improvements in gender parity. The pupil teacher ratio has reduced which implies more focus per student in schools and increased quality of teaching. However, PTR was still high in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Telangana, and Uttar Pradesh.
- Economic Participation of youth: The transition of young people into work is critical, and the challenges of securing a decent work. During 2017-18, the labor force participation was low at 38.2% and it increased slightly to 41.4% during 2020-21. Young women's participation is lower than men's across all age groups.
- Unemployment is one marker of the difficulty in transition faced – in 2017-18, unemployment rate was at 17.8% which reduced to 12.9% in 2020-21, which is still on the high side. Women face higher unemployment rates than men, while the unemployment rate reduced in rural areas at a higher pace than in urban areas. Youth unemployment has improved across States and Union territories during 2020-21. Furthermore, the lure of public sector work also means younger people might wait for such opportunities which again impacts employment rates.
- Skills and employment have a close relation. In 2020-21, youth had an average of 10.2 years of formal education. And the years spent in formal education was highest in the "information and communication" industry.
- 34.1% of youth across India were involved in employment related activities. Among male, it was 53.9 percent whereas for women it was only at 14.2% due to unpaid domestic work that women often perform. 85.8% and 39.8% of young females participated in unpaid domestic services and unpaid caregiving services for household members respectively whereas the proportions of young males were only 24.2% and 11.5% respectively.
- Men and women spend equal time on self-care and maintenance activities but irrespective of area of work, more females are involved in unpaid work than men. For young males the proportion of travelling time for employment was more than that of learning but in case of female youth, more of travelling time was for the purpose of learning as compared to employment.
- Crime: Crime is an outcome of multiple factors like economic situation, social environment, family structure, etc.
- Juvenile crime is a huge issue in India, which witnessed a decrease of 7.8% from 2019. Significant reductions in 2019 were observed in states like Haryana, Gujarat, Telangana, etc. Majority of the crimes committed by juveniles, during 2020 were Offences Affecting the Human Body. Most juveniles received education above primary to matric, and most lived with parents
- Moreover, the 18-30 also accounts for more than a third of victims of crime. And this has been the trend since 2015. Unfortunately, incidence of rape, particularly against minors are rising steadily. In 2020, the highest number of victims were reported in Rajasthan.

- Percent of women who have experienced any kind of physical violence is highest for women with no schooling and lowest for women with 12 years or more of schooling.
- Suicides is one of the leading causes of death among young adults worldwide, and youth is the most vulnerable to suicide (34% of all suicides in 2020).

Read more: [Youth in India 2022.pdf](#)

Author: Saranya Ravindran, PILOT at Pratham