

TITLE: Population and development in SAARC.

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ABSTRACT: This study examines the relationship between the size, age structure, and growth of population and economic development in SAARC countries; the relationship between rural and urban differences and the persistence of poverty; and the impact of population growth on education, health, employment, and the environment. This research outlines major trends. Data were obtained from international institutions, the Population Reference Bureau, and the SAARC secretariat. Chapter 1 is an introduction to the study. Chapter 2 describes trends in population growth in SAARC countries. Chapter 3 identifies some important issues such as urban and rural differences, the incidence of poverty, poverty alleviation strategies, vital rates, and sociocultural factors. Regression analyses are performed in order to assess the relationship between demographic and socioeconomic variables. Chapter 4 discusses the relationship between population and economic development and the implications. Chapter 5 discusses population policies and programs and the role of nongovernmental organizations. Findings indicate that 86% of the variation in the crude birth rate (CBR) in pooled data from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, for 1975, 1980, 1985, and 1990, was explained by the crude death rate (CDR), infant mortality rate (IMR), the gross national product (GNP) per capita, the industrial share of gross domestic product (GDP), the adult literacy rate, and the overall primary enrollment. A 1% increase in the infant CDR led to a 0.25% increase in the CBR. A 1% increase in adult literacy led to a 0.23% decline in the CBR. Various factors explained 78% of the variation in the CDR, 69% of the variation in TFR, 96% of the variation in IMR, and 94% of the variation in life expectancy. High population growth rates are attributed to the low status of women, low average marriage age, shorter breast feeding periods, and low contraceptive usage.

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