



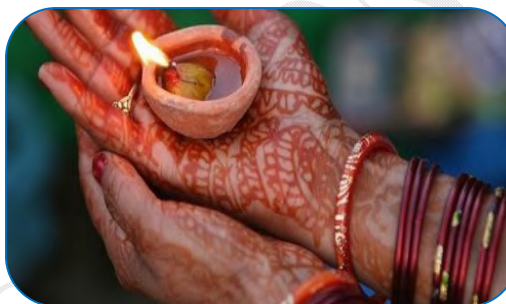
POPULATION TRENDS OF MAJOR RELIGIOUS GROUPS IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT :

Religion implies a solid confidence in an otherworldly power or powers that control human fate. This is the source of pride and a means of identification with a distinct culture. But, profound identification with one religion can lead supporters into conflicts with followers of other religions. Religion has played an important role in Indian society from the very beginning. India is a multi-religious society in which Hindus are majority followed by Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, and Jains. Religion in India has never been static. Today it has made inroads into



the arenas of politics and economic life. The country has no official state religion, but religion plays a central role in Indian daily life through its temple ceremonies, festivals, pilgrimages, family religious traditions etc. Diversity and tolerance with reference to religions are both established in the country by the law and custom. The Constitution of India has declared the right to freedom of religion to be a fundamental right. Geographers distinguish two kinds of religions i.e. universalizing and ethnic. An ethnic religion contrasts from a universalizing religion in that it commonly has an increasingly grouped geographic circulation. The ethnic religion with the biggest number of adherents is Hinduism. Hinduism is the world's third largest religion and more than 99 percent of its followers are lived in India. The aim of the present paper is to examine population trends of different religious groups in India since independence from a geographical perspective.

KEYWORDS : society, religion, multi-religious, ethnic, India.

INTRODUCTION

Religion is a transforming experience. It is not a theory of God. It is spiritual consciousness. Belief and conduct, rites and ceremonies, dogmas and authorities are subordinate to the art of self discovery and contact with the divine. Transformations and changes in different religions have occurred from time to time with reference to changes in intellectual, climate and social structure etc.⁽¹⁾ Our former President Dr. S. Radhakrishnan spoke about the religion of spirit which is scientific, rational, tolerant and a positive force in the improvement of society. Religion in its wider sense coincides with, and goes beyond, culture and in its narrower sense, forms an important part of it. ⁽²⁾ Most religious people pray for peace, but religious groups may not share the same vision of how peace will be achieved. The world's four major religions i.e. Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism were originated from the Indian subcontinent.

RELIGION- A GEOGRAPHICAL PERSPECTIVE:

Geographers are concerned with regional distribution of different religions and the potential for conflict among them that result from the various distributions. Geographers also observe that religions

are derived in part from elements of the physical environment and that religions in turn make a significant contribution to modification of the landscape. As one the most important characteristics of culture, religion leaves a strong imprint on the physical environment. If we viewed from the perspective of a geographic process, each religion has a point of origin, a pattern of diffusion, and a current distribution across the earth's surface. Geographers study the process by which religion like other cultural characteristics diffuses from one location to another, resulting in a distinctive distribution. Regions characterized by adherence of most residents to a particular religion develop through interaction and immigration. Geographers considered that the diffusion of a religion is important because this is a major force in the spread of cultural values.

CLASSIFICATION OF RELIGION:

Only a few religions can claim the adherence of large numbers of people, and each of these has a distinctive distribution across the earth's surface. Geographers distinguish two kinds of religions: universalizing and ethnic. Geographers identify the distinctive spatial distributions and diffusion patterns of universalizing and ethnic religions.

Universalizing religions attempt to appeal to all people, not just residents of one cultural background or location. Conversely, the religious standards of an ethnic religion are bound to be founded on the physical attributes of a specific area on the world's surface. Consequently, an ethnic religion carries meaning primarily either for people living in a particular environment or for those attracted to a particular environment. The world has three main universalizing religions- Christianity, Islam and Buddhism. Each began with an individual founder who preached a message accepted initially only by immediate followers. These followers in turn transmitted the message to people elsewhere on the earth's surface. Today, these three universalizing religions have hundreds of millions of adherents distributed across wide areas of the world. Each of these three religions is divided into different branches, denominations, and sects. A branch alludes to an expansive and crucial division inside a religion, a category to divisions inside a branch, and an organization to a generally little denominational gathering that has split far from a set up confidence.

An ethnic religion on alternate hands commonly has a progressively bunched geographic appropriation. The ethnic religion with the biggest number of supporters is Hinduism. Hinduism is the world's third largest religion and more than 99 percent of its followers are lived in India. An ethnic religion is harder to transmit to people elsewhere in the world because its social forms are rooted in a specific location. It may change when physical, social as well as economic condition of the home land change without spatial expansion.

On the basis of value system, religion may be categorical or absolute and instrumental. The first refers to beliefs and practices in the supernatural powers. The second refers to norms and practices related to work, efficiency, productivity, etc.

The constitution of India declares that India is a secular state in which distinctions and discriminations based on caste, creed, region, language, religion etc. are not allowed. The people have been given 'fundamental rights' according to which primordial considerations do not find any place in modern life.

OBJECTIVES:

An understanding of the distribution of religious forms is the basis for an analysis of the relationship between different religions and the landscape. Both the ethnic and universalizing religions have been created during the recorded history. Their origin, diffusion and spatial distribution can be documented. The present paper aimed at to find out the spatial variation of different religious groups in India as well as to examine the temporal variation of different religion groups in India since Independence. India is a land of various religious groups like, Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, Jain, Sikh etc. Our country i.e. India is the birth place of four religions. These are Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism. Here in our country we find both the ethnic and universalizing religions. The

ethnic religion with the biggest number of adherents is Hinduism. Hinduism is the world's third largest religion and more than 99 percent of its followers are concentrated in India.

METHODOLOGY:

As per methodology is concerned the present paper is mainly based on different secondary data and it is documented with the help of different concepts, maps and diagrams. The present study is concentrated on literature review collected from both national and international sources. Literature review is followed by collection of secondary data mainly from Census of India from 1951 to 2011. Finally with the help of statistical techniques and cartographic techniques, maps and diagrams are prepared and interpreted to know the extent of spatial and temporal variations of different religious groups in India.

OVERVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Religion refers to beliefs and practices in the supernatural powers. K.L.Sharma (1997) said that religion may be defined as "beliefs and practices related to supernatural entities, spirits and powers, which are considered as ultimate in shaping human relations". Religion has played an important part in Indian society from the very beginning. It has assumed numerous forms and nomenclatures in relation to different groups of people associated with it. Transformation and changes in different religions have occurred from time to time vis-à-vis changes in intellectual climate and social structure. The word Hindu appears to have been coined by the Arab invaders around the 8th century A.D., for the people living beyond the Indus but then it had no religious connotation.

Cultural identities in India are formed on the basis of religion, region, and ethnicity. Of these, religion is a false indication; except belief, forms of worship, and rituals, there is little that is common among those who follow a particular faith. Even in forms of worship and rituals there are sectarian and regional differences (S.C. Dube, 1996).

Religion in its wider sense coincides with, and goes beyond, culture and in its narrower sense, forms an important part of it. Where religion signifies the inner experience which reveals to the mind the real meaning and purpose of life, it is very soul of culture; but where it is used for the external form in which the inner experience has crystallized itself, it is only a part of it. Religion as the inner realisation of the highest truth can never be opposed to culture; but positive religion, when it has degenerated into mere form without substance, is often in conflict with cultural life (S. Abid Husain, 1997)

India is a land of religious diversity where almost all the major religions are practiced by their respective followers. This land has given birth to four religions. These are Hinduism, Sikhism, Jainism and Buddhism. These four religions are known as Eastern religions. The people of India have a strong belief in religion and it is not only confined to belief but also include rituals, ceremonies etc.

RELIGIOUS GROUPS IN INDIA:

Religion in India is known all over the world for having unique diversity in terms of religious beliefs and practices. India's significant religions incorporate Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Christianity, Islam, and Jainism. In India, religion holds utmost importance and therefore this is the reason that India got the title of "Land of spirituality and philosophy" all over the world. India has received this title due to its diversity of religion, beliefs, celebrations, culture, and languages etc. Even though India is no state religion country but you will find a diversity of religions ruling different regions. No matter which religion it is, the message of love and brotherhood comes from all the religions, regions and cultures of India.

- I. Hinduism:** It contains Indo-Aryan, Dravidian and Pre-Dravidian religious components. Hinduism is the religion of the lion's share in India. Hindus make up almost 80% of the country's population. You will find Hindus in almost every state of India. Hinduism is the oldest religion of the world which is also known as 'Sanatan Dharma' a term popularized by Mahatma Gandhi. We even don't

know the founder's name as well as specific period of its origin. The doctrine of Hinduism believes in supreme God who is present in every living things and it allows its followers to worship the supreme god in any form. According to Hindu philosophy soul is immortal, it never dies. When it leaves one's body, it enters the other body which is called the cycle of birth and rebirth. The holy books of Hinduism are Vedas, Darshans, Puranas, Gita, Sanhita, Shruti, Upanishads, Ramayana, Mahabharata etc. According to Hinduism Moksha can be attained by three ways: Karma Yog, Gyan Yog, Bhakti Yog. Tri-Deva concept of Hinduism considered that creation is governed by three gods, i.e. Brahma- the creator, Vishnu- the preserver, and Mahesh or Shiva- the destroyer. The other Gods of Hinduism are Rama, Krishna, Ganesh, Hanuman, Lakshmi, Saraswat, Kali, Parvati etc. The Hindus are broadly divided into Shakta (worshipper of the mother Goddess), Shaivite (worshipper of Shiva), Vaishnava (worshipper of the Vishnu), the Smarta (worshipper of Shiva, Vishnu and mother Goddess). The distinctive groups of Hinduism dependent on doctrinal contrasts and subtleties of ceremonies incorporate Arya Samaj, Brahmo Samaj, Sakta, Satnami, and Kabirpanthi and so forth. Hindu love the symbol or murtis which is considered as an impression of God. But, the Hindus who belong to the Arya Samaj do not practice idol-worship.

II. Sikhism: Sikhism is firmly a monistic religion. The Gurus play an unavoidable and instrumental job of acknowledging God. Master Nanak established Sikhism in the sixteenth century A.D. He said God is amorphous, ageless, all amazing expert maker who isn't impacted by sentiment of envy and segregation. The 'Gurudwara' is the spot of love for the Sikhs. It actually implies the Guru's residence. No demonstration of Sikh love is finished without the 'Sadh Sangat' or sacred assembling. The Sikhs as a collectivity can be recognized by their Kesh, Kanga, Kacch, Kara and Kirpan, which means un-trim long hair and facial hair, wooden brush, shorts, iron bangle in the hand and short sword separately.

Sikhism had begun because of religious revolt prevalently known as Bhakti development against the bias and station based culture rehearsed in Hinduism. They believe in one God and do not recognize ceremonial impurity at birth and death as well as abolished caste based distinctions within society. The sacrosanct sacred text of the Sikh is 'Grantha Sahib' that incorporates distinctive religious songs not simply of the Sikh Gurus, yet in addition of a few Hindu just as Muslim holy people who were counterparts of the Sikh Gurus. Be that as it may, the Sikhs are ideologically closer to the Hindus in correlation with the Muslims. Sikhs are mainly found in Punjab, Chandigarh, Delhi, and Haryana.

III. Jainism doctrine tells that to attain Moksha, penance was a must. Along with this Mahavir suggested three other ways to attain Moksha. These were- right faith, right action and right knowledge which were also known as Triratna or Three Jewels. As per Jainism there were 24 Tirthankars and among them Rishabh was the first. But there were lacunas about authentic information of first twenty two Tirthankars. Parshva Nath was the 23rd Tirthankars who was born in Royal family of Kashi presently Varanasi in UP. He left his house and carried on hard penance for 84 days and after which he attained supreme knowledge. His teachings were; to adopt non-violence, not to tell lie, not to steal anything and not to own property. His successor was Vardhaman or popularly known as Mahavir. He was born in 540 BCE and left his royal family at the age of 30 years. He attained Kaivalya or supreme knowledge after prolonged meditation and then he conquered the feeling of pleasure and pain. Thereafter he was known as 'Jindev' and his followers were known as Jains. At the age of 72 in the year 468 BCE he left his heavenly abode at Pawapuri in Bihar. He added one more teaching with his predecessor i.e. to follow Brahmacharya or not to marry. He wanted that his followers to discard clothes (Digambers) but the other section is also there i.e. Shvetambers (who wear clothes). The famous work of Jainism is known as 'Kalpasutra' that contain biographies of Tirthankars as well as rules to be observed by the Jin-munees. Jains are a separate community but their practices are similar to the Hindu community. They are strict vegetarians. Not only they avoid chicken, eggs and fish but also avoid eating root vegetables like onion, garlic etc. They are known for their charitable and educational works. Jains are mainly found in Punjab, U.P. Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharastra, Delhi and Madhya Pradesh.

- IV. Buddhism** was founded by Goutam Buddha. He was born in 563 BCE at Lumbini in Tarai of Nepal. When he realized that worldly goods could not give him real happiness then he left his home in search of truth and real happiness. At the age of 35, when he was sitting under a pepal tree in Gaya (Bihar), he got enlightenment and realized the truth and became Buddha. He passed away at the age of 80, in 483 BCE at Kushi Nagar (UP). According to him the real cause of misery is desire and the desires can be removed by following Astangika Marg or Eight-fold path. These are right observation, right action, right livelihood, right thinking, right determination, right speech, right exercise and right meditation. He said if one follows the eight fold path then he can attain desired goal, i.e. Moksha. Buddha was silent on the existence of God and discard caste biases. Buddha's teachings are compiled in Tripitakas that contains rules for monks, sermons for the people. Today, we can see Buddhists in almost every part of India especially in the states like Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram etc.
- V. Islam:** Islam originated in Arabia as a monolithic religion comprising about 14.23% of the total population of India, as per Census 2011. It is the second largest religion in the country and its followers are known as Muslims. It came to India towards the last quarter of the twelfth century A.D. with the Muslim trespassers. The Muslim rulers in India belittled it. They set up long lines over substantial pieces of the nation and supported transformations from Hinduism and Buddhism. Therefore the quantity of Muslims step by step expanded in India. Islam encompasses two important branches: Sunni and Shiite. The Indian Muslims are also divided into the Sunni and Shiite community. Sunni community accepts the first four caliphs as rightful successor to Muhammad whereas Shiite community believes Ali as the legitimate successor to Muhammad and rejects the first three caliphs i.e. Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman. Islam does not have confidence in symbol love. The 'Quran', holy book of Islam, appoints five essential obligations of a genuine and faithful Muslim, for example, confidence in God (Allah), petitions five times each day, the giving of charity, a month's quick consistently, and a journey to Mecca at any rate once in the existence time of a Muslim.
- VI. Christianity** religion was founded by Jesus which was based on the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. He was born in Bethlehem, a village of Jerusalem. It is said that he performed certain miracles before the people and claimed that he was the son of god. He preached that there is only one God. He gave message to the people in simple language in the form of stories. He emphasized that God is the great healer and loves all. He was fearless and spoke freely against evils of the society. As he called himself the 'king of Jews', the Roman rulers considers him as a rebel and they nailed Jesus to a cross and killed him. Since then the 'Cross' has become a sacred symbol for the Christians. The sacred day of his death is called as Good Friday and the birth of Christ i.e. 25th December is celebrated as Christmas. The Christian era started from first CE. Christians believe in the Day of Judgment which comes after the closure of human life. They believe that a person is rewarded on the judgment day as per the type of life he led. The holy book of Christian is Bible which has two parts. These are, Old Testament that contains history of the religious beliefs of the Jews and the New Testament contains biography and teaching of Jesus Christ.
- Christianity came to India through crafted by St. Thomas, a supporter of Jesus. Anyway in the sixteenth century the Portuguese landed in India for exchange and in this way settled Christian church. The Dutch pursued the Portuguese during the time spent colonization. Be that as it may, they were not keen on spreading the Christian confidence. The Britishers pursued the Dutch. They had likewise spread Christianity through ministers. Today, Christians in India are scattered all over the country, but they are mostly found in Nagaland, Mizoram and Meghalaya. Indian education system has been adopting Christian School practices because Christian schools were considered as one of the best educational institutions in the world.
- VII. Zoroastrianism** is one of the oldest religions and its profounder was prophet Zarathustra of Persia (Iran). It was founded around 6th century BCE. The followers are known as Parsees. According to Zoroastrianism there is only one God i.e. Ahur Mazda who is the God of good forces and the evil forces is represented by Ahirman. But ultimate winner is Ahur Mazda. This religion teaches to follow the right deeds, right thinking and right speech. Zoroastrians offer prayer in front of the fire

and they worship sun and fire. They believe that if a person's good actions are more than the evil then he goes to heaven and otherwise to the hell. Their holy book is Avesta, which contains sacred songs which are recited everyday in praise of Zoroaster. Parses is an extremely small religious group which you can find mostly in Mumbai. One can become Parse, only if he or she is born in that family that's why they are very few in number

VIII. Judaism is followed by the Jews or Hebrews. They first lived in Mesopotamia and their leader was Abraham. But they later migrated to Palestine and established their state in Palestine with Jerusalem as their capital. They believe in one single God (mono-theistic) i.e. Jehovah who loved people but punished the sinners. The followers are supposed to offer prayers to God everyday and their temple is known as 'Synagogue'. After 70 CE, Jews left Palestine and settled in different parts of the world. Their sacred books are 'Old Testament' and 'Apocrypha' that contain history of Jews, poetic verses, knowledge of medicine and astronomy and the rules to be followed by every Jew.

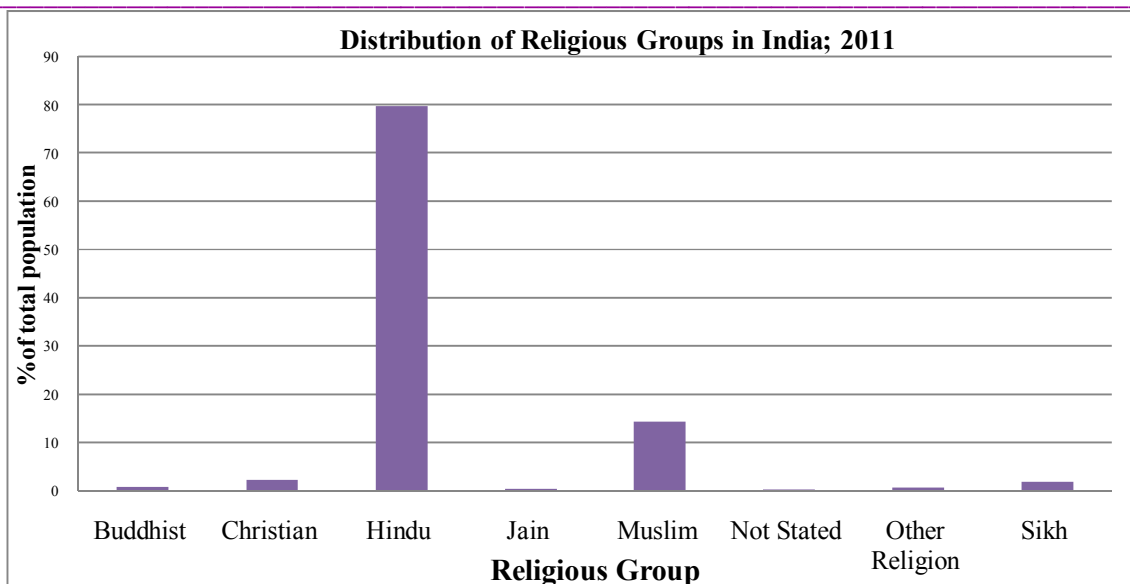
Trends of Religious Groups in India:

From the season of initiation, the Census of India has been gathering and distributing data about the religious affiliations as communicated by the general population of India. According to the 1931 census there were ten religious groups in India. These are Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Zoroastrians, Jews and other tribal and non-tribal religious groups. The Census of 1961 listed only seven religious categories: Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains and other religions and persuasions. The latest religious data of India was released by the Government of India on 25th August, 2015. This is the first time "No religion" category was added in the census. According to 2011 census, there are six major religions in India. Among them 79.8% (966.2 million) are Hindus while Muslims are 14.23% (172.2 million), Christians are 2.30% (27.8 million), Sikhs are 1.72% (20.8 million), Buddhists are 0.70% (8.44 million), and Jains are 0.37% (4.45 million). These six religion groups comprising 99.1% of total population. Other religion is 0.66% (7.94 million) and no religion category is 0.24% (2.87 million). On the other hand, there are six religion groups in India, which have been awarded as "Nation Minority". These are Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, and Parses.

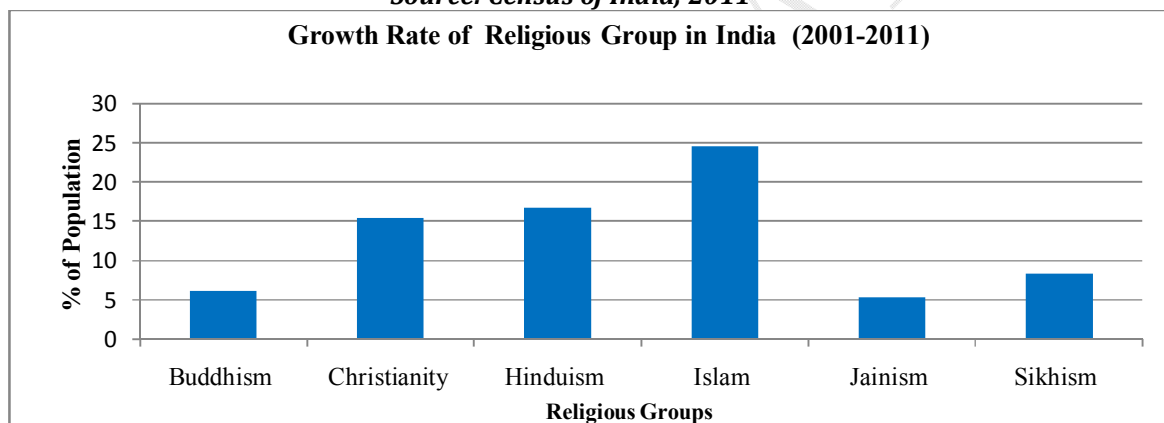
Table: 1 Religious Groups in India; 2011

Religion	% of Population	Actual Population (Million)	No. of State With Majority
Hindu	79.80%	966.2	28
Muslim	14.23%	172.2	2
Christian	2.30%	27.8	4
Sikh	1.72%	20.8	1
Buddhist	0.70%	8.44	-
Jain	0.37%	4.45	-
Others	0.66%	7.94	-
Not Stated	0.24%	2.87	-

Source: Census of India; 2011



Source: Census of India; 2011



Source: Census of India; 2001 & 2011

Table: 2 Characteristics of religious groups in India; 2011

Religion	% of Population	Growth Rate in % (2001-2011)	Sex Ratio	Sex Ratio (Rural)	Sex Ratio (Urban)	Sex Ratio (Child)	Literacy Rate (%)	Work Participation Rate (%)
Hindu	79.80	16.8	939	946	921	913	73.3	41.0
Muslim	14.23	24.6	951	957	941	943	68.5	32.6
Christian	2.30	15.5	1023	1008	1046	958	84.5	41.9
Sikh	1.72	8.4	903	905	898	828	75.4	36.3
Buddhist	0.70	6.1	965	960	973	933	81.3	43.1
Jain	0.37	5.4	954	935	959	889	94.9	35.5
Others / Not Stated	0.90	NA	959	947	975	974	NA	NA

Source: Census of India; 2001 & 2011

Table: 3 Religious Groups in Rural & Urban India; 2011

Religious Group	Rural India		Urban India	
	%	Actual Population (Million)	%	Actual Population (Million)
Hinduism	82.05	684.1	74.82	282.1
Islam	12.41	103.5	18.23	68.7
Christianity	2	16.6	2.96	11.2
Sikhism	1.79	14.9	1.57	5.9
Buddhism	0.58	4.82	0.96	3.62
Jainism	0.11	0.9	0.94	3.55
Others	0.86	7.2	0.2	0.74
Not Stated	0.2	1.65	0.32	1.22

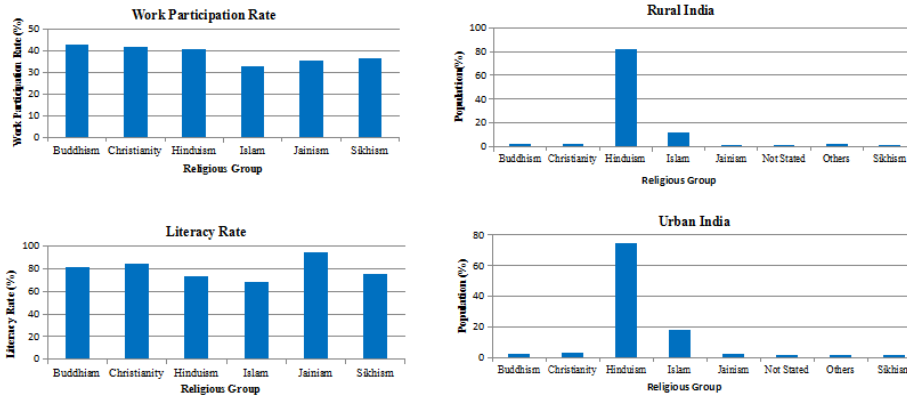
Source: Census of India; 2011

Hindus are the biggest religion gathering of India packed in 28 States and Union Territories with the exception of in Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Lakshadweep, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab. Muslims are in majority in Lakshadweep (96.58%) and Jammu & Kashmir (68.31%). The percentage of Muslims is sizeable in Assam (34.22%), West Bengal (27.01%), Kerala (26.54%), Uttar Pradesh (19.26%) and Bihar (16.87%). Christianity is a dominant religion in three north eastern states like Nagaland, Mizoram and Meghalaya. It is also high in other Indian States and Union Territories like Manipur (34.0%), Goa (26.7%), Andaman & Nicobar Islands (21.7%), Kerala (19.0%), and Arunachal Pradesh (18.7%). Sikhism is mainly found in Punjab and this State consisting of more than 75% of total Sikh population in the country. Alongside Punjab, Chandigarh (16.1%), Haryana (5.5%), Delhi (4.0%), Uttaranchal (2.5%) and Jammu and Kashmir (2.0%) are other essential States and Union Territories having Sikh populace. These six states and Union Territories together record for almost 90 percent Sikh populace in the nation. Sikkim (28.1%), Arunachal Pradesh (13.0%) and Mizoram (7.9 %) have developed as best three states as far as having most extreme level of Buddhist populace. Buddhists are also found in Maharashtra, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh. Jain population are mainly found in Maharashtra (1.3%), Rajasthan (1.2%), Delhi (1.1%), and Gujarat (1.0%). These states and Union Territories together account for nearly 90 percent of the total Jain population in the country.

Growth rate of population of different religion group has come down in the last decade (2001-2011). Hindu population growth rate come down to 16.76 % (2011) from 19.92% (2001). Muslim religion witness marked fall in growth rate to 24.60% (2011) from 29.52 % (2001). This is remarkable incidence in India because such sharp decline in population growth rate for Muslims didn't happened in the last 6 decades. Christian Population growth rate was at 15.5% while Sikh population growth rate stood at 8.4%. The most educated and wealthy community of Jains registered least growth rate of 5.4% in 2011. It is expected that the growth rate of Hindus, Muslims and Christian religion group will decline more in coming 2021 census. But the other religions like Sikhism, Jainism and Buddhism are expected to remain stable for next two decades considering already slowed down growth rate of these religions.

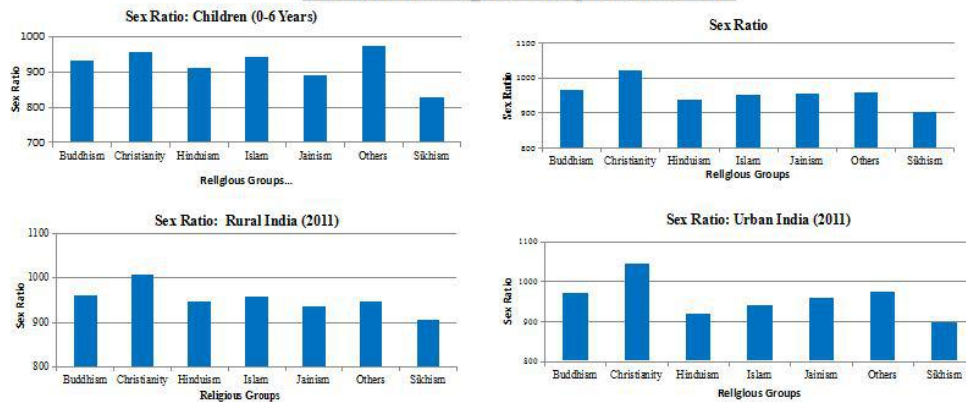
As per 2011 Census of India, Work participation rate is high among Buddhism and it is low (32.6%) among Islam. One interesting feature is that literacy rate is highest (94.9%) among Jainism and lowest (68.5%) among Islam religion people as per 2011 Census of India. At Present, in India, sex ratio is highest (1023) among Christianity and lowest among (903) Sikhism. This is also true for rural and urban India. Hindus are largest (79.8%) religious group in India. This is true in case of rural India (82.05%) & urban India (74.82%) also. In terms of total population, Hindu population was declined from 84.1% in 1951 to 79.8% in 2011. On the contrary we found gradual increase of Muslim population from 9.8% in 1951 to 14.23% in 2011.

Characteristics of Religious Groups in India: 2011



Source: Census of India 1951 to 2011

Sex Ratio of Religious Groups in India :2011



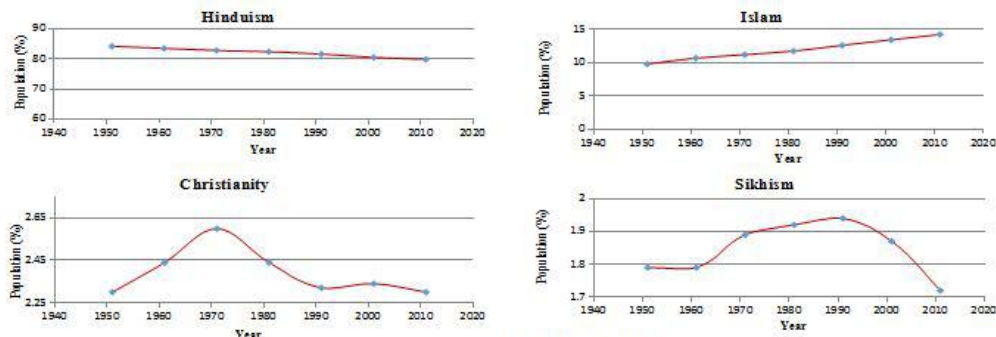
Source: Census of India 1951 to 2011

Table: 4 Population trends for major religious groups in India (1951-2011)

Religious Group	% of Population						
	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Hinduism	84.1%	83.45%	82.73%	82.30%	81.53%	80.46%	79.80%
Islam	9.8%	10.69%	11.21%	11.75%	12.61%	13.43%	14.23%
Christianity	2.30%	2.44%	2.60%	2.44%	2.32%	2.34%	2.30%
Sikhism	1.79%	1.79%	1.89%	1.92%	1.94%	1.87%	1.72%
Buddhism	0.74%	0.74%	0.70%	0.70%	0.77%	0.77%	0.70%
Jainism	0.46%	0.46%	0.48%	0.47%	0.40%	0.41%	0.37%
Zoroastrianism	0.13%	0.09%	0.09%	0.09%	0.08%	0.06%	Not counted
Others/Religion Not Stated	0.43%	0.43%	0.41%	0.42%	0.44%	0.72%	0.9%

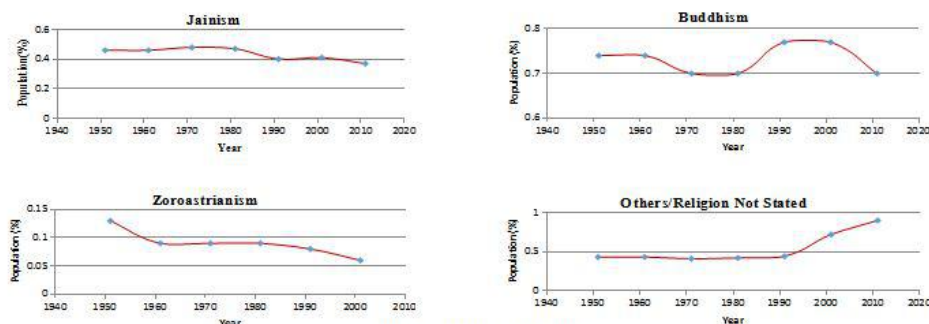
Source: Census of India; 1951 to 2011

Temporal Change of Religious Groups In India



Source: Census of India 1951 to 2011

Temporal Change of Religious Groups In India



Source: Census of India 1951 to 2011

MAJOR FINDINGS:

Major findings of the present studies are outlined as follows:

1. Population Growth rate of various religion has come down in the last decade (2001-2011). Hindu population growth rate slowed down to 16.76 % from previous decade figure of 19.92%.
2. Muslim population witness sharp fall in growth rate to 24.60% (2001-2011) from the previous figure of 29.52 % (1991-2001). Such sharp fall in population growth rate for Muslims didn't happened in the last 6 decades.
3. Hindus are largest (79.8%) religious group in India. This is true in case of rural India (82.05%) & urban India (74.82%) also.
4. Although, in terms of total population, Hindu population was declined from 84.1% in 1951 to 79.8% in 2011. On the contrary we found gradual increase of Muslim population from 9.8% in 1951 to 14.23% in 2011.
5. Christian Population growth rate was at 15.5% while Sikh population growth rate stood at 8.4% in the year 2001-2011.
6. The most educated and wealth community of Jains registered least growth rate in 2001-2011 with figure of just 5.4%.
7. The Growth rate of Hindus, Muslims and Christian is expected to fall more in upcoming 2021 census while other religions like Sikhism, Jainism and Buddhism are expected to remain stable for next 2 decades considering already slowed down growth rate of these religions.
8. Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism and Jainism presently have more or less same population size as was in 1951 although there were some minor increasing trends in between.

9. For the first time, a "No religion" category was added in the 2011 census with 2.87 million people in India.
10. As per 2011 census, six major faiths- Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains make up over 99.4% of India's population, while "other religions' persuasions" (ORP) e.g. Sarnaism, Gond, Sari, Donyi-Polo, Sanamahism, Khasi, found in Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya count is 8.2 million.
11. There are six religions in India that have been awarded "National Minority" status. These religion groups are Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists and Parses.
12. The States which have dominant religion as Islam are Lakshadweep (97%) & J & K (68%)
13. The States which have dominant religion as Christian are Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya
14. The State with dominant religion as Sikhism is Punjab (58%)
15. Presently, there are twenty eight States and Union Territories in India which have Hindu majority i.e. 55% to 95% of total population are Hindu.

CONCLUSIONS:

India is a land of religious diversity but it is very easy for anyone to recognize one's religion and community. In India's constitution every religion is given equal importance and every person is free to follow his or her own religion and beliefs. The best thing about India's religious diversity is that India is not identified with a particular religion. Recognitions are granted to multiple religious communities in India. Irrespective of one's religion, India offers a commitment to values like liberty and equality etc. to all the citizens of India.

The major religions of India are Hinduism (majority religion), Islam (largest minority religion), Sikhism, Christianity, Buddhism, Jainism. India is a land where people of different religions and cultures live in harmony. This harmony is seen in the celebration of festivals. The message of love and brotherhood is expressed by all the religions and cultures of India.

Whether it's the gathering of the faithful, bowing in prayer in the courtyard of a mosque, or the gathering of lamps that light up houses at Diwali, the good cheer of Christmas, the religions of India are celebrations of shared emotion that bring people together. People from the different religions and cultures of India, unite in a common chord of brotherhood and amity in this fascinating and diverse land. This is due to the religious richness of India and tourists from all over the world visit this popular land to have a glimpse of the religious diversity of India.

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