

Commentary

Direct and indirect methods of demography

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ABOUT THE STUDY

The statistical study of populations, particularly human populations, is called demography. Whole civilizations or groups that are identified by factors like education, nationality, religion, or ethnicity might be the subject of demographic studies. Despite the existence of some autonomous demography departments, educational institutions often treat demography as a subfield of sociology.

Any medical facility's fundamental data, including patient demographics, emergency contact information and medical record data, comes from its patients. They enable the identification of a patient and the classification of that patient for statistical analysis. Date of birth, gender, date of death, postal code, ethnicity, blood type, emergency contacts, primary care physician, insurance provider information, allergies, significant diagnoses, and significant medical history are all examples of patient demographics. Unlike the more comprehensive field of social demography or population studies, which also examines the relationships between economic, social, institutional, cultural, and biological processes influencing a population, formal demography restricts its subject of study to the measurement of population processes.

Direct methods of demography

Vital statistics registries, which keep account of all births, deaths, and certain changes in legal status like marriage, divorce, and migration, provide direct data (registration of place of residence). Registry statistics are the most accurate way to estimate the number of births and deaths in developed nations with good registration systems.

The other typical direct technique for gathering demographic information is a census. A census, which aims to count every individual in a nation, is often carried out by the national government. Censuses often take place only every 10 years or so and are therefore not always the best source of data on births and

deaths. Vital statistics data, in contrast, are typically collected constantly and summarised on an annual basis. After a census, analyses are performed to determine how much undercounting or over counting occurred. These contrast the sex ratios derived from the census data with those predicted using mortality and natural value statistics.

In a census, more than simply persons are counted. In addition to obtaining data on individual traits like age, sex, marital status, literacy/education, job status, occupation, and location, they frequently also gather data on families or households. They may also gather information on citizenship, language, religion, nationality or ethnicity or race, and migration or place of birth or previous residency. The censuses are also utilised as a direct source of information regarding fertility and mortality in nations where the vital registration system may be unreliable; for instance, the People's Republic of China collects data on births and deaths that were place in the 18 months before to the census.

Indirect methods of demography

When complete data are unavailable, as is the case for the majority of historical demography and much of the developing world, indirect techniques of data collection must be used. The sister method is one of these contemporary demography procedures, in which survey researchers ask women how many of their sisters have passed away or given birth and at what age. Researchers can then indirectly calculate the population's birth and death rates using these surveys. Asking people about their siblings, parents, and kids is another indirect strategy used in modern demography. Historical demography needs further indirect techniques.

There are numerous demographic modelling techniques for population processes. Models for mortality, fertility, marriage, disability, population growth, and forecasts are among those included.

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