



**PHILIPPINE POPULATION: IMPLICATIONS,  
PROGRAM AND POLICIES**

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## PREFACE

This book is the fruit of three intangibles: first, research covering a year of poring over conference reports, tables, pamphlets, interview-write-ups, periodicals, and books; second, a fierce desire to awaken students to the urgency of the problems arising from the demographic-economic complex in the Philippines; and third, the encouragement, gentle but persistent, of Dr. Socorro Espiritu, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences of the University of the East.

Hence, this book is a textbook for college students. Its target is the student whose acquaintance with demography is limited to the catch phrases "population explosion" and "family planning." For that reason the first chapters of the book, starting where the student is, eschew the jargon of demography but works gradually toward the language of demographers, economists, and family planners, only, however, to the extent that an educated layman should find necessary.

The book is made up of two parts: the first describes the population phenomenon as an aggregate and identifies Philippine population in terms of location, size, composition, territorial distribution, etc. It analyses population theories and assesses the human consequences of acute population pressures on a whole constellation of activities revolving not just around man's better life but more important, about his survival in an increasingly depleted world.

Part II discusses one of the demographic processes in the Philippine context — fertility — and examines the proposition that the Philippines can curb its runaway population by striking at its source, the prolific Filipino husband and wife. The socio-cultural values affecting the acceptance of family planning are traced to their roots, the methods of limiting fertility are analyzed, and incentives for adopting such methods are suggested.

The student who uses this book will, it is hoped, sense the gravity of the problems arising from our accelerated population growth and will so passionately desire the good life for himself and his family that he will regulate his way of life now to conform to world policies on demography. As knowledge and understanding grow, so grows the awareness that the drive for a decent life must not be allowed to fail.

## THE AUTHORS

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## INTRODUCTION

### POPULATION PRESSURES UNDERSCORE NEED OF POPULATION PROGRAM AND POLICY

The unprecedented rate of growth of the world's population in the 1960's caused such worldwide alarm that many people began to talk about a possible doomsday within the next one hundred years. Paul and William Paddock predicted that 1975 would be a crucial year. Food shortage would dominate the headlines. A trend that could not be reversed.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, Paul Ehrlich forecasted that from 1975 to 1985 the world would experience vast famine and hundreds of millions of people would starve to death, if natural disasters or thermonuclear wars do not kill them first.<sup>2</sup>

In another research book entitled "The Limits to Growth," Donella Meadows concluded that if the present population growth rate, industrialization, pollution, food production and resource depletion would continue, limits to growth would be reached within the next one hundred years. The most probable outcome would be an abrupt and uncontrolled decline of population and industrial capacity.<sup>3</sup> However, if the present population growth and the economic and ecological situations would be altered, it would be possible to reach a global equilibrium that would satisfy the basic material needs of man and would provide equal opportunities to all men.<sup>4</sup> However, attaining this equilibrium was considered by Meadows as unrealistic. It would mean a sudden change of fertility level or a sudden world adoption of a two-child family before the end of the century. In less developed countries, such a situation is

<sup>1</sup>William Paddock, "Famine 1975," *Population Evolution and Birth Control* (San Francisco: Freeman and Co. 1964), p. 123.

<sup>2</sup>Paul Ehrlich, "Paying the Piper," *Population, Evolution and Birth Control* (San Francisco: Freeman and Co. 1964), p. 127.

<sup>3</sup>Donella H. Meadows et al., *The Limits to Growth* (New York: Universe Books and Potomac Associates, Inc., 1972), p. 23.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 24

unlikely to happen within the next fifty years,<sup>5</sup> but in the most developed countries, fertility has to be further reduced.<sup>6</sup> This harsh reality is compounded by the fact that only a few countries are interested in any crash program that will arrest population growth.<sup>7</sup> Fortunately, despite the general indifference, there are leaders and social scientists who recognize the imperative of manipulating birth rate. Through their efforts, a number of governments have institutionalized population programs and policies.

### Philippine Attitude and Approach to a Population Program

Up to the early sixties, the Philippines was unconcerned by the global need to control population. The thrust of national endeavor was the improvement of the standard of living through economic development and the conquest of disease to improve population quality and safeguard community welfare.

Success in these national pursuits led to an acute awareness of the appalling implications of a high rate of population growth. As living standards increased and life expectancies improved because of healthier environments, there loomed new and serious threats to society such as population implosion, pollution and the depletion of natural resources.

Most Philippine laws which may be said to have some bearing on population trends are pronatalist in nature. They encourage big families. To this day, these laws are in the statute books. Among the notable examples are: 1) an act imposing higher taxes on the unmarried; 2) the act granting tax exemptions for every additional child (limited to four dependents); 3) measures granting special privileges to pregnant employees.

The reluctance of past administrations to embark on population control stemmed from these following factors: 1) the laissez faire attitude arising from the belief that the greatest welfare will be achieved through non-interference with family size because child-bearing is inextricably imbedded in the religious beliefs and spiritual values of the people; 2) the presence of virgin tracts of tillable land capable of supporting a bigger population; and 3) the theory that industrialization raises the standard of living, supports a growing population, and eventually brings a decline in fertility.

<sup>5</sup>Tomas Frejka, *The Future of Population Growth* (New York: John Wiley, 1973), p. 202.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup>*Ehrlich, op.cit.*, p. 127.

These theories dominated the thinking of the early sixties and accounted for government concentrations on extensive construction of roads and bridges, the opening of new industries, the increase of areas under cultivation, and the intensive efforts towards electrification of the countryside.

### Population Growth and Industrialization

Soon enough the Philippine government has realized the futility of its efforts to industrialize the country without controlling population growth. High fertility postpones the attainment of a much-needed industrialization. Coupled with the need to curb population growth and to industrialize are the needs for capital resources, adequate leadership, trained manpower and a change of the age-old customs and traditions of the people.

Spengler pointed out that rapid population growth imposes two kinds of cost on people. First, the growth absorbs resources that could otherwise be spent to increase physical and personal capita per head. Savings that could be spent for capital investments are spent instead for reproduction and for rearing and educating the newcomers. Second, the growth renders the population age composition less favorable to high production.<sup>8</sup>

In sum reduction of Philippine fertility would enhance industrialization, accelerating the growth of income and providing productive employment for all adults. Reduction of fertility permits improvement in the education and the training of the population, leading to better productive outcome. On the other hand, if the government were to wait for industrialization to affect fertility, it would take sixty years to do so.<sup>9</sup>

The Marcos government has instituted economic reforms and established definite population policies. The administration advocated the green revolution to increase food supply, land reform to accelerate the subdivision, distribution and transfer of land to the man who tills the soil, family planning to acquaint people about the most recent methods of controlling and spacing births, and population education to inform people about the causes and effects of the Philippine population growth.

<sup>8</sup> Joseph Spengler, "Population and Economic Growth," *Forum: The Population of the World Series* (U.S.A.: Voice of America, 1971), p. 32.

<sup>9</sup> Anshley Coale, "Population and Economic Development," *Population Dilemma* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1969), pp. 59-85.



## CHAPTER I

### POPULATION EDUCATION

#### The Meaning of Population Education

The Population Education Program (PEP) of the Department of Education and Culture defines population education as "the process of developing awareness and understanding of population situations for the attainment of quality life for the individual, the family, community and the world."<sup>1</sup>

The definition implies that population education is any deliberate effort of the school to educate the youth on the dynamics and implications of population. The program aims to develop the attitudes and ideals that will make young people adopt a family size that fits both their circumstances and society's needs. The hope is that ultimately, the young will gravitate toward a small-size family norm.

Population education is often taken to mean as sex education. Sex education provides the individual with an adequate physical, mental and emotional maturation in relation to sex. It eliminates fears and anxieties relating to sexual development and adjustments. Population education, on the other hand, aims to deepen the student's awareness of the processes and consequences of population growth that should affect their decisions about future reproductive behavior. However, some aspects of human reproduction and sexuality are shared by both population and sex education because an understanding of sexuality and the physiology of human reproduction is necessary to develop awareness of population.

#### 1. Objectives of a Population Education Program

Authorities on population education agree that the main goal of a population education program is to help students understand population dynamics and to conceptualize the relevance of

<sup>1</sup>*Planning for the Future: Population Education in the Philippines*; an Information Handbook: Department of Education, 1972, p. 5.

population changes to themselves as they make reasonable and responsible decisions regarding population matters. From these generally stated objectives, the Population Education Program (PEP) has framed four major aims. By integrating population education in the formal curriculum, the pupils are expected to<sup>2</sup>

1. Acquire knowledge of—
  - a) The methods and problems of measuring population situation;
  - b) the fertility, mortality, and migration behavior of people over time and space;
  - c) the values, beliefs, and practices of society which influence fertility, mortality, and migration behavior;
  - d) the effects of rapid population growth (and other population changes) on economic development, food production, health, education and other natural resources, political power, sociological, and psychological aspects of people's lives; and
  - e) human and non-human reproductive processes (sexuality).
2. Develop rational and responsible attitudes and behavior towards family size and towards other population matters.
3. Acquire skills in planning and decision-making and utilize them in planning and decision-making on population matters now and later in life.
4. Improve the ability to learn by participating in classroom activities which employ a variety of teaching strategies-with emphasis on the discovery approach and less emphasis on lecture.

### The Coverage of Population Education

The five major areas chosen where the goals are most likely to be attained are:<sup>3</sup>

1. demography or population dynamics
2. determinants of population growth

<sup>2</sup> Juan Manuel, "The Population Education Program of the Philippines," paper read at the 8th Biennial Conference, UNESCO, Manila: September 6-8 1973, pp. 5-6.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

3. consequences of population growth
4. sexuality and human reproduction
5. planning for the future

1) **Demography or Population Dynamics.** — The study of population is important to the understanding of population matters. Basic instruction in demographic tools such as birth rates, death rates, and dependency ratio are initially learned on the family level and analyzed eventually as regards changes in the community and the world.

Social studies will be used extensively in developing knowledge of demographic concepts. Arithmetic and mathematics utilizing population data may be used to provide incidental learning.

2) **Determinants of Population Growth.** — The causes of population increase, the customs and traditional practices that promote large families and understanding of the interrelation of factors in the socio-economic background which contribute to growth will be studied.

It is envisioned that Social Studies, and to a lesser degree, Health Education, Science, and Home Economics will be the "avenues" in this area.

3) **Consequences of Population Growth.** The social and economic effects of too many children, the capacity to provide for the basic needs and the opportunities for education and health problems related to child-bearing will be taught in Health Education, Home Economics, Social Studies, and Science.

4) **Sexuality and Human Reproduction.** Basic knowledge of the process of human reproduction with its biological, psychological, and sociological components will be introduced. Information on family planning facilities will be provided.

5) **Planning for the Future.** Teacher-learning situations that provide opportunities for decision-making will be incorporated. Emphasis will be given to problems that involve value conflict. This will develop student competence in handling situations wherein conflict arises between personal desires and group interests or between the good of the individual and the welfare of others.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*



## Implementation

Population education is taught from grade one to fourth year high school. It will be taught as a single elective course in the teacher education curriculum. Grade one is the starting point for the teaching of population education because attitudes, whether on population or other matters, are developed early in life. Since the curriculum program of schools is tight, it is not practical to introduce population education as a new or separate subject. The Department of Education has adopted a scheme of integration where a population education unit is introduced in the existing syllabus of a certain subject area. This is the unit method in the elementary. In college, the curriculum is permeated with population concepts into the different subject areas.

## Curriculum Development and Training

Population education is a new field. As such, there will never be a "final" set of curriculum materials. The curriculum will be continually revised to reflect new ideas derived from research and observation. Suggestions for revisions will also come from an evaluation of the first set of materials. Some basic population data would have to be changed periodically in order to be up to date. Thus, curriculum revisions will be made every year, at least for the 5-year duration of the program.<sup>5</sup>

The PEP has prepared a massive program for teachers. There are two kinds of training. One is the five-week program for instructions of teacher training institutions and supervisors, called the Supervisory Training Teachers (STTS). The other is the one week training course for elementary and secondary teachers.<sup>6</sup>

The training program aims to:

1. develop knowledge of population dynamics;
2. develop an awareness of the objectives of population education;
3. develop effective techniques of teaching population education; and
4. develop competence in training the teachers to use the curriculum materials effectively.

The five-year plan of the program expects to train 200,000 supervisors and teachers all over the country.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.