

BASIS OF POPULATION CHANGE AND AGEING: A PERSPECTIVE OF IRAN

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ABSTRACT

The paper explores how various demographic indicators affect ageing as a whole, and how the emerging phenomenon is flourishing in various societies. During the 20th century many countries particularly the Western world experienced much change in their population trends and indicators leading to population ageing. Whereas the industrial world has widely adapted to its increasing ageing population, and has brought about social security system and pension system for a wide range of its growing ageing people, the developing world lags behind. The new phenomenon of ageing has attracted diverse specialists such as sociologists, psychologists, anthropologists, political scientists, geographers and legal scholars in addition to gerontologists and demographers to tackle various and increasing problems of the ageing people. The author has come to know that ageing as a new social issue needs new and relevant education, curriculum and knowledge. As many upcoming generations will face it, ageing must stay on the agenda, followed by new strategies to be planned for.

Keywords: Demographic behaviour. Fertility behaviour. Cultural influence. Ageing. Modernization.

Problem of Study

Population ageing is a shift in the distribution of a country's population towards older ages. It is usually reflected in an increase in the population's mean and median ages, i.e. a decline in the proportion of children, and a rise in the proportion of the population that is elderly. Ageing of population occurs due to change in population structure, and the related- indicators. The following discussions and analyses of the demographic indicators

accrue to the new phenomenon of population ageing. The new demographic model that is appearing in many parts of the world especially in Asia, is resulting in surging ageing population. Increasing longevity that is leading to more elderly people, is becoming problematic for newly emerging societies/economies. However, it is the force of declining fertility that is the largest contributor to population ageing in the world today (Weil: 1997). Roughly out of 150000 people who die each day across the globe, about two thirds, or 100000 per day die of age-related causes (Aubrey et al., 2007).

Objective

The aim of study is to prove the relationship between sociology and demography. While demography is the study of human population dynamics, it encompasses the study of the size, structure and distribution of populations, and how populations change over time due to births, deaths, migration, and in recent decades the elders, it feeds sociology which mainly studies social change, social groups, lifestyles and population ageing. So, the two disciplines are interconnected with each other.

Sociology of population reflects the notion that the superiority of the advanced industrial world is more due to their internalized population organization and planning. While the Western world's population remains static or declines, the size of the developing world population is ever on increase, and the biggest increase in population is currently taking place in Asia and Africa. While in 1950, the annual increase in world population was 28 million, by 1960 it was 72 million per annum, and by the year 2000, it reached 94 million per year of world population increase. While the entire conditions brought the world population to 7.3 billion in the year 2014, the population of Iran reached over 75 million in 2014 from 16.5 million in 1950.

To explain and analyze such sociological change especially at the macro and/or micro levels, sociologists should first turn to demographic indicators for possible explanations. Demographic analysis as powerful tools play role to explain a number of sociological phenomenon. However, demographic indicators are often informative in explaining the world events.

The dimensions of such huge increase if not studied, analyzed and predicted, social, economic and ecological challenges are inevitable. Among other things, the number of the youth exploding followed by increase in the number of the elderly in the next decades, will culminate in various problems, namely, the affects of which on development and peace will be

miserable. Sociologically speaking, doubling of population in many parts of the world in less than fifty years calls for immediate probing and investigation. As a whole, poverty, deprivation, social injustice, unemployment and political exclusion; all leading to challenges and even threats; all depend on quality and quantity of population, and that should be the focus of major sociological researches in the future. However, population health is an essential component of human and social development (Gaimard:2014). As both a means and an end of development, health is at the heart of population quality.

Introduction

The study of human populations has its roots like sociology in industrial revolution. Similarly, the development of demographic calculations started in the 18th century through censuses and registration statistics comprising of birth, death, marriage and divorce registrations.

Throughout the world the field of population studies is becoming broader in scope. Research in population is no longer the exclusive domain of a few professional groups, such as demographers and public health specialists; rather, researchers from those fields that have traditionally been involved in population, are now working hand-in-hand with such diverse specialists as psychologists, anthropologists, political scientists, geographers and legal scholars. That is to say, a group of disciplines are currently involved in the issue. Population dynamics focus on topics such as the demographic transition, labour market challenges, universal education and gender issues (Groth et al.2012).

This broadening of population studies or sociology of population results from a recognition that demographic behaviour has roots in the society, the culture and the psychological development of the individual that are only poorly understood. Better knowledge about the complex causes of demographic behaviour will not only facilitate the development of government programmes to bring about changes, but will also shed light on the probable consequences, intended and unintended of such changes. Though the effects of population growth are relatively recent, yet assertions that population growth could affect human welfare are not (Narasaiah: 2001).

In the definition of the concept of sociology of population, we try to deal with selected aspects of fertility behaviour², demographic behaviour, and also focus on psychological dimensions, specially the social-psychological dimensions of fertility. The term "social - psychological" should not be construed to apply only to the domain of a particular

professional group, i.e., social - psychologists, rather, the term is used here to describe those theoretical or research approaches that consider simultaneously the individual and the social context and attempts to relate one to the other in a dynamic way. Such an outlook is common among behaviourally - oriented researchers in many of the social sciences, as well as among those identified as social - psychologists.

A particular advantage of the social - psychological approach is that, it lends itself readily to linkage with the long and rich tradition of socio - demographic research. In most societies, the social parameters of fertility behaviour are now well known; one of the objectives of social - psychological research is to extend this knowledge to the individual level through models that incorporate both social and psychological levels of conceptualization.

Based on "Social Overhaul Theory" propounded by (Sheykhi:2014); when every part of the social, economic and cultural machinery of the society is improved in time, in place, and in parallel, then the whole body would function well, and quality of life is more likely to improve. The whole process is impacted by the quality and quantity of population. The new sociological theory emphasizes on improving each part of society regularly based on a time schedule. However, if developing countries move according to "Social Overhaul Theory", their development and quality of life goals would be achievable.

Sociologists are interested in moving beyond merely the arithmetical analysis of population to achieve theories which can explain patterns of population change, namely, variations in levels of fertility, or "push and pull"³ factors explaining migration (Jary and Jary: 1999). The study of tendencies in world population growth is a particularly important aspect, as is study of the social implications of particular national population profiles (e.g. an ageing population).

In this study, the entire body/ background of the research is based on: First, discussing the cultural, situational and policy influences on fertility behaviour. This provides a broad context for the more specific research topics that follow; that is, dealing with topics that are commonly thought of as psychological value orientations, attitudes, personality dimensions, inter-personal communications, and so on. A discussion of research design and methodological issues must follow too. Finally, a discussion on coordinating and facilitating mechanisms would enhance the research findings.

With respect to population policies, it is noted that the emphasis on family planning programmes⁴ as a means to resolve population problems is in part responsible for the lack of an adequate knowledge base to assist in the development of policies other than family

planning that might reduce fertility. There is an urgent need, therefore, to stimulate more social science research of high quality on the multiple factors that influence fertility.

Method of Research

The research is based on qualitative frameworks to provide information about the "human" side of the issue—that is, the often contradictory behaviours, beliefs, opinions, emotions, and relationships within the population. In that, the author has tried to identify the intangible factors such as social norms, socio-economic status, gender roles, ethnicity and education of the population. The qualitative research method used by him has helped the author interpret and better understand the complex reality of the given situation. Throughout the research, the author played as a participant observer and did in-depth interviews with (250 people) focus groups. The author also reviewed the background literature to obtain the relevant data. In this way, he could collect the necessary data through this qualitative flexible method. The main assumption of the present research is: "The health of a population is not independent of broader demographic trends."

Profiles and Challenges

The demographic characteristics of human populations are clearly of major importance for any sociological understanding of human society. Despite these obvious connections between demography and sociology, it is perhaps surprising that the two disciplines have tended to develop as separate and distinct approaches to human society. Although the question of population density played an important part in early sociological theories of social contract and division of labour, subsequent sociological theory and research took the demographic features of society to be of central analytical significance in sociological explanation. However, bridging between the two could be illustrated as such: while demographers are inclined to relate the cultural and social factors between population and environment, sociologists too, take into account population variables between society and environment.

The relationship between demography and sociology has in recent years changed fundamentally with recent developments in social history of human populations, which is centrally concerned with such questions as marriage practices, family structure and generally with impact of social conditions on fertility, mortality and migration. Historical demography employs the method of family reconstitution including births, deaths and marriages of the

family (Coleman: 1992). The use of this method transformed sociologists' understanding of the family. Historical demography, especially under the impact of Cambridge Center for the Study of Population and History, has made a major contribution to the re-evaluation of conventional sociological perspectives on the family, fertility and social class, and the social aspects of population dynamics. This expansion in historical demography consequently made important contributions to the sociological analysis of social change by improving our understanding of the relationship between population change, social structure, technological improvement, women's improvement of quality of life, public healthcare etc.

In the analysis of sociology of population, it is worthwhile to discuss formal demography, social demography, and the differentiation between the two. To what are usually known as formal demography and social demography respectively. The former involves making sure you have an adequate understanding of data sources and simple methods of analysis, and the latter involves using these data and methods to understand the social aspects of population change and its causes and consequences.

Alternately, social demography is concerned with social causes and consequences of demographic transition. The demographic transition is the change in the human conditions from high mortality and high fertility to low mortality and low fertility (Caldwell:2006). The relationship between demographic and socio-cultural factors is usually one of reciprocal influence (Shrivastava: 1995). Social demography is concerned with relationships between social and demographic phenomena. It is thus, distinguished from formal demography which deals with relationships among demographic variables that constitute the demographic system, although all demographic processes take place within an influencing social context, yet most social demographic theories are basically dependent upon sociological theories. However, social demographic theory is not developing in isolation. Wilbert Moore and Kingsley Davis, the two leading social demographers of the 20th century, are proponents of the structural-functional approach in social demography.

Davis holds that demographic changes are both reflexive and behavioural. They are *reflexive* in the sense that they affect other components of a social system, when in turn bring about changes in the component initiating the change. They are *behavioural* in the sense that they involve human decisions. Societies faced with problems of prolonged population increase, may choose any number of alternative methods of control. Such strategies and conditions would play to narrow poverty, bridge the gap between the rich and the poor, and thereby create a stable society.

Social demographers emphasize that women are not just for sex play. They plead that women should get equal status not only in sex enjoyment, but also in taking fertility decisions. Sociologists emphasize that a society characterized by male dominance, and a low social status for women is a society which walks with a limp, and which breathe with only one of its lungs.

Population Policies

Cultural and situational atmosphere highly influences population policies and is influenced by the population policies. Situation factors are many and varied, and could be viewed at different levels of conceptualization. In the broadest sense, the culture or society might be taken as a situational influence, and the effects of such variables, as cultural values and social structure could consequently be studied. Likewise, attention may be focused on smaller social units such as ethnic groups or the family in the course of the study of population. In a longitudinal sense, the group may be seen as a learning environment through which socialization of members take place. Hence, behaviour, or better to say fertility behaviour, is shaped through long-term learning experiences in the immediate social environment.

Population policies may be viewed as attempts to structure the group situation i.e., the social system in a manner that would influence individual choices about fertility behaviour. A population policy, by definition should address the population issues or problems as they are perceived by the people of a country (Sinha: 2001). It is important to recognize that even in the absence of a population policy, the social system conveys messages to individuals about the likely consequences, namely, positive or negative, of having another child, or having a large or small family. This process allows for variability in individual choices, and the ultimate goal is to steer the statistical aggregate of fertility decisions in the desired direction. The development of such social - psychological models of fertility behaviour would permit each society to devise more appropriate population policies, taking into consideration the forces that influence childbearing choices in particular setting. Population policies also include the situation of the developed countries and their specific challenges --- sub-replacement fertility, population ageing, and immigration (May:2012). Similarly, population policies explore the way forward and future prospects over the next decades.

Rapid population increase⁵ poses a serious threat to the development efforts of less developed countries. The problem of population is not merely quantitative, but also

qualitative in nature as the implications of population growth on the quality of life and the well-being of the people (Sinha: 2001). It is also felt that such models should focus upon social and psychological factors that are "mutable" or "dynamic", that is; the factors that are susceptible to change with relative ease through public policies or programmes. As a whole, social change could be conceptualized in terms of three processes:

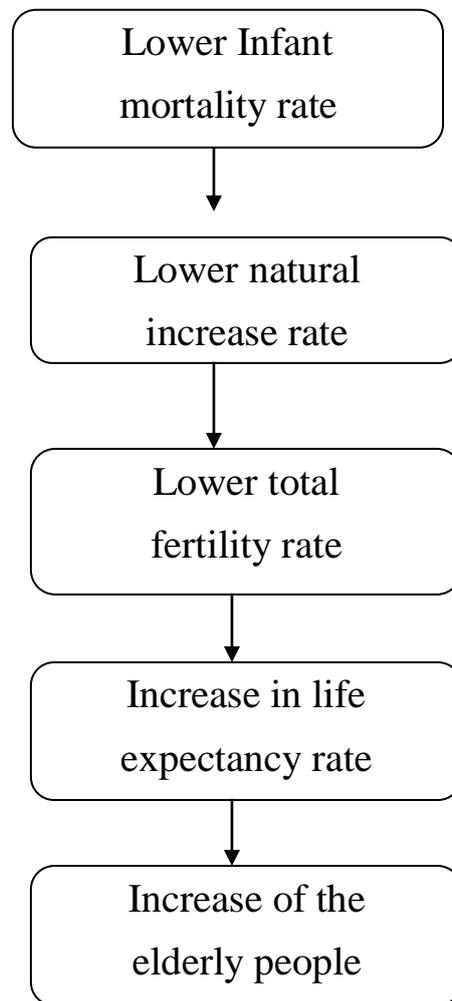
- (1) Accelerated rate of technological development.
- (2) Increased differentiation in the social and family structure.
- (3) Increased rationality in the belief system.

Each of those processes might be related to psychological mediating mechanisms that facilitate fertility reduction. Such knowledge might suggest means for speeding up changes in fertility behaviour without waiting for long-term social change, by designing programmes and policies that affect the psychological mediators directly. For example, educational programmes that strengthen beliefs about the efficacy of science and technology might have a substantial effect on the tendency of individuals to control their own fertility behaviour.

Another way to look at the social context is to consider the opportunity structure and the possibilities for social mobility that it provides. From the individual's perspective, what kinds of work opportunities, social relationships, recreation etc. are available? and, in the context of fertility, to what extent do those opportunities provide satisfactions that might be substitutes for some of the satisfactions obtained through having children?

In this regard, it is important to recognize that children, provide multiple benefits to parents; therefore, diverse policy approaches are required to affect fertility. For example, a social security system might be a good substitute for economic help from children in old age, but it is not a substitute for the emotional support and other types of help that children might provide for their parents. Other types of institutional mechanisms might be required to provide alternative means of social and emotional support in old age.

Trends of Population Dynamics



Situational Factors

Such factors as proposed by Popper are analyzed in terms of the motivations and goals of social actors and the logical implications of those factors. Such factors could be studied in relation to costs of having children. For example, education policies have implicit population effects, in which in most countries, the costs of educating children are borne not by parents alone, but by the wider population through transfer to the school system of payments collected in various ways, such as taxation. If it is presumed that subsidized education has a pronatalist effect, then it must be asked: What would be the fertility effect of reducing or eliminating the subsidy, at least for families which could bear the costs? Given that the rationale for a population policy is to increase the welfare of the people, it is obvious that such policy measures must be considered with a view to whether they would have harmful non-fertility effects, such as aggravating social and economic inequalities.

More widespread awareness of the social costs of excessive childbearing might facilitate the process of fertility reduction. For instance, social pressure for small families might be increased if it were commonly known that basic necessities of life became increasingly scarce when some people chose large families. Also, internal psychological pressures might be enhanced through the development of a "population consciousness" similar to the "ecological consciousness" that has arisen in some countries. Such processes present a translation to the personal level of the societal consequences of population growth. The Ottawa Charter of World Health Organization in 1986 also spoke of the need to achieve healthy public policies and a supportive environment to underpin the health of a population (Cahill: 2002). Sociology of population helps applied demography and public health by describing how applied demographic techniques can be used to help address public health issues (Houque et al.2013).

In view of the fact that in many developing countries the potential use of social and financial disincentives is limited by poverty and inadequate welfare services, more attention should be given to the possibilities of using positive incentives to encourage fertility regulation. In particular, the use of social approval as a reward and the linking of small family size to achievement aspirations deserve analysis by social - psychological researchers.

More attention should be given also to the ways in which development policies in various sectors might have unintended effects on fertility behaviour. For example, an agricultural policy to increase the viability of labour-intensive small farms might have the effect of increasing the economic value of large families. It is recognized of course, that policies in those sectors have their own appropriate rationales, and should not be evaluated solely on the basis of fertility implications. However, policy decisions should be taken in the light of full information about both intended and unintended consequences, with a view to developing integrated national policies to promote social welfare. In many instances, social - psychological mechanisms provide a link between policies of various types and fertility behaviour.

Similarly, sociology of population includes and illustrates *sociology of ageing*. It focuses on the social forces that shape human ageing, their social consequences and policy implications of it. Ageing itself is related to social diversity, inequalities, social relationships, social institutions, economics and governments, social vulnerabilities, public health and care arrangements (Settersten et al.2011).

The sociological approach emphasizes that changes must occur in society to motivate people from high-fertility to low - fertility behaviour (Weeks: 1989). In this context the effect

of urbanization on fertility behaviour is also noticeable. That particular aspect of social change deserves special attention in view of the rapid urbanization occurring in Iran as well as in many other countries of Asia. Studies of the adaptation processes of rural - urban migrants, with changes in fertility behaviour as an aspect of that adaptation, provides a means for understanding the psychological effects of a changed environment. Urban migrants have their own psycho-social characteristics, group norms, interaction patterns and life styles, and the relationships between those psycho-social variables and fertility behaviour needing further exploration. Knowledge derived from such studies could provide important guidelines for population policy, and for information, education and communication programmes, by identifying the particular aspects of the adaptation process that induce motivation towards or against smaller families.

Personal and Family Influences

Economic development and access to new technologies have led to at least some level of fertility decline every where in Asia (East - West Center: 2002). Likewise, behaviour is shaped not only by the external situation or environment, but also through the internal psychological organization of the individual. People learn certain patterned and relatively stable ways of perceiving and responding to the world around them, based in part upon what had been rewarded in their past experience i.e., shaping their attitudes, values and personality dimensions.

Role relationships provide another organizing principle for human behaviour. The social life of each individual might be viewed as a series of structured interactions with others towards whom the individual has a particular type of relationship: son, husband, friend, employee etc. The social system provides rewards for correct role behaviour, and punishment for deviation, thus ensuring that relationships within the society follow a patterned functional course.

In the context of fertility behaviour, many efforts are made to identify and assess the psychological and social-psychological dimensions that are related to the desire for children, family size preferences, and birth - limitation behaviour. The value orientations of individuals have repeatedly been found to be associated with family planning adoption. Some of the values which are recognized as militating against the acceptance of family planning include traditional, familial and kinship orientations, family solidarity, son preference and fatalistic attitude towards life. Values such as mastery, achievement, individualism and

future orientation, namely, what might be called developmental value orientation, is positively correlated with family planning adoption. While factors such as those shown to be related to family planning acceptance, their origin and relative degree of importance need to be studied more adequately, furthermore values and fertility-specific attitudes ought to be studied within the context of individual modernity factors, reflecting the changing socio-cultural context, and the individual's perception of his environment.

The value of children to parents is the subject of recent comparative studies in countries like Iran, India as well as many other countries in the developing world. The study deals with fundamental motivations or reasons for having children. It must also be mentioned that the values of children to parents vary from culture to culture, and according to the sex of the parents and children, and differentiated by socio-economic variables, and are related to fertility level as well. In addition, knowledge is needed about how the parents' general psychological needs are transformed into needs for children, how values that are specific to children are formed and developed, and how the needs for children differ according to the number and sex composition of children already born.

Sociologically speaking, one of the most neglected areas of research in fertility behaviour is the voluntarily childfree couples. What are the psychological costs and benefits of childlessness? How does society perceive couples without children, and how do they perceive themselves? What alternative satisfactions exist for voluntarily childfree couples? What are the social pressures working against childfree couples, and how is the pressure dealt with? Also, in present-day transitional societies, family dynamics are changing rapidly, women's employment outside of the family is frequent, and the sources of women's life satisfaction are tending to move away from the family. Husband and wife share economic responsibility in the family more than ever before. It is important to know how women perceive their changing role in the family, and how that perception influences their level of participation in decision-making for family planning etc.

To gain a total picture of family dynamics, the concept of ecological psychology is needed to be introduced in the study of fertility behaviour, particularly to examine the effects of crowding or density on fertility. In that regard, questions bearing on the effect of crowding on the type of interaction among family members, and the effect of the extended family on decision-making and sexual behaviour are relevant.

The Demographic Transition

The demographic transition is a model and theory describing the transition from high birth rates and death rates to low birth and death rates that occurs as part of the economic development of a country. In pre-industrial societies, population growth is relatively slow because both birth and death rates are high. In most post-industrial societies, birth and death rates are both low, i.e. the transition from high rates to low rates is referred to as the demographic transition. This understanding of societal changes is based on the work of Thompson (1929), Blacker (1947), and Notestein (1945) who derived the model based on changes in demographics over the preceding two hundred years or so.

Holistic Approach

So far as sociological enquiries are concerned, there is now a wider understanding of the necessity for a holistic approach where intensive efforts must be made, to conjointly and simultaneously bring about significant reductions in birth rates nationwide, to provide accessible, affordable, and quality services for reproductive and family planning programmes, where measures to ensure gender equity and the empowerment of women are pursued vigorously, and where social evils such as early age at marriage, and gender violence are combated. Hence, if these components are pursued each on its own; through parallel and vertical programmes, adequate results are not reached. Now, the holistic approach demands interlinkages and horizontal coordination.

Therefore, to eliminate poverty, and bring about full and productive employment and economic growth, and to create a democratic society which is socially integrated, population stabilization⁶ is an integral factor in bringing about the fulfillment of such goals. (IIPS: 2001). Thus, population policy plays a decisive role in encompassing the linkages between population and development, and to some extent the environment.

Traditional vs. Modern

So far as policy issues are concerned, in many societies including Iran, traditional⁷ values are currently in conflict with the modern ones. For example, traditional roles within marriage are likely to change more slowly than other aspects of women's lives such as schooling or employment opportunities (East-West Center: 2002). As long as women who are educated and have worked outside the home, are expected to shoulder all the traditional house

- wifely duties when they become wives, it should come as no surprise that many are reluctant to marry.

Such contradictions of women's changing views and behaviour have profound implications for government policy in areas such as health, family planning, labour, and support systems for the elderly. For instance, postponement of marriage has been an important factor, to bring birth rates to unprecedented low levels in countries such as Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and recently in Iran. These low birth rates raise serious concerns about population ageing and the size of the future workforce in many societies so far as sociological researches and predictions are concerned.

Iran's Demographic Perspective

Iran, with an area of 1648000 k² in south Asia; a demographically fast-growing country in the past fifty years, had a population of 16.5 million in 1950. Since then, through the public census 2011, the country's population has reached 75.1 million (Public Census:2011). But, socio-culturally speaking, with the changes emerged among different social classes, and based on change in the standards and values, doubling time of the country's population towards the year 2050, will approximately take 50 years. Though in recent years every effort has been made to lower the population growth rate, but due to young population structure, Iran's population increase will continue for many more decades.

The most important question on a nation's fertility rate is whether people want to have children, and this decision is shaped by cultural, situational and policy influences in a country. Situational factors which are varied and different play a major role in Iran's fertility behaviour --- a key factor which could even dominate the cultural factor. Culturally speaking, the head of the family in Iran, usually a man, is responsible for the fortunes of all the family members, and his success depends not only on the accumulation of capital in the modern sense, but on the accumulation of people as well. In the traditional Iranian society, the children are either the mainstay, or the whole of the work force. Such deep-rooted attitudes could be changed mainly under the situational and policy influences. The attitude based on the fact that a large family provides extra insurance against old-age under the conditions that the country can not provide full-range and satisfactory old-age assistance programmes. That is to say, the more children a couple have, the better off they will be in old age.

In Iran, where population policies have been waived for many years, the population outlook has changed, i.e, it has become a complicated and problematic phenomenon for "now and then".

Population policies being viewed as attempts to structure the group situation , and the social system, would in a manner influence individual choices about fertility behaviour etc. It is important to recognize that even in the absence of a population policy, the social system could convey messages to individuals about the likely consequences, positive or negative, of having another child, or having a small or large family. One of the aims of the population policy is to adjust the array of messages in a way, so that the individual desires would be congruent with societal well - being.

Due to the deep - rooted cultural values in rural society of Iran, and the great differences in rural - urban standards, population growth rate is still high particularly in the non - urban areas, where more progressive policies must be applied. In Iran, though standards have changed to some extent, and more equality has emerged in the past few years, yet more children and son preference is culturally a value. As, still men earn more in general, so sons add more to the family coffers before they marry, and are better able to support their parents in old age. Furthermore , as the daughters have to be paid on heavily at the time of marriage, hence more sons are preferred, and that is the point where high population growth rate in Iran starts from, and where the cultural values of high fertility behaviour find their roots in. That is why the Iranians say, "the first two sons are for the crows."

Hence, changing such cultural outlook is not so easy, even when medical advances and better nutrition enable more children to live into adulthood in the country. For many decades, prevailing wisdom held that the key to population control was economic development. According to this view, a country must first reach a certain level of modernization (in such areas as industrialization, urbanization, and education) before people will realize the economic advantage of small families. Supporters of this argument point to the rapid fall in birth rates experienced by such newly-industrialized countries as Singapore and south Korea. However, Iran must not wait to first fully get modernized, and then turn to population planning as Sri Lanka and Costa Rica did for example. But , the country must extensively start cultural and population planning parallel with its economic planning.

Iran's Demographic Indicators 2000-2013

Year	Population (millions)	Births per 1000 Pop.	Deaths per 1000 Pop.	Natural increase (annual%)	Infant Mortality Rate	Total Fertility Rate	% Population of Age		Life Expectancy	% Urban	GNP Per Capita 1998 US\$
							<15	65+			
2000	67.4	21	6	1.4	31	2.9	39	5	69	63	1650
* 2001	66.1	18	6	1.2	30	2.6	35	5	69	63	5520 GNI,PPP
2002	65.6	18	6	1.2	32	2.5	33	5	69	66	5910 GNI,PPP
2003	66.6	18	6	1.2	32	2.5	33	5	69	66	5940 GNI,PPP
2004	67.4	18	6	1.2	32	2.5	33	5	69	67	6640 GNI,PPP
2005	69.5	18	6	1.2	32	2.1	30	5	70	67	7550 GNI,PPP
2006	70.3	18	6	1.2	32	2.0	29	5	70	67	8050 GNI,PPP
2007	71.2	18	6	1.2	32	2.0	29	5	70	67	8480 GNI,PPP

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2008	72.2	20	5	1.4	32	2.1	26	5	71	67	10800 GNI, PPP
2009	73.2	20	5	1.5	35	2.0	28	5	71	67	10840 GNI, PPP
2010	75.1	19	6	1.3	29	1.8	28	5	71	69	10840 GNI, PPP
2011	77.9	19	6	1.3	45	1.9	25	5	70	70	11470 GNI, PPP
2012	78.9	19	6	1.3	43	1.9	24	5	70	69	11490GNI, PPP
2013	76.5	19	5	1.4	19	1.9	25	5	73	71	10320 GNI, PPP

Source: Population Reference Bureau, 2000-2013, Washington, DC.

*: Population of the World 2001, Gilles Pison.

Policy Approaches

A major need for Iran is to develop conceptual frames, models and theories to link together the socio - situational variables and the individual - psychological variables that jointly determine fertility behaviour. The development of such socio-psychological models of fertility behaviour would permit Iran to devise more appropriate population policies , taking into consideration the forces that influence childbearing choices in the particular setting.

Occurrence of social change as a master-key to population change could be conceptualized in terms of three processes:

- 1- Accelerated rate of technological development.
- 2- Increased differentiation in the social and family structure.
- 3- Increased rationality in the belief system.

Each of these three processes somehow or the other affect the fertility behaviour , and the tendency of the individuals to control their fertility potentials. But, the problem is that such processes have not extensively penetrated the rural areas and the lower categories of people. Likewise, the opportunity structure and the possibilities for social mobility count a lot so far as population control is concerned. That is to say, work opportunities, social relationships, recreation, etc. are partly responsible for fertility control. They may play as alternatives/ substitutes for some of the satisfaction obtained through having children.

In this regard, it is important to recognize that in Iran, the children provide multiple benefits to parents; therefore, diverse policy approaches are required to affect fertility. For example, an inclusive social security system might be a good substitute for economic help from children in old age, but it is not a substitute for emotional support and other types of help that children might provide for their parents. Other types of institutional mechanisms might be required to provide alternative means of social and emotional support in old age.

In view of the fact that in Iran, the potential use of social and financial disincentives is limited by poverty and inadequate welfare services, hence more attention should be given to the possibilities of using positive incentives to encourage fertility regulation. In particular, the use of social approval as a reward and the

linking of small family size to achievement aspirations deserve analysis by social and psychological researchers.

Future Perspective

Since the quality of life as a result of modernization is different in various provinces /states of the country, the rate of population growth is varying in the different provinces of Iran. While in provinces such as Sistan & Baluchistan bearing high population growth rate; averaging 3.4 percent annually, more prosperous provinces such as Zanzan has an annual population growth rate of 0.77 percent, and Mazandaran has the annual average population growth rate of 0.98 percent. Hence, the continuity of baby-boom in many provinces of the country in the past, including the rural areas, accelerates doubling time of population in the country, and the influx of migrants to the urban areas (Population Data Sheet of Iran: 1996). On the other hand, the latest perspective of Iran reflects different data in annual population growth rates in which Ardabil Province indicates 0.33% annually, and Boshehr Province indicates 3.11 annual population growth rate in 2011 (Public Census:2011).

In some parts of the country and among certain categories of people where women have entered labour market, their fertility patterns have changed, and fertility has lowered, but yet in many parts of the country fertility patterns have not changed . Also, there is largely a moderate approach towards fertility in the country.

Conclusion

Fueled by declines in fertility and increase in life expectancy, the share of the world's population ages 65 and older is ever on track to jump. The study emphasizes how demographic components are sociologically regulated and conditioned. Sociology and demography as related disciplines, though have different perspectives on matters concerning population, when combined, would result in a healthy society. The research also stresses that psychological factors should not be viewed in isolation, but within a situational context. The ideal aim for social and psychological research on fertility is to understand the interaction among the situation, the person (or couple) and fertility behaviour. This implies that social-psychological research should build upon, benefit from and extend previous socio-demographic studies. The study stresses

that the integration of socio-demographic and social-psychological approaches should ultimately lead to better understanding of causal mechanisms, and that such causal understanding is the key to the development of effective long-range population policies.

It is also concluded that social development, social modernization and economic development for men and women in Iran in the form of education, media exposure, and opportunities to work outside home, can provide access to new ideas and, with time, a transformation of cultural values, leading to population change. All the above-mentioned transformations have helped in population change and ageing not only in Iran, but in other developing countries too.

So far as Iran is concerned, there is a lot to be done so as to have an optimum population size. Also, it must be added that the population improvement in Iran would be reached within a situational context; and that could be reached through an interaction among the situation, the person (or couple), and fertility behaviour. Likewise, the integration of socio-demographic and socio-psychological approaches through appropriate policies could ultimately lead to better population situation in the country.

Notes

1. Demographic trap: a demographic situation in which an unexpected population explosion appears due to rapid decline in mortality rates without the same decline in fertility /birth rates, usually accompanied by large migration trends.

2. Fertility behaviour: the behaviour pertaining to the physical capacity of a woman or man to sexually reproduce.

3. Push and pull: the theory which says that some people move because they are pushed out of their former location, whereas others move because they have been pulled or attracted to some place else.

4. Family planning: it is one of the internationally most popular population policies to limit fertility, and it provides each woman with the technological ability to have the number of children she wants.

5. The image of the Third World supported by modernization theory is one in which war, poverty, famine, disaster and drought are either natural disasters or self-

inflicted wounds which visit these societies on occasion. These disasters or social upheavals are often explained in terms of the general inefficiency, or even corruption common to such societies or because of their lack of rational values, or scientific or professional processes of management.

6. Stabilization is a state in which neither the age-specific birth rates nor the age-specific death rates have changed for a long time. In a sense, it is a state in which percentages of people at each age and sex do not change over time.

7. Traditional values of society are presumed to be static and contrasted with a modern changing industrial society in various respects. The concept is widely used in the social sciences, but over the last few decades, it has come to be seen as very problematic, and therefore avoided by many sociologists.

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