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Population and Development in the
Arab World *

by

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I. Introduction

This paper examines the relationship between population and development in the Arab Countries of Asia and Egypt, i.e. countries that belong to the Economic Commission for Western Asia. The following part of the paper delineates the conceptual framework of the discussion. We then proceed to discuss the position of population in processes of socio-economic change in the region stressing the rich variety of the population-development relationship in countries of the region. The last part of the paper investigates in some detail two cases, which are both extreme in many ways on the population-development continuum: Egypt and Kuwait.

II. Conceptual Framework

A. Definition of Terms

By population in this paper we mean a well-connected subsystem of the socio-economic system that is society. The label socio-economic here is meant to cover political and cultural aspects of human existence.

The population subsystem extends to the dimensions of: population size, growth, spatial distribution and characteristics. It is unfortunate that the dimensions of size and growth have overshadowed the other two, a bias that has its basis in a certain point of view on the population-development relationship that we shall discuss later on.

On the purely demographic plane, these four dimensions interact strongly. The link between growth and size is obvious. The relationship between growth and the two remaining dimensions is also strong but affected through the basic four demographic processes: fertility, mortality, internal migration and external migration. Here we reach a higher degree of specification of the population subsystem, and, at once, gain a closer understanding of its functioning.

It is well known that growth and, eventually size, are determined by fertility, mortality and external migration; spatial distribution is determined by natural increase differentials and patterns of internal migration; a young age structure is brought about, in the main, by high birth rates; a relatively high infant mortality rate is strongly related to high birth rates; a young age structure implies that larger cohorts will be in the reproductive age span in the future, etc... In short, population is an internally well-connected system, i.e. its components interact tightly.

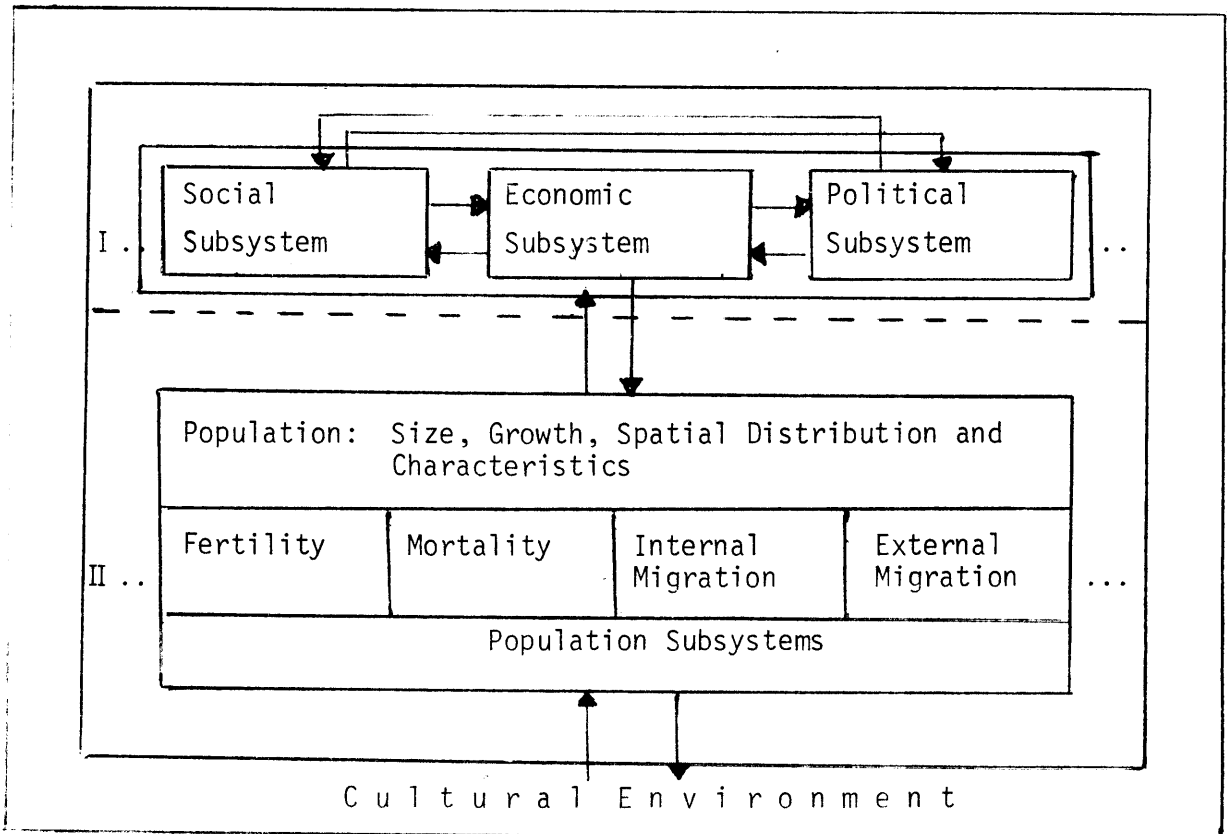
Hence, it is wrong to treat one dimension of the population subsystem in isolation of the remainder of the subsystem.

There are various ways to characterize a society, i.e. a socio-economic system. It is common to identify three major subsystems: the economic, social and political, Level I of figure (1). Again these three major subsystems interact strongly. Increasingly, the cultural environment of these subsystems is gaining recognition. Another environment that envelops the entire system is the International Context.

The population subsystem described earlier is defined on a different level of specification than the three major subsystems. It is connected to all of them as well as to the cultural environment. See figure (1).

Thus the population subsystem does not exist in a vacuum, but as an integral component of a socio-economic, political and cultural context. Fertility and migration, for example, are processes determined by the collective behavior of individuals responding rationally to their socio-economic environment (note that there is a significant cultural aspect to this environment which sets bounds on rationality in the strict neo-classical sense (Earl, 1983).).

Figure. No. 1 Schematic Representation of the Socio-Economic System



Mortality rates, particularly for infants, are sensitive manifestations of the level of socio-economic progress to the extent that the infant mortality rate is considered one of the best indicators of development. Socio-economic variables have been shown to explain most of the variations in fertility change in developing countries (The World Bank, 1980, 65-66).

On the other hand population does have an impact on the socio-economic system, the nature of which shall be discussed in the next part.

In general any system exhibits a structure in the form of structural organization of its major subsystems and their linkages. These structural features determine the basic characteristics and the level of performance of the system, Given a certain structure, a socio-economic system shows variation in time. This we shall refer to as socio-economic change, i.e. variation that does not involve a change in structure.

However, a socio-economic system can, under certain conditions undergo structural transformation. This structural socio-economic change leads to fundamental modifications of the basic characteristics and level of performance of the system. Such structural change, if it satisfies certain conditions, may be called development.

The socio-economic structure of Third World Countries exhibits certain basic features that can be summarized as follows: distorted and inefficient production system, repressive and unjust social organization and subordination to the West in technology, finance, and culture. The end result of these structural features is the lack of satisfaction of basic needs of the masses in the Third World and the increasing deterioration of living conditions in these societies, relative to the better-off segments of humanity. This relative deterioration takes a stupendous future proportion when seen in the light of the expected qualitative shift in technology and consequent social organization that are incipient in the West, the so-called Third Wave.

The historical challenge for Third World Countries is not to improve their position within the present structure. This can only lead to marginal amelioration of misery. The only hope for a better future for the masses in the Third World is a struggle for a long-term structural socio-economic change in these societies aimed at satisfying the basic needs of all the people as a first priority and providing the basis for higher levels of welfare to follow. Attaining this objective necessitates building autonomous technological capability and productive capacity. This can only be a process of human development, based on participation, and stressing cultural identity and self-reliance. It involves an intense political struggle, both internally and internationally. This is what we shall refer to as development.

It is our contention that a process of development, in the sense given above, has not set in Arab Countries. Present patterns of socio-economic change do not satisfy the requirements needed in a development process. In fact, they can prove to be counter-developmental in the long-run. We can only speak of a potential for development that exists in the region as a whole.

b- The Population-Development Debate

The relationship between population and development, as defined above, has rarely been discussed. This might come as a surprise to the reader who is aware of the extensive literature that is normally classified under this title. One major periodical is even entitled "The Population and Development Review" *

We claim that what has been hotly debated, sometimes in a scientific way, but a great many times in an ideologically loaded fashion, is the relationship between (high) population growth and economic growth (measured in the, now widely-discredited, monetary indicators of national accounts). This is the basis of what we might call the "Battle for Population Control in the Third World" which was, of course, given the euphemism : "Family Planning".

It is extremely unfortunate, in our opinion, that the population-development debate has been mostly reduced to the "population growth - economic growth" issue. On the two sides of the relationship attention is thus focused on one dimension in isolation. Population growth is just one of the four interrelated population dimensions. In some societies high population growth might not be a problem. In fact it might be on the top of national priorities to increase the rate of population growth. Other aspects of the population subsystem, as in its linkage to the rest of the socio-economic system, might have more significant implications for social welfare. Economic growth, measured in monetary indicators, is just one rather insignificant aspect of the complex processes of development as defined above. Actually, since, development as defined above, is the historical challenge facing the Third World in general, casting the issue in terms other than development, can misdirect energies to peripheral concerns and thus impede development efforts.

* We shall refer to this periodical frequently, abbreviated as P & DR.

1. Theoretical Basis

It is useful to briefly review the theoretical basis for investigating the population-development relationship in the social science literature. The topic has been treated more in the tradition of economics.

It should come as no surprise that the available literature does not provide us with a firm basis for arguing the population-development issue in the Third World. In general, this literature fails to furnish us with a theoretical foundation for development in the Third World (for documentation of this widely-admitted assertion, see : Fergany, 1984).

The literature emphasizes population growth. Malthusian concepts have been with us for a long time and have recently found new advocates the so-called, Neo-Malthusians. These have dominated Western literature and found adherents in many Third World Circles. However, opposite points of view have also existed and survived.

At one extreme we have such points of view as "an increase in the number of people is one of the principal causes of social development, civilization, and progress indeed the original and universal cause" (Durpeel, 1914, in; P & DR, Vol 8 No.4, 825). A modern-day echo of this point of view is the beautiful slogan that "the ultimate resource is people" (Simon, 1981) (We believe that people are the "ultimate resource" but do not subscribe to many of the arguments given in that book.). However, it is easy to see that such arguments hold in the very long run and bear little relevance to the pressing problems of Third World Countries.

The major opposition to Malthusian ideas, however, comes from Marxist theory. Bondestam succinctly formulates the difference as follows: Malthus related population growth, in essence, to consumption while Marx related it, in the main, to production." The former interpreted over-population as a surplus of consumers... The latter saw it as a surplus of capacity for work." (Bondestam, 1980, 10).

Another distinguishing feature is the deterministic nature of the "law of population" according to Malthus, contrasted to the definition of over-population as a relative phenomenon imbedded in the political-economy of capitalism, i.e. in the structure of a certain socio-economic system.

The implications of the differences in the two points of view are quite significant and worth stating explicitly.

In the Malthusian framework, population has to come down, i.e. the number of consumers to be reduced, to the level determined by the means of subsistence. But the Marxist solution calls for a transformation in the socio-economic structure in order to utilize the idle capacity for work.

In terms of the conceptual framework given above, we believe that the Marxist approach is a more meaningful starting point for the population-development debate in the Third World. (We hasten to add that we do not believe that classical Marxist formulations are strictly applicable to the Arab World or Third World Countries. We only refer to the methodology).

This fundamental link of population parameters to the socio-economic structure is confirmed in serious works on population and development. Having analyzed available literature on population growth and inequality G. Rodgers concludes : " there does not emerge from the literature, national or international, a convincing demonstration that the effects of population growth on inequality are important. Future research in this area will perhaps be most productive if it concentrates not on direct relationships between population growth and inequality, but on the multiple roles of population growth in the transformation of systems of production. It is surely these transformations which are the key to understanding changes in inequality. These changes can then be traced in part, and indirectly, to population growth. Whether these links are are strong, and whether they are positive or negative, are questions that can only be answered in specific economic, social and historical contexts" (Rodgers, 1983, 458).

On a higher level of detail, we assert that classical and neo-classical theories on population are irrelevant to present Third World Societies. This is established by the inadequacy of the underlying theoretical frameworks to explain population-economic realities, much less to serve as a basis for development efforts. We give two specific testimonies.

After analyzing Neo-Malthusian demographic economic models that " provided the analytical basis for the -alarmist - view of population growth ", Anker and Farooq concluded that " these models were simplistic their assumptions were certainly open to criticism and they were unable to analyze the effect of many important population policy." (1978, 146).

The second example pertains to the "economic theory of fertility". Ismail Serageldin makes the assessment that "the final effect (of income) on fertility cannot be deduced unequivocally from the theory. In fact, almost anything can be demonstrated. Within a total committed expenditure on child services, parents may decide to have more or less quantity or quality depending on parameters outside the model specification." (1983, 21).

The upshot is that a solid theoretical basis for the investigation of the population-development relationship in Third World Countries does not exist. Formulating such a basis should be one aspect of the quest for a theory to explain socio-economic change, and serve as a foundation for development.

We close this section by noting that Marxism today identifies an important global angle to the population-development debate. It is claimed that "world capitalism faces a greater challenge from the oppressed of the periphery than the working class of the center. Obviously population growth will strengthen this political pressure" (Bondestam, 1980, 11). Actually, it is claimed that this is the motive for the "population control in the Third World" movement in Western Capitalist Countries. Some light will be thrown on this claim in the following section.

2. Declared Policy Positions

Various policy positions on population and development have been declared by international bodies. Most of the time, the bone of contention was whether high population growth is bad for development in the Third World, indeed, for some, the cause of "underdevelopment". On the operational level this has been translated into whether "Family Planning" should, or can, be used to reduce population growth in Third World Countries?

The one position that received international consensus, and hence is most worthy of consideration in this conference, is that contained in the "World Population Plan of Action" adopted in Bucharest in 1974. Hence, liberal quotation from this source is warranted here.

The plan recognizes population as "the inexhaustible source of creativity and a determining factor of progress" (UN, 1979, 35). It also recognizes the three aspects of population growth, distribution and characteristics (Ibid, 36-37).

The first four principles of the plan summarize the strategic basis of population policy which is clearly non-Malthusian. The first principle contains the celebrated statement "of all things in the world, people are the most precious. Man's knowledge and ability to master himself and his environment will continue to grow. Mankind's future can be made indefinitely bright". This is followed by the principle that "true development cannot take place in the absence of national independence and liberation". The relationship between population and development is determined to be dialectical for "population's variables influence development variables and are also influenced by them". Finally, population policies are "constituent elements of socio-economic development policies never substitutes for them". (Ibid, 38-39).

Specific policy recommendations in the Plan do extend to all aspects of the population subsystems and conform to the principles referred to above. For example, the Plan recommended that "countries wishing to affect fertility levels give priority to implementing development programmes and educational and health strategies which, while contributing to economic growth and higher standards of living, have a decisive impact upon demographic trends, including fertility". (Ibid, 43).

The same approach of couching aspects of population policy within development policy is taken with respect to spatial distribution "A major approach to a more rational distribution of the population is that of planned and more equitable regional development, particularly in the advancement of regions which are less favoured or developed by comparison with the rest of the country" (Ibid, 45).

We are not aware of any international document that has treated the population-development issue as comprehensively and profoundly as the World Population Plan of Action. We also have to remember that the Plan is the truly international, such document, having received international approval in the World Population Conference.

Other international policy positions are more concerned with population growth and "development" or poverty. We give two prominent examples.

The Independent Commission on International Development Issues better known as the Brandt Commission, tackled the population question in its report "North-south, a programme for Survival". Although its analysis was considered, by the Population and Development Review to "reflect the limitations of the consensus approach that the Commission's rules of operation imposed" (P & DR, Vol.6 No.2, 335), the Commission's position, while desirous of reducing world population growth, is a perfect expression of the "Family Planning with Development" point of view. It states "Expanded and more effective family planning services are needed. But experience has shown that these are rarely effective unless they go hand in hand with community development, education, better chances of survival of infants and children, higher status for women and other advances which require general economic and social progress. ... In the final analysis, it is development itself that will provide the most propitious environment for stabilizing the world's population at tolerable levels". (Ibid, 335).

Three years later, however, the Commission, in its report "common crisis", reaffirmed its earlier position: "Unless broadly based development reaches and changes the lives of ordinary people, rapid population growth will continue" (P & DR, Vol.9, No.2, 393).

The World Bank, in its 1980 World Development Report devoted to human development issues, takes a stand that brings us closer to the "Family Planning Movement" while not dismissing the importance of "economic growth".

The Bank declares that "In the great majority of developing countries ... the growth of income per person could be accelerated by slower population growth." (World Bank, 1980, 39-40), it explains that " rapid population growth impedes economic growth by reducing investment per person in physical capital and human skills" (Ibid, 65).

The Report notes that "quantitative analysis suggests that social and economic factors (such as incomes, literacy and life expectancy) accounted for as much as 60 % of the variation in fertility changes among developing countries from 1960 to 1977. The strength of family planning programmes explained an additional 15 % " (Ibid, 65-66).

The Bank's policy recommendations are outlined as follows:

" Progress in reducing fertility will partly depend on increasing the demand for contraception-primarily through social and economic development that successfully reaches the poor, but also through the growing understanding that fertility is a matter of individual choice. It will also depend on providing effective family planning service. Both will be facilitated if contraceptives can be made more convenient and less prone to complications that need medical attention. And the importance of political commitment to a population policy should not be underestimated. Countries with a dual concern for social and economic advance and for family planning will be able to cut fertility rates substantially in the rest of this century, and beyond." (Ibid, 68).

However, the observer of the international population scene, particularly in the field of aid, can easily assess that action is not necessarily conforming to the tenets of the World Population Plan of Action . It is closer to the stand of "attempting to reduce population growth in the Third World through family planning programmes". We shall discuss the relevance and prospects of success of this attempt in a typical case when we treat the case of Egypt in the next part of the paper. Here we try to explain this divergence between the World consensus , as expressed in the Plan of Action, and the reality of international affairs .

The divergence is mainly due to the policies of a major world power, the western industrialized countries led, and particularly on this issue, by the United States. The position of the US is clear in statements by officials and in government documents.

The US Secretary of State, George Shultz, in February 1983, declared that one point of the US Security and Development Cooperation Programme is "helping curb the rampant population growth which underlies much of the Third World's poverty and threatens our planet's resources" (P & DR, Vol.9 No.2, 393-394). Another senior official, the Under-Secretary for Economic Affairs, in September 1980, considered population growth as one of the two root causes of economic crisis in the world . He proclaimed " I do see economic crisis in the 1980 s unless we act decisively to avert it. I see economic events in the 1980s driven largely by two factors-rapid growth of world population and inadequate supplies of oil at existing prices" (P & DR, Vol.6 No.4 686).

It is also enlightening to note that the two documents described by the Population and Development Review as "probably the clearest and most authoritative articulation by the Executive Branch of the government of the US international population policy now on public record" (P & DR, Vol.8 No.2, 423) were both issued by the National Security Council, in December 1974 (i.e. after the World Population Conference issued the Plan of Action) and in November 1975 respectively. Both documents were originally issued as "Confidential", but were recently declassified. (Ibid, 423)

The first document, entitled "Implications of worldwide population growth for US security and overseas interests" is the more substantial and we give below some excerpts from it.

In its "Executive Summary", the document states that "the world is increasingly dependent on mineral supplies from developing countries, and if rapid population frustrates their prospects for economic development and social progress, the resulting instability may undermine the conditions for expanded output and sustained flows of such resources."

It advocates family planning by claiming that "expenditures on effective family planning services are generally one of the most effective investments for an LDC country seeking to improve overall welfare and per capita economic growth. We cannot wait for overall modernization and development to produce lower fertility rates naturally since this will undoubtedly take many decades in most developing countries"(Ibid,426).

"The political consequences of current population factors in the LDC ... are damaging to the internal stability and international relations of countries in whose advancement the US is interested, thus creating political or even national security problems for the US ."(Ibid, 426).

These consequences are said to extend from "child abandonment, and juvenile delinquency" to "food riots, separatist movements, communal massacres, revolutionary actions and counter-revolutionary coups. Such conditions also detract from the environment needed to attract the foreign capital vital to increasing levels of economic growth in these areas" (Ibid, 427).

"Assistance for population moderation should give primary emphasis to the largest and fastest growing developing countries where there is special US political and strategic interest" The list contains 12 countries. Only one Arab country is included: Egypt (Ibid, 428).

This document even contains goals for population growth in various regions of the world implying a reduction in the 2075 projected total population by 35 % in the less developed regions (i.e. 1.5 Billion) and 59 % in Africa. (Ibid, 425).

It is clear that the over-riding consideration of the policy position expressed in this document is the interest of the Western Capitalists Countries led by the U S. It ignores the fact that less than one fifth of the world's population enjoys over two thirds of the world's gross product in the rich capitalist societies (Bondestam, 1980, 14); that the fastest growing segments of humanity exhaust per capita a minute fraction of the consumption of western capitalist societies; that enough food for everyone in the world is produced but "there are still half a billion people who are hungry, ill and dying, because basically they are too poor to buy what is available"(Saouma, 1982, 193). This position disregards even the consensus that developed out of the "Global Modelling" movement: that the major "limits to growth" and welfare in a growing world are not physical but socio-political on both country and international levels (Fergany, 1980). More importantly, it proposes a solution that has limited potential in attaining the targets it sets. We shall come back to some of these points again in the following part of the paper.

III. Population, Socio-Economic Change and Development in the Region

a. Diversity in the Population-Development Relationship

The nature of the relationship between population and socio-economic structure in the region varies drastically from one country to the other. It follows that the preoccupation with high population growth is misguided. The diversity in this relationship has led to a major demographic process that has linked countries of the region through migration for work, a process that has produced significant impact on the development potential in the countries involved and the region as a whole (Fergany, 1983)

Table (1) includes an attempt to characterize the nature of the relationship between population and the socio-economic structure in the region and its articulation in a policy position by governments in the early 1980s. The table is based on a UN Survey of population policy in the region (UN, 1982). This is not meant to be a definite assessment of the inter-relationship of population variables and socio-economic structure or the population policies of the governments of countries included. The material in the table is meant to be only indicative.

On the population size dimension, the position of governments ranged from considering both present and anticipated population size too high, as in Egypt, to regarding the present size to be too low, as in Saudi Arabia.

Table No. 1 Policy position on the various population dimensions in countries of the Arab East in the early 1980s. (*)

		Bahrain
1	Population Size	
1a	present	
1b	anticipated	
2	Rate of Growth	Satisfactory
3	Fertility	
3a	level	Too high
3b	differentials	
3c	family planning	
4	Mortality	
4a	level	Satisfactory
4b	differentials	
5	Spatial Distribution	
5a	patterns	Appropriate
5b	internal migration	
6	International Migration	
6a	temporary	Immigration permitted but <u>strictly</u> controlled .
	permanent	Discouraged
7	Population Problem	
7a	recognition	
7b	conception	
7c	solution	

* Based on: UN, Population Policy Briefs, ESA/P/WP.67/REV.1/June 1982.

Table No. 1 (cont'd)

	Democratic Yemen	Egypt	Iraq	Jordan
1				
1a		too high	satisfactory	
1b	satisfactory	too high	satisfactory	
2	satisfactory	too high	too low	
3				
3a	satisfactory	too high	too low	too high
3b				
3c		national programme encouraged		no policy of intervention
4				
4a	too high	high	too high	too high
4b				
5				
5a	unsatisfactory	unsatisfactory	not appropriate	n. appropriate
5b			rural to urban excessive	
6				
6a	immigration discouraged	immigration encouraged	immigration encouraged	immigration encouraged
6b			encouraged	serious brain-drain problem
7				
7a		wide	small pop. size	
7b		3 interrelated dimensions		
7c	socio-economic development	development approach and family planning		

Table No.1 (cont'd)

	Kuwait	Lebanon	Saudi Arabia
1			
1a		satisfactory	too low
1b			
2	natural increase too low	satisfactory	natural increase too low
3			
3a			
3b		too high	
3c	contraceptives available	services available	contraceptives banned
4			
4a			too high
4b		too high	
5			
5a		not appropriate	
5b			
6			
6a	immigration encouraged but strictly controlled	immigration restricted	immigration permitted but strictly controlled.
6b	immigration discouraged	immigration restricted	
7			
7a			
7b			
7c		socio-economic development	

Table No.1 (cont'd)

	Syria	Yemen
1		
1a		satisfactory
1b		satisfactory
2	satisfactory	satisfactory
3		
3a		satisfactory
3b		
3c	encouraged	family planning programme
4		
4a	too high	too high
4b		
5		
5a		
5b		
6		
6a		immigration encouraged
6b		
7		
7a		
7b		
7c		

The extent of diversity of positions is much larger on the dimension of population growth. While the rate of growth was regarded to be too high in Egypt, it was considered too low in Iraq (a country of an intermediate population size) and in the majority of the sparsely-populated oil rich Gulf states (Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia).

The situation with regard to fertility and family planning varies accordingly. Thus, Egypt has an official family planning programme that aims at reducing birth rates, Syria encourages family planning as a health measure, Oman permits the practice of family planning, Kuwait makes contraceptives available, but Saudi Arabia bans the use of contraceptives.

It is to be noted that only one country in the region expressed concern about fertility and mortality differentials. In Lebanon the composition of the population forces these issues to the fore.

Another population dimension on which countries of the region differed was external migration. Some encouraged immigration for work, like Egypt and North Yemen, whereas others allowed temporary immigration for work but controlled it tightly, like the oil-rich Gulf states. Only Iraq opened its borders for other Arab citizens to work and reside freely.

Finally, it should be noted that Table (1) includes many empty cells as an indication of the lack of articulation of policy positions on population matters.

b. The Population Dimension in Development

The diversity in the relationship of population parameters to socio-economic conditions in the Arab East leads to a variety of population conditions with respect to the development process, in other words, to various definitions of the "population problem" facing a country in the region.

In this section we emphasize this point by giving a rather detailed investigation of the nature of the population problem facing two countries of the region that represent two extreme types: Egypt and Kuwait. We start by a comparison of the basic demographic and socio-economic indicators of the two countries, then proceed to give an analysis of the policy responses. Our treatment of the Egyptian case will be more extensive, it being the major case in the region for the population-development controversy.

In the early 1980s, Egypt had a population about thirty times as large as that of Kuwait. If we restrict the comparison to nationals, the population size ratio rises to over 70. Similar ratios hold for the population projected for the turn of the century where Egypt is expected to have a population of approximately 65 million inhabitants. See Table (2).

Crude birth rates exhibit a similar pattern of decline over the period (1960-80) in the two countries, but a better standard of health in Kuwait (reflected in a lower crude death rate and a higher life expectancy at birth) results in a rate of natural increase higher than that of Egypt by a full percentage point in 1981.

A striking difference in the population profile of the two countries is due to the role played by international migration. While Egypt's rate of population growth was close to the rate of natural increase, the population of Kuwait grew at exceptionally high rates in the last two decades (almost 10 % in the 1960s and over 6% in the 1970s).

The spectacular growth in population size in Kuwait was never considered much of a problem. The reason of course is the dramatic increase in the already large, per capita flow of oil revenues after 1973. In 1980 the per capita gross national product in Kuwait exceeded US \$ 20,000. The corresponding figure in Egypt was in the neighbourhood of US \$ 650. (World Bank, 1983, Table (1)).

Table No. 2 Demographic and Socio-Economic Indicators for Egypt and Kuwait

		<u>Egypt</u>	<u>Kuwait</u>
<u>A. Basic Demographic Indicators</u>			
Population Size, mid 1981, millions		43.3	1.5
Projected Population, 2000, millions		64	2
Average Annual Rate of Population Growth,%			
	1960-70	2.5	9.9
	1970-80	2.5	6.3
Crude Birth Rate, %			
	1960	44	44
	1981	36	38
Crude Death Rate,%			
	1960	19	10
	1981	12	4
Rate of Natural Increase,%			
	1960	2.5	3.4
	1981	2.4	3.4
Life Expectancy at Birth,years			
	1960	46	60
	1981	57	70
<u>B. Urbanization</u>			
Percent Urban of total population			
	1960	38	72
	1981	44	89
Average Annual Growth Rate in Urban Population,%			
	1960-70	3.6	10.0
	1970-80	2.9	7.5
<u>C. Education</u>			
Adult Literacy Rate,%			
	1960	26	47
	1980	44	60
Number enrolled in Primary Schools as Percent of Population in Age Group			
	1960, Males	80	131
	Females	52	102
	Total	66	117
	1980, Males	89	98
	Females	63	93
	Total	76	96

Table No. 2 (cont'd)

	Egypt	Kuwait
Number Enrolled in Secondary Schools as		
Percent of Population in Age Group		
1960	16	37
1980	52	75
<u>D. Labour Force</u>		
Percent of Population in Working Age		
1960	55	63
1981	57	52
Average Annual Rate of Growth in Labour		
Force		
1960-70	2.2	7.0
1970-80	2.5	4.5
Percent of Labour Force in Agriculture		
1960	58	1
1980	50	2
Percent of Labour Force in Industry		
1960	12	34
1980	30	34
Percent of Labour force in Services		
1960	30	65
1980	20	64

Source: Compiled from the World Bank, World Development Report 1983, Washington D.C., July 1983, Tables: 1, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23 and 25.

Further, the level of economic activity that materialized in Kuwait in the 1970s required a labour force that could not be provided locally. Importing labour enabled Kuwait to increase the labour force by rates much higher than can be secured through natural increase, particularly in 1970s. Again, this was not regarded to have posed serious strains on the economic capabilities of the society.

It is to be noted that this pattern of population change, which would be considered severely taxing on average, took place in an economy dominated by a single extractive industry in terms of output and by the services sector in employment.

The difference in the population-resources balance between the two countries reveals itself in discrepancies on indicators of development. Educational achievement of the population is a notable example. Progress in Kuwait during the period (1960-80) and relative deterioration in the Egyptian educational system, have resulted in a considerably higher educational attainment in Kuwait in 1980.

Whereas Kuwait is essentially a city-state, Egypt is by comparison a vast country. In both, however, the extent of population concentration in urban centers is increasing at a fast rate (much faster in Kuwait). In consequence, the problems associated with cancerously growing urban centers without concomittant development in infrastructure and amenities have produced conspicuous negative extranalties to urban life in Egypt that are hardly noticeable in Kuwait.

We now proceed to examine the policy responses to these two quite distinct population-to-socio-economic environment situations.

1. Kuwait

While the topic of population policy is frequently discussed in Kuwait, the author is not aware of an official policy package on population matters. That does not mean, however, that a de-facto population policy does not exist; though the observer has to look for indications of this "policy" in various executive actions by the government.

We hinted above that if Kuwait has a population problem, it is of a nature different from the population problem as perceived in Egypt. Neither the total size nor the rate of growth of population poses strains on economic resources. To the contrary, the country has strived to increase its population beyond the consequences of the, already high, level of natural increase through temporary immigration.

Kuwait does not suffer from a population problem in the ordinary sense. The situation is closer to the other extreme, i.e. an increase in effective population size due to immigration and/or naturalization might prove to be an asset to development in Kuwait. By effective population we mean inhabitants who belong to the society and participate effectively in socio-economic and political life. Further, the country can be considered to suffer from a population problem only if we widen the scope of population characteristics to include the composition of the population by nationality.

Kuwait has a majority of expatriates among its population in 1980 the proportion of nationals was slightly higher than 40 %. Non-Arab expatriates are mostly workers but the Arabs have a lower rate of participation in economic activity, i.e. include a relatively large proportion of dependents.

Entry to Kuwait, as well as the right to work and reside, are tightly controlled. Expatriates, regardless of the length of their residence in Kuwait are rarely granted Kuwaiti nationality. Furthermore, the various segments of the population are not integrated into a cohesive whole due to various characteristics of social organization that are common in the oil-rich states in the Gulf. This situation is not conducive to high social productivity. (Fergany, 1983, 15-17).

Further, the government, wary of the increase in the proportion of expatriates in the population, restricts entry to the country while the conditions that lower social productivity are maintained

By contrast, the most desired solution to the smallness of the national population base would be to raise the level of natural increase. This is the position of the government expressed in encouraging marriage and procreation among nationals.

The basic limitation of this solution is that there is an upper bound on the birth rate determined by limits to natural fertility. Furthermore, the birth rate in Kuwait has been declining steadily in response to factors of modernization that has set in the society. It is to be noted that the crude birth rate in the early 1980s was not much higher in Kuwait than Egypt, a country which is considered to be seriously "overpopulated".

Thus, the dilemma facing the policy-maker in Kuwait in the field of population is to arrive at a national population size larger than that expected under present demographic patterns, and a composition by nationality as well as an environment of social organization that maximize the potential of development and social welfare. Naturalization seems to be the only policy instrument available. In the case of Egypt the situation is vastly different.

2. Egypt

Some aspects of the population situation in Egypt are not known accurately. For example, the level of infant mortality is subject to dispute. But, if we speak in terms of analysis and explanation, the extent of our knowledge is further reduced. A notable case in point is the fact that a widely accepted explanation of the decline in the birth rate in the 1970s, and its rise in the late 1970s and early 1980s, has not been found.

Nevertheless, certain parameters of the population situation in Egypt are generally considered to have negative welfare implications. There are:

- (i) Population size grows at a rate higher than desired. This is particularly due to high fertility.
- (ii) The distribution of population on the land surface of the country is severely out of balance. Further, the imbalance worsens as time elapses. The country-side remains a source of emigrants to urban areas; urban centers particularly major cities, are over-burdened by excessive populations; and the "new communities" do not yet attract inhabitants.
- (iii) a young age structure overloaded with a large proportion of dependent children.
- (iv) relatively high infant and childhood mortality.

These are all pure demographic traits. But it is important to stress two points that we made in general in the conceptual framework; that the

demographic features given above interact strongly and that they exist in a socio-economic context that determines them on one hand, and is also affected by them on the other. It follows that these two considerations should be taken, simultaneously, in any attempt at understanding the population problem in Egypt and formulating policies for tackling it.

A popular definition of population policy identifies it as "one that tries to eliminate the demographic causes of the socio-economic problems to be solved" (K.Davis, quoted in Serageldin, 1983, 4).

Population policy is then a Societal response to a perceived population-related socio-economic condition, normally referred to as a "population problem". Thus the population policy is determined by the perception of a "population problem" .

Another determinant of population policy is the state of knowledge on appropriate policy responses to a population problem. At a further level of analysis the formulation of a population policy within a certain government administration is determined by the extent of incorporation of available knowledge in the working knowledge base of the administration.

A third determinant of the population policy response is the ability to formulate a coherent policy package that is deemed sufficient to attain the the objectives of the policy. This is an institutional determinant.

The population policy response in Egypt exemplifies these determinants.

The perception of the population problem went through three successive stages, and this change in perception, conditioned by the two other determinants resulted into different policy responses. (Arab Republic of Egypt, 1980)

The first phase: In the sixties, population policy centered on one aspect of the population question, viz. growth and aimed at fertility reduction.

The first national population policy was declared in 1965. A family planning programme was developed as its instrument. In conformity with the prevailing wisdom at the time, the policy and the program adopted a medical orientation.

The second phase : The socio-economic approach to fertility reduction. This phase prevailed in the early 1970s.

Fertility reduction was still the primary concern. But, the National Population and Family Planning Policy, adopted in 1973, recognized the role of socio-economic variables in relation to fertility and identified nine such factors as critical fertility influencers which have to be manipulated simultaneously in order to create the demand for family planning services provided

through the family planning program.

This development reflected the growing doubt in the effectiveness of family programmes in the limited sense, that resulted from growing experience with such programmes internationally and in Egypt, and also the results of the appraisal of the basic socio-economic model they assume.

It is to be noted though that the perception of the population problem has not changed, but the focus of policy manipulation has widened. The underlying socio-economic model is sounder than the first phase. But, this juncture is also critical in the history of the population policy response in Egypt, because by widening the scope of population policy into many interrelated aspects of the socio-economic system, the level of knowledge on the appropriate policy response in general, and the extent of its incorporation within the government administration of a less developed country, and the ability to produce appropriate policies are reduced drastically. This dilemma is to be exacerbated in the third phase.

The third phase: The development approach to the population problem. Starting in the mid-seventies population growth was perceived as a major concern, but a realization of the limits within which it can be reduced set in. The population problem was also extended to two other dimensions; distribution and characteristics. These are not separate aspects but interacting dimensions of a population subsystem of the overall socio-economic system. The problem is to be addressed at all levels of socio-political organization in the country, central, governorate, and local community levels. Also, it is addressed as an integral component of the development efforts at all these levels.

The perception is radically different from the first two phases of population policy. We think that, in terms of available knowledge in population and socio-economic interrelationships it is flawless. It is also consistent with the collective wisdom of the International Community as reflected in the World Population Plan of Action 1974.

However, the bottlenecks in terms of the available knowledge on the appropriate policy response, its incorporation in the knowledge base of a less-developed country, and the ability to transform this base into a coherent policy grow to critical proportions.

Has population policy in Egypt been effective? The effectiveness of a policy in attaining its objectives hinges on two factors.

a. The soundness of the policy response determined as mentioned above, i.e. the validity of the underlying model of policy formulation and its effective implementation.

b. The ability of the government administration to bring about the socio-economic changes that are deemed sufficient, within the policy, to attain its objectives, i.e. the ability to realize the policy instruments.

We now try to outline some factors that define the level of effectiveness of population policy in Egypt.

First We claim that available knowledge of the appropriate policy responses to the population problem, as defined in the third phase of population policy in Egypt in a typical Third World Country is meagre.

This is not limited to Third World Countries, even in the industrialized countries "almost no single population policy was specified in terms of the total social system, . . . only vague assertions were sometimes made. Population policies evidently have not developed as a coherent system" (Serageldin, 1983, 10). The same author gives two reasons for the relative ineffectiveness of population policies "during periods of industrial-demographic transitions:

(a) lack of interest on the public policy level to incorporate population in their deliberations because of political or ideological factors.

(b) lack of conceptual and empirical knowledge about the dynamic nature of the socio-economic-demographic system (Ibid, 10-11).

The situation in present day Third World Countries is not far from this characterization. It is further exacerbated though by the crisis in development thought in general. (Fergany, 1984). We have made this point in general in the section on the theoretical basis for the population-development debate. It is however stressed many times over in any attempt to formulate population policies as an integral component of planning for development. A UN document states "... the lack of a clear definition of the nature and dynamics of the relationships between population and socio-economic factors often hinders the incorporation of population policies into development planning" (UN,

Indeed it is true that "such progress as has been made in various parts of the world toward curbing explosive population growth has mostly occurred independently of planned interventions guided by social science knowledge" (Simon, H., 1982, 194).

Further, the extent of incorporation of whatever scanty knowledge available on appropriate population policy response in the government administration of a typical Third World Country, like Egypt, is very limited. Clearly, this problem goes far beyond the domain of population policy. It is a general feature of government administrations in the Third World.

Finally, policy measures formulated in such a government administration, and regardless of how sound they are, stand a slim chance of being implemented because the government is normally unable to realize the policy instruments devised. Again this is an over-riding trait of government in these countries.

The solution proposed by the World Population Plan of Action, and the Third Phase of population policy in Egypt, is to integrate population policy within planning for development. But what if there is no sound development and no development planning? This is the dilemma of a conceptually valid formulation of the "population problem" and the appropriate policy response to solve it. The solution requires a development process that does not actually exist in most Third World Countries.

The Chinese example confirms this point of view. When a sweeping socio-economic transformation was taking place, population policies were formulated and implemented, effectively. The environment was propitious and the means available. Now, that the society has established an efficient form of social organization, the Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party can declare, in 1980, that "The State Council deems it necessary to launch a crash programme over the coming 20 to 30 years calling on each couple... to have a single child... In an effort to achieve this, we rely chiefly on publicizing and implementing the policies of the Party and government and on ideological and political work, not on compulsion and arbitrary orders" (In P & DR, Vol. 6, No. 4).

This call takes place in a well-organized society, and hence stands a good chance of success. In a country like Egypt, by contrast, the society is complex. But, in system analytic terms, it is not purposive complexity expressing a high degree of internal organization in pursuance of a common objective. It is more in the nature of noise and exhibits a contradiction between individual and collective welfare (a strong case of the tragedy of the commons) and sheer confusion of socio-economic organization. In such an environment, nothing close to the Chinese leader's proposition can be made. If it is made, it would reveal a blatant disregard for the fundamental determinants of socio-economic change and of measures of societal intervention to bring it about.

Second Development is in a crisis in Egypt. We need not dwell on this theme here, suffice it to mention that the country suffers from two major, and interrelated, problems: low social productivity and critical dependence on the outside world. The latter reveals itself in a high level of food imports and financial transfers. These are manifestations of a structural crisis that extends to the entire socio-economic fabric. Hence, no single aspect of the development crisis can be tackled in isolation or in the short-run.

We now return to the population-development issue. Undoubtedly, a lower rate of population growth in Egypt would help reduce the pains of the development crisis. But neither are high growth rates the cause of the development crisis, nor would lower birth rates, if attained, in themselves, overcome it.

But, in view of the development crisis and the inability to implement a total-system policy to tackle the population problem, one often is faced with the position: "We cannot wait for development. Let us concentrate on what we know and can manage now, like family planning programmes". This is reminiscent of the man who was found searching for key under a lamppost although he lost it a mile away.

While family planning is a human right that should be supported unconditionally, family planning programmes are not sufficient, by themselves, to reduce fertility to desired low levels. It is widely-accepted now that they succeed only in a favourable socio-economic environment. We have given support to this in the conceptual framework. In addition we can point to the basic propositions of the IUSSP Committee on Studies for Population Policies in Developing Countries where it is stated that "Reproductive behaviour is multi-determined and multi-conditioned. The efficacy of action aimed at modifying the reproductive behaviour... will depend on the manner and degree to which they affect the factors determining such behaviour". (Miro, 1982, 5). Needless to say, family planning services should be made as efficient as possible in order to contribute to fertility reduction, but it is wise to remember that Egypt is a country in which many basic human needs go unsatisfied at an adequate level. Hence, it is inconceivable that family planning service can be rendered at a standard of efficiency higher than other general services in the country.

It is now recognized that, within present knowledge, the population of Egypt will range between 60 and 70 million in the year 2000. The lower limit assumes a fertility pattern consistent with a socio-economic environment that does not exist now and is not easy to materialize soon. This means that the likely range for the projected population is narrower than 60-70 million, and probably closer to 65-70 million. But the important point to ponder is that this range is the ceiling of success for family planning if the socio-economic environment was completely favourable, which is not certain as we indicated. This argument is not meant to diminish the importance of family planning services, but only to put its possible contribution in perspective.

However, let us accept the 60-70 million range for Egypt's population in the year 2000. The decisive distinction between alternative futures in Egypt is not whether the population size will be 60 or 70 million, but whether the country would be still suffering the structural features of underdevelopment, indicated at the onset of this paper or has started the road to a genuine process of development. In either case, it would matter only marginally whether the total population is 60 or 70 million. In the first case, in addition, the path to a decent future for Egyptians would not have been found.

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