

Birth rate correlates -
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Birth Rate Correlates Introduction A country's population is an important economic asset, as it provides the necessary labor force. This is especially essential in running of different economic processes as well as activities that make up the different sectors of an economy. In many cases, a high population is seen as a blessing to a country, as it offers cheap labor to industrial activities. However, over years, there has been a population explosion worldwide, putting a lot of pressure on the already-constrained natural resources. Consequently, there is a need for every government to put in place policies that ensure that the available resources are wisely utilized for sustainable development. Policy makers are therefore concerned with developing measures and mechanisms aimed at controlling population growth for sustainability. In many cases, an increasing population has been blamed for internal unrest and communal wars experienced in many third world countries, as communities fight over resources like land and water.

Discussion Population control hence becomes eminent in order to reduce the rate at which a country's population grows. Despite the use of contraceptives, there are numerous natural birth control methods that can be employed. The methods to be used are determined by individual families in consultation with family planning specialists. The Catholic Church has been one of those institutions that have been against the use of artificial birth control methods like the condom. According to the Doyle in his article titled " Natural Family Planning Key to Intimacy", Catholics do believe that " artificial contraception is evil, and only natural family planning conforms to the objective criteria of morality". As such, this policy has greatly affected the birth rates in countries where there are high catholic populations like

Brazil, Philippines, Argentina, Mexico, Italy and Spain. In Brazil, 73.6% of the people are Catholics as per the 2000 census. According to the CIA World Factbook, 24.7% of the people are under 14 years. Additionally, 68.2% are in the birth-giving age of 15-64 years. The remaining 7.1% are those who are 65 years and over. From these statistics, it is clear that there is family planning in the country as only 24.7% of the population fall below the 14 years age bracket. Furthermore, the CIA World Factbook indicates that the country's population growth rate is 1.102%. The country's birth rate is at 17.48 births per 1000 people. As such, the low birth rate could be attributed to birth control in Brazil. On the other hand, the Philippines has 82.9% as Catholics. According to the CIA World Factbook, the country's total population is 103,775,002 people as per a census carried out in 2012. Its age structure is different as compared to that of Brazil, a catholic-dominated nation too. Here, 34.3% of the total population does fall below 14 years of age. Additionally, 61.3% are between 15 to 64 years whereas those over 65 years constitute 4.3% of the total population. Essentially, a high population below 14 years of age means that natural birth control methods, as per the Catholic Church have not been such effective in the country. Moreover, given that the country has a population growth rate of 1.873% and birth rate of 24.98 births per 1000 people shows that family planning is low. Another country dominated by Catholics is Argentina. According to the CIA Factbook, 92% of the country's total populations are Catholics. In contrary to the Philippines that had a high population below 14 years, Argentina's population below this age bracket is only 25.2%. In addition, 63.6% of the people are within 15-64 years of age while only 11.1% are 65 years and above. The

statistics are as per a census undertaken in 2012 and contained in the CIA Factbook. The country's population growth rate is 0.997% with a birth rate of 17.34 births per 1000 people. Consequently, the low birth rate in Argentina can be attributed to religion whereby the Catholic Church's policy of natural birth control could be in practice. On the other hand, Mexico is another country with a Catholics population of 76.5% out of the total population of 114,975,406. The CIA World Factbook indicates that 27.8% of the population is below 14 years whereas those in the birth-giving bracket constitute 65.5%. The elderly form a mere 6.7% of the country's total population. Furthermore, the country's population growth rate is 1.086% while the birth rate is at 18.87 births per 1000 people. As such, it can be concluded that the Catholic Church's policy of natural birth control has played a big role in the country's population. Italy, with a population of 61,261,254 people as per a 2012 census, is dominated by the Roman Catholic. Here, the CIA World Factbook states that over 80% of the country's total population is Catholics. With only 13.8% of the people below 14 years of age, it means that birth control is so effective in the country. 65.7% of people are between 15-64 years whereas 20.5% are 65 years and over. The effectiveness of birth control policies, by the Catholic Church, in the country can be demonstrated by the low population growth rate at 0.38%, as well as a birth rate of 9.06 births over 1000 people. Spain, with a population of 47,042,984 people, has a Catholics population at 94%. Consequently, it has a low population growth rate of 0.654% with a birth rate of 10.4 per 1000 people. With such statistics, only 15.3% of the population is under 14 years.

Tabular Representation (Table 1) Country Population Growth Rate Birth Rate

Below 14 years Brazil 103, 775, 002 1. 102%. 17. 48 births /1000 population 34. 3% Argentina 42, 192, 494 0. 997% 17. 34 births /1000 population 25. 2%. Italy 61, 261, 254 0. 38% 9. 06 births /1000 population 13. 8% Source:

CIA World Factbook, 2012. On the contrary, Afghanistan, Algeria and Iran do have low Catholics population in the world. The table below shows some of the important population statistics from these countries. Tabular

Representation (Table 2) Country Population Growth Rate Birth Rate Below 14 years Afghanistan 30, 419, 928 2. 22% 39. 3 births/1000 population 43. 2% Algeria 37, 367, 226 1. 165% 16. 64 births/1000 population 27. 8% Iran 78, 868, 711 1. 247% 18. 52 births/1000 population 23. 9% Source: CIA

World Factbook, 2012. The dominant religion in these countries is Islam.

From the above statistics, it can be concluded that religion does not really play a big part in a country's population control policy. This is due to the fact that both Algeria and Iran, despite not being highly influenced by the Catholic Church, do have low population growth rates at 1. 165% and 1. 247% respectively, just like other nations dominated by Catholics. Only Afghanistan, which is dominated by Muslims, has high population growth rate at 2. 22% with 43. 2% of the population below 14 years. Conclusion

From the statistics from the 9 different countries, it is evident that Catholic prohibition can influence birth control use in some way. However, there seems to be other factors like poverty and education that play a greater role.

Thus, it cannot be said that it is the Catholic prohibition that solely plays that role. Works Cited Doyle, Fletcher. Catholic Update. Natural Family Planning Key to Intimacy. Web. 30 October, 2012. Available at: The CIA World

Factbook. People. Web. 30 October, 2012. Available at:

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